

# THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

## *A Message of Hope and Fulfillment For Those Longing For God*

### *The Fruit of Repentance*

Luke 3: 1-14

**Introduction:** As we move into chapter three of Luke's Gospel we leave behind the birth narrative and childhood scenes. Nearly two decades have passed since we last saw Jesus. Chapter three begins the period of public ministry, starting with the revival and preparation of John the Baptist.

#### I. The Politics & Geography During Jesus' Ministry

- A. Roman rule--Tiberius Caesar
- B. The geography of Israel in the ministry of Jesus  
Jesus' ministry centers mainly around Galilee and Jerusalem
- C. Rule in the land of Israel--the Herodian Dynasty  
After the death of Herod the great his sons/family ruled over various parts of Israel
- D. Temple and religious life--Annas & Caiaphas  
Several of Annas's sons followed him, as well as Caiaphas his son-in-law, but his overarching influence was so great that even though there was ever only one *official* High Priest at a time, Annas greatly influence the priesthood and temple politics until his death

#### II. The Ministry of John the Baptist

- A. John's preaching was repentance--getting right with God  
He minced no words in making plain the call of God to repent and turn from wickedness
- B. His prophetic work was foretold by Isaiah (40:3-5)  
He is the voice of one crying in the way of the wilderness, make ready the way of the Lord

#### III. The True Nature of Repentance

- A. John proclaimed a message of repentance and preparation and offered baptism as a means of outwardly declaring one's repudiation of sin and choice to walk in righteousness (vv.6-9)
- B. John makes it plain that while God desires us, He does not need us: God has chosen us because of His great LOVE for us, not out of some need in His Being to be complete
- C. The power of the anointed message reaches an amazing audience:
  1. the crowds in general
  2. tax collectors
  3. Roman soldiers!!
- D. The meaning & fruit of true repentance
  1. Metamelomai vs Metanoia  
A sense of regret or remorse vs a change in attitude AND behavior
  2. Genuine repentance involves more than remorse or sorrow:
    - a. it involves a genuine change of mind, in this case an agreement with God concerning sin
    - b. it is accompanied by the fruit of repentance—there is a difference in the life of the truly repentant one
    - c. it is a choice to change one's behavior from wrong doing to right doing, even in the case of sins of omission ("share your tunic and your food")

Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins; as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, "THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT. 'EVERY RAVINE WILL BE FILLED, AND EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL WILL BE BROUGHT LOW; THE CROOKED WILL BECOME STRAIGHT, AND THE ROUGH ROADS SMOOTH; AND ALL FLESH WILL SEE THE SALVATION OF GOD.'" So he began saying to the crowds who were going out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? "Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham. "Indeed the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; so every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

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**Conclusion:** The message of John prepared the way for Jesus by anointed preaching aimed at preparing a broken and contrite heart and spirit among all the people. The baptism of repentance was a commitment to change, a choice to do the right thing, and an openness to God.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think Luke gives us the geopolitical climate of Israel in the time of Jesus?
2. What is the significance of the rulers he names with respect to the Gospel story?
3. Why does he mention two high priests, yet uses the singular title, when there was ever only one.
4. What can you say about the character of these rulers?
5. What is so startling about the people who came to be baptized by John?
6. Why baptism? What is the significance of bearing fruit in keeping with repentance?
7. What kinds of issues does John tell the people need to be changed in their life?
8. How is this baptism of repentance a way of preparing for the coming of the Lord?
9. Does this type of revival ministry have application for us today, now that Jesus has come & the church has been born?

### NOTES

And the crowds were questioning him, saying, "Then what shall we do?" And he would answer and say to them, "The man who has two tunics is to share with him who has none; and he who has food is to do likewise." And *some* tax collectors also came to be baptized, and they said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Collect no more than what you have been ordered to." *Some* soldiers were questioning him, saying, "And *what about* us, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Do not take money from anyone by force, or accuse *anyone* falsely, and be content with your wages."

Luke 3: 1-14 (NASB)

#### Memory Verse

"Therefore bear fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children to Abraham."

Luke 2: 8 (NASB)

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