

## Synopsis 014b Description of the Messiah part 2

[Matthew 3:11-12; Mark 1:7-8; Luke 3:15-18] Here, we have three different passages that vary a little in their wording and details, but they all say basically the same thing. Let's look at each passage and compare and contrast them.

In Matthew 3, John is saying, "I'm baptizing you as a sign of repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I am". He's going to do much more than simply baptize as a sign of repentance, isn't he? How much mightier is he?

Matthew, in the Greek, says, "He who is coming after me is stronger than I". Matthew, who was writing to the Jews, knows that the Jews know of the coming Messiah, and he simply says, "He who is coming after me is stronger than I".

It is generally accepted that Matthew wrote his gospel to the Jews. For one thing, he focuses on the fulfillment of the OT, quoting from it 62 times, which is more than any other gospel writer. Matthew does not explain Jewish culture like the other evangelists. Matthew is the only gospel writer to use the expression, "Kingdom of the Heavens", which was reverential to the Jews. His purpose in writing to the Jews was to show them that Jesus of Nazareth was the expected Messiah. Everything he wrote was to show them this.

Mark was written for the common man. It was written in such a way that the Hellenistic Jews, the Greeks, the Romans, and anyone who knew about these, could be made to understand what was being written, and so there could be no confusion. Mark uses some Latin words, and he explains some Aramaic words that a Jew would understand, but not others. He says, "Coming after me, is the one who is stronger than I". It's someone specific, *the* one, just as it is in Matthew. But, Matthew simply says, "He who is coming after me", and Mark says, "There is one". In Matthew, they know, in Mark, he tells them.

Luke is writing to the world. He uses big, fancy (and precise) words, and he lays out everything in detail. He words things similarly to Mark: "There is coming one who is stronger than I."

In all three cases, John compares himself to the one of whom he is the forerunner, and declares, "he is mightier than I am". "You're impressed by me? You haven't seen anything yet!"

Then, he goes on to further put himself in the proper perspective. "I am not worthy [competent] to bear his shoes." "I'm not competent to stoop and loose his shoes." "I'm not competent to loose his shoes." John puts himself in the position of the lowest of the servants. This was the job of only the lowest servants. In Luke, he simply loosens them. This was done before the feet were washed. In Mark, he stooped and loosened them. He had to put himself in the proper position. In Matthew, he had to go the extra step to bear

them and put them away, which was done after washing. Why this distinction? (Jesus bore our sins.)

Then, Matthew tells us that John said that the one who is mightier “will be baptizing you in the Holy Spirit and in fire”. Mark simply records, “He shall be baptizing you in the Holy Spirit”. Luke has John saying the same thing that Matthew says: “He will be baptizing you in the Holy Spirit and in fire.”

The order is also different: Luke says, “I am indeed baptizing you, but there’s one who is mightier than I who will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire”. Mark says, “There’s one who is coming who is mightier than I am”, with the emphasis on the Messiah, and continues with, “I am indeed baptizing you in water, but he will be baptizing you in the Holy Spirit.” Matthew begins with, “I am baptizing you in water unto repentance”, and then continues with, “The one who is coming (you know who I’m talking about), he will be baptizing you in the Holy Spirit and in fire”.

Only Matthew mentions that John is baptizing in water unto repentance. Repent. What does “repent” mean?

The English word “repent”, from the Latin word “repenitet”, simply means “to be sorry”, and that just does not convey the full meaning of the Greek word. John did not merely want people to be sorry, but to change their attitudes (literally, “after mind”) and he wanted them to change the way they acted. One of the problems is that we do not have a single English word that reproduces the exact meaning of the Greek word.

The Greek does have a word that means to be sorry, which is exactly our English word “repent”, and it is used in the NT in reference to Judas in Matthew 27:3, which says, “Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders”. That’s a different Greek word, “metamelomai”, which simply means “regret”. Judas regretted what he had done, but it was too late to change, wasn’t it? The deed was done.

But, John was a prophet, after many years of prophetic silence, who was bringing a message of “turn around!” That’s why the book of Matthew, which was written to the Jews specifically, emphasizes repentance: They knew better. To the rest of the world, this was something new. They didn’t need to turn back; they had never been on the right track.

Repent! Turn back! John was echoing the same message that the prophets of old had been preaching to Israel. Joel 2:12 tells us, “Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye *even* to me [return unto me] with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning.” Isaiah 55:7: “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.” Let him return unto the Lord. Ezekiel 33:11 says, “Say unto them, *As* I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye [turn back,

turn back] from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” This is followed a few verses later by Ezekiel 33:15: “*If* the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die.” Repent! The Jews needed to turn back to the road of righteousness!

The symbolism of this baptism that John preached was repentance, which of course involved an obligation to repent. By definition, repentance does require you to repent. Repentance requires a change in lifestyle; it requires you to stop living the way you’re living and return to righteousness. You’re living in sin, so stop it! The Gentiles did not need to repent. They had never been on the right track. The Jews had, so their message was different. That message does apply to us now.

In Mark, John only talks of two baptisms: One in water and one in the Holy Spirit. Yet Matthew and Luke both talk of three: One in water, one in the Holy Spirit, and one in fire. The Jews were used to a self-imposed baptism signifying an confession of sins, but a baptism of repentance goes a step further. It signifies a change in attitude.

[1 Corinthians 12] What about baptism in the Holy Spirit? What does this mean? What is this talking about? [1 Corinthians 12:13] When thinking about baptism, keep in mind the one who is baptizing, the one who is being baptized, and the element into which he is being baptized. In Matthew 3:11, John was the baptizer, repentant sinners were the ones being baptized, and water was the element into which they were baptized. This is similar to Christian baptism, with which we are familiar.

Spirit baptism finds Jesus the Christ doing the baptizing, believers being baptized, and the Holy Spirit is the element into which they are being baptized. There has been much confusion caused by the translation of “εἰς” as “by” and not “in”. We are all baptized into the Holy Spirit, not by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit baptizes no one. We are all baptized. However, Jesus the Christ baptizes all believers into the Holy Spirit; they are one body. We are all baptized in the Holy Spirit into one body.

The permanent indwelling of the Holy Spirit in every believer did not occur in the OT, as it does now. Even in Acts 1:5, it is a future event, but with Acts 11:15, we are told that it began at Pentecost. It is unique to the church age. (Acts 1:5 says, “For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost Spirit not many days hence.” Acts 11:15-16 says, “And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost Spirit.”) In Acts 10, we are told that Cornelius received the Holy Spirit before he was baptized in water.

Although the baptism in the Holy Spirit takes place when we are saved, Acts 5:32 tells us we are filled with the Holy Spirit as we obey God. It is an ongoing action.

What is the ministry of the Holy Spirit? [John 7:37–39; 14:15–26; 16:7–15; Romans 8:1-17 (verse 2: Spirit’s law of life)] What is the ministry of the Holy Spirit? He teaches, he

comforts, guides, glorifies the Lord, frees us from the law of sin and death, keeps us from walking carnally, helps us mortify the deeds of the body, [Romans 8:14-15]. [Romans 8:14]

Do you want to be a son of God? I do. A while back, we looked at five different words for “child”. One of those words was “huios”, which is used here. It’s a mature child or an adult. Spiritually, it’s a person who is spiritually where God wants him to be.”

This is talking about maturity and son-ship, as opposed to nativity or simply being a child. Maturity and son-ship were not attained at birth. Instead, it waited until the thirtieth year. [Sort of like a driver’s license or contract signing waits for maturity.]

When we read or hear the word "adoption", we immediately think of a child being born into a family and then that child, through a legal process, becoming a member of another family. There are those who teach that when we are saved we are adopted into the family of God. This concept of adoption does not agree with what we find in John 3:3, which says, “Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be **born** again [born from above], he cannot see the kingdom of God”. When we receive Jesus Christ as our personal savior, we are born from above into the family of God. Being born into the family God, means adoption is not necessary. In Ephesians 1:5 we find the word “adoption” in context with the word “children”. It says, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will”. The phrase “adoption of children” is the translation of one Greek word, “huiiothesia”. This word is the same word that is used in Romans 8:15, and is a compound word containing the words “huios” and “thesis”. The word “huios” means “son”. The word “thesis” means “to put”, “to lay”, “to appoint”, or “to ordain”. Not son-ship itself, but son-ship conferred. There is not a single hint to suggest that the word “huiiothesia” means “adoption”. The word “huiiothesia” means “To appoint as a son” or “To ordain to son-ship”.

We can have that, and I find that quite exciting! [Romans 8:14]

John said that not only would Jesus the Christ baptize in the Holy Spirit, but He would also baptize in fire. This will happen at the end of the age in connection with the Judgment Seat of Christ. 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 tells of the trial of a Christian’s works by fire. Mark 9:49 tells us that all Christians shall be salted with fire. Revelation 2:11 promises that the overcomer shall **not** be hurt (strong double negative) of the second death (the second death is the lake of fire; Revelation 20:6,14; 21:8). Do not confuse this baptism in fire with the lake of fire, because it has to do **only** with Christians.

The passage in Matthew 3 is written to Jews who need to turn back to the right path. They’re looking for a Messiah, but they’re looking for the wrong Messiah. The Messiah came to save, but there are many different ideas for “save”, and they were looking for the wrong one. But, he **did** come to save us completely: body, soul, and spirit. He came that we might have life.