

Matthew 3

ASVh with Comments

Summary. In this Gospel, the Lord doesn't give any further details about the childhood life of Jesus after His return to Nazareth. Here in Chapter 3, Jesus is an adult man, and we are presented with the events that mark the start of His ministry on earth. 1) A human messenger, John the Baptist, introduces the Lord Jesus as the One who has the power to save us from our sins, take us to heaven, and baptize us with the Holy Spirit for the cleansing and purifying of our souls. 2) Jesus was baptized in the water by John the Baptist; therefore, the baptism of the Lord Jesus in water is an example for all Christians to follow. 3) At the water baptism of the Lord Jesus, the Spirit of God descended from heaven like a dove and alighted on Him, and God the Father confirmed to John, and people, with a voice from heaven, that Jesus is His beloved Son in whom He delights. 4) Verses 16 and 17 describe a reunion between the Father, the Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. These verses are a clear testimony to the Trinity of God.

3 ¹ Then in those days comes John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ² and saying, Repent; for the kingdom of the heavens has come near.

Comments 3:1-2. John is a messenger of the Lord. John warns people to come to the Lord and repent; come to Jesus is his message. The Father's love for the world He created is so great that He sent His beloved Son to earth to show us the way. Jesus opened the gate of the heavens; believe and come to Him.

³ For this is the one that was spoken of through Isaiah the prophet, saying,
A voice of one crying in the wilderness,
Prepare the way of the Lord,
make His paths straight.

Comments 3:3. John is the messenger of the Lord. He calls people to come to Jesus.
See Comments Luke 3:4.

⁴ Now John himself had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leather belt about his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey.

Comments 3:4. John was part of a group of prophets that kept themselves separated from the world.

⁵ Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan,

⁶ and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

⁷ Now having seen many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to the baptism, he said to them, Offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

⁸ Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of the repentance.

⁹ And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham as our father. For I say to you, that God is able out of the stones to raise up children to Abraham.

Comments 3:7-9. Pharisees and Sadducees came to find mistakes and criticize the work of John; they did not come to be baptized. This passage refers explicitly to that time and to those who claim themselves righteous, to those who blame someone else instead of themselves and see themselves as always righteous. The Lord has come, and He gives all a chance to hear the truth and see the light. John asks them to come to the light.

¹⁰ Now already the axe is applied to the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not yield good fruit is cut down, and cast into the fire.

Comments 3:10. The axe here represents the Word of God.

The root of the trees refers to those people that believe themselves to be righteous and perfect and not in need of a Savior (See Luke 18:10-14). The Pharisees and the Scribes of that time acted as middlemen between God and the people. This duty ended with the birth of the Lord Jesus. There is no need anymore for these kinds of people to come and tell us what the Lord says. Now, the Lord speaks straight to everybody's heart if they pray and meditate on the Word of God.

In this verse, the fire represents hell.

¹¹ I indeed baptize you in water to repentance, but mightier than I comes after me, **He** of whom I am not fit to carry the sandals, **He** will baptize you with the **Holy Spirit** and fire,

Comments 3:11. The sin cannot be where the Holy Spirit is. When we are baptized by the Holy Spirit, the sin in us will be burned by the holy fire (pure fire) of the Lord that cleanses our souls.

See Comments John 1:33 on Holy Spirit baptism.

¹² whose winnowing shovel is in **His** hand, and **He** will thoroughly cleanse **His** threshing floor; and **He** will gather **His** grain into the storehouse, but the chaff **He** will burn up with unquenchable fire.

Comments 3:12. The winnowing shovel (or fan) here represents the scale that weighs man's deeds, the good and bad.

His threshing floor, or simply floor, represents the entire world.

Grain (or wheat) represents the saved people.

The storehouse (or barn) here represents the house of the Lord (heaven).

The chaff represents the unsaved people.

Unquenchable fire represents hell.

¹³ Then comes **Jesus** from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized of him.

¹⁴ But John was hindering **Him**, saying, I have need to be baptized of **Thee**, and do **Thou** come to me?

Comments 3:13-14. This passage of Scripture shows that even the sinless Lamb of God needs to be baptized in water. If the sinless Lamb of God asks to be baptized, how then can humans say they have no sin and do not need to be baptized? Here we see the example we need to follow about baptizing in water.

¹⁵ However, **Jesus** answering him said, Permit just now; for thus it is proper to us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he permits **Him**.

Comments 3:15. As it is written, "to fulfill all righteousness," the Lord Jesus Himself needed to be baptized in water. He is God and human, and this is an example for humans to follow. If the sinless One has to be baptized in water, then all the people who want to follow Jesus must also do so. As is the walk through the gate of death, even so, a person baptizing in the water dies from the old life and becomes a new person in the Lord. The old book of life has been destroyed, and a new book of life starts (See Matthew 12: 30, 36-37). When you merge under the water in the name of the Father, the Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, your soul is touched by the Lord in that water. And when you come out from that water, the Lord becomes the guide of your soul in the unseen world and the master of your life in this world. Water baptism is important for a new believer, but the person must meditate on the Lord's teaching and seek and ask for the Holy Spirit baptism as well; when you have received the Holy Spirit baptism, the Holy Spirit goes through your soul and guides your soul. All humans need to be born of water and the Holy Spirit in order to enter the kingdom of heaven (See John 3:5). Your life living on this earth has to follow according to the master of your life. If you do not baptize in the water, your soul does not have a chance to be counted in (after the Lord's crucifixion, all must be baptized in water). For the soul of a human, the baptism in the water is the same way as a butterfly emerging. The soul itself is wrapped with many layers of sins. When you submerge into the baptism water and when you come out, most of the layers of sins covering your soul are left in the water, and you come out with a purer soul, free; this is the new birth in the spiritual world. However, the Holy Spirit baptism, when it happens, will cleanse the soul thoroughly, making a complete cleansing of your soul.

¹⁶ Now, **Jesus**, having been baptized, ascended immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to **Him**, and **He** saw the **Spirit** of **God** descending as a dove, alighting upon **Him**;

Comments 3:16. The door of heaven was opened to Jesus for the Lord to see His house (the Father's throne); Jesus misses His home. The Father misses His Son. This is a reunion between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (the Trinity of God).

¹⁷ and behold, a voice from out of the heavens, saying, This is **My** beloved **Son**, in whom **I** am well pleased.

Comments 3:17. John saw part of the reunion act between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. All the other people present only heard the voice of the Father. See also Comments Mark 1:9-11.

Life and Faith Applications. 1) The Lord Jesus is identified as the Son of God and the Savior of the world by a man (John the Baptist), by God the Father Himself, and by the Holy Spirit. 2) This chapter testifies to the Trinity

of God (the Father, the Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit), which must be the key foundation of our faith. 3) Your life living on this earth has to follow according to the master of your life. Therefore, as a Christian, you must follow Jesus' example, be baptized in water, and seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit.