Matthew 3:1-12

Holman Christian Standard Bible

**The Messiah’s Herald**

**3**In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Wilderness of Judea **2**and saying, “Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near!” **3**For he is the one spoken of through the prophet Isaiah, who said:

A voice of one crying out in the wilderness:  
Prepare the way for the Lord;  
make His paths straight![[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+3%3A1-12&version=HCSB#fen-HCSB-23196a)]

**4**John himself had a camel-hair garment with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. **5**Then people from Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the vicinity of the Jordan were flocking to him, **6**and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins.

**7**When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to the place of his baptism,[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+3%3A1-12&version=HCSB#fen-HCSB-23200b)] he said to them, “Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? **8**Therefore produce fruit consistent with[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+3%3A1-12&version=HCSB#fen-HCSB-23201c)] repentance. **9**And don’t presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones! **10**Even now the ax is ready to strike the root of the trees! Therefore, every tree that doesn’t produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

**11**“I baptize you with[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+3%3A1-12&version=HCSB#fen-HCSB-23204d)] water for repentance,[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+3%3A1-12&version=HCSB#fen-HCSB-23204e)] but the One who is coming after me is more powerful than I. I am not worthy to remove[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+3%3A1-12&version=HCSB#fen-HCSB-23204f)] His sandals. He Himself will baptize you with[[g](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+3%3A1-12&version=HCSB#fen-HCSB-23204g)] the Holy Spirit and fire. **12**His winnowing shovel[[h](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+3%3A1-12&version=HCSB#fen-HCSB-23205h)] is in His hand, and He will clear His threshing floor and gather His wheat into the barn. But the chaff He will burn up with fire that never goes out.”