

To Be a Disciple

Unit 401: The Appearance of the Magi and John the Baptizer

Matthew 2:13:-3:12

CONTINUITY

A. The Visit of the Wise Men (2:1-12)

1. Scientists, Astrologers, Magicians [Magi]- not "kings"
2. Gentile residents of Babylon or Persia - not Israel
3. Prophetic preaching in spoke of STAR signal birth of Messianic King.
4. **NUMBERS 24:17** (star prophecy)
5. STAR was probably a conjunction of the planets Saturn and Jupiter .
6. **ISAIAH 60:6** (Camels and gifts)
7. **JOHN 19:38-40** (Myrrh for burial of the dead)

B. THE FLIGHT TO EGYPT (2:13-18)

1. Angels - *Signal advance of God's Plan of Salvation*
2. As the New Israel, Jesus replays the history of OT Israel.
3. Hosea 11:1
4. King Herod slaughters the Bethlehem Babies
5. EXODUS 1:15-22

C. THE RETURN TO NAZARETH (2:19-23)

1. EXODUS 4:19 (Safe for Moses to return to Egypt)
2. *Netzer* [Branch] and Nazarene (Isaiah 11:1)

D. JOHN THE BAPTIZER PREPARES THE WAY (3:1-12)

1. Wilderness - Place of prophetic activity
2. REPENT - Hebrew *shuv* (turning around)
3. ISAIAH 40:3 (Jesus and John did similar preaching)
4. John as 'New Elijah' (2 Kings 1:7-8)
5. Water baptism not a new thing (proselyte baptism)
6. Baptism with BOTH Holy Spirit (faith) and FIRE (judgment)

STUDY QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What does it mean that Jesus is the *True Israel*?
2. In what way does Jesus' life differ from the *Old Israel*?
3. What was the main emphasis of Jesus' preaching according to Matthew 3:2?
4. Why would John be preaching *in the wilderness* and his *clothing* stir up such excitement in Israel?
5. What prophecy does John's appearance fulfill according to Matthew?
6. What are some of the *word pictures* that John uses to describe the coming judgment?
7. What is the term John uses to describe the Messiah who would follow him?
8. John said that the Messiah would *baptize people with the Holy Spirit and with fire*. What does that mean?
9. In what way was John's baptism *different* from previous water baptism used by Israel?
10. Why do you think God sent John to prepare the way for Jesus?
11. What do you think our response to this section of Matthew's gospel should be?