

The Gospel According to

SAINT MATTHEW

SAINT MARK

SAINT LUKE

SAINT JOHN

CHAPTER 3, VERSES 13-17¹¹

3:13 - Then cometh Jesus¹ from² Galilee³ to Jordan⁴ unto John⁵, to be baptized⁶ of⁷ him.
3:14 - But John⁵ forbad⁸ him, saying, I have need⁹ to be baptized⁶ of⁷ thee, and comest thou to me¹⁰?
3:15 - And Jesus¹ answering¹² said unto him, Suffer¹³ it to be so¹⁴ now¹⁵: for thus it becometh¹⁶ us to fulfil¹⁷ all¹⁸ righteousness¹⁹. Then he suffered¹³ him.
3:16 - And Jesus¹, when he was baptized⁶, went up²⁰ straightway²¹ out²² of the water²³: and, lo²⁴, the heavens²⁵ were opened²⁶ unto him, and he²⁷ saw²⁸ the Spirit²⁹ of God³⁰ descending³¹ like³² a dove³³, and lighting³⁴ upon³⁵ him:
3:17 - And lo²⁴ a voice³⁶ from heaven²⁵, saying, This³⁷ is my³⁸ beloved³⁹ Son⁴⁰, in whom⁴¹ I am well⁴² pleased⁴³.

CHAPTER 1, VERSES 9-11

1:9 - And it came to pass⁴⁴ in those days⁴⁵, that Jesus¹ came from² Nazareth⁴⁶ of Galilee³, and was baptized⁶ of⁷ John⁵ in Jordan⁴.
1:10 - And straightway²¹ coming up out²² of the water²³, he²⁷ saw²⁸ the heavens²⁵ opened²⁶, and the Spirit²⁹ like³² a dove³³ descending³¹ upon³⁵ him:
1:11 - And there came a voice³⁶ from heaven²⁵, saying, Thou⁴⁸ art⁴⁹ my³⁸ beloved³⁹ Son⁴⁰, in whom⁴¹ I am well⁴² pleased⁴³.

CHAPTER 3, VERSES 21-22

3:21 - Now when⁵⁰ all¹⁸ the people⁵¹ were baptized⁶, it came to pass⁴⁴, that Jesus¹ also being baptized⁶, and praying⁵², the heaven²⁵ was opened²⁶.
3:22 - And the Holy Ghost⁵³ descended³¹ in a bodily⁵⁴ shape⁵⁵ like³² a dove³³ upon³⁵ him, and a voice³⁶ came from heaven²⁵, which said, Thou⁴⁸ art⁴⁹ my³⁸ beloved³⁹ Son⁴⁰; in thee⁵⁶ I am well⁴² pleased⁴³.

CHAPTER 1, VERSES 29-34

1:29 - The next day⁵⁷ John⁵ seeth⁵⁸ Jesus¹ coming unto him, and saith, Behold⁵⁹ the Lamb⁶⁰ of God³⁰, which taketh away⁶¹ the sin⁶² of the world⁶³.
1:30 - This is he of whom I said, After⁶⁴ me cometh⁶⁵ a man⁴⁷ which is preferred⁶⁶ before⁶⁷ me: for he was before⁶⁸ me.
1:31 - And I knew him not⁶⁹: but that he should be made manifest⁷⁰ to Israel⁷¹, therefore am I come baptizing⁶ with water²³.
1:32 - And John⁵ bear⁷³ record⁷⁴, saying, I saw the Spirit²⁹ descending³¹ from heaven²⁵ like³² a dove³³, and it abode⁷⁵ upon³⁵ him.
1:33 - And I knew him not⁶⁹: but he that sent me⁷⁶ to baptize⁶ with water²³, the same said unto me, Upon³⁵ whom thou shalt see the Spirit²⁹ descending³¹, and remaining⁷² on him, the same is he which baptizeth⁶ with the Holy Ghost⁵³.
1:34 - And I saw²⁸, and bear⁷³ record⁷⁴ that this is the Son⁴⁰ of God³⁰.

CHRONOLOGY: About Friday 27 November 26CE or 1st of Tevet, 3787 (according to the Hebrew Calendar)

LOCATION: NAZARETH of Galilee, the road between Nazareth and Bethabara, The Jordon River, Bethabara

COMMENTARY: The forerunner of the Messiah, John the Baptist, was preparing the humble people of Judea by preaching repentance and inviting them to be baptized. Baptism existed among the Jews anciently, but was considered by the Jews of John's time to be reserved for converts only. Descendants of Abraham were considered children of the covenant and they did not believe that they had need of it. John taught otherwise. Many believed John and were baptized by him. As he finished the baptisms at the Jordan, the Messiah arrived asking John to baptize Him. John revealed the Messiah as Jesus of Nazareth. Initially John declined to baptize Jesus, expressing that it would be more fitting for him to be baptized of Jesus. Jesus taught that all righteousness must be fulfilled, and therefore he had need of entering the covenant of baptism and receiving the ordinance. We learn that baptism is much more than a step in the process of forgiveness. When Jesus is baptized, the Holy Ghost descends and the voice of the Father is heard from heaven. We learn that the Godhead is comprised of three separate and distinct beings. The Father bears testimony of the fact that Jesus is His Son, in the flesh. He also expresses His love for Him and His approval of His obedient actions. John then bears testimony that Jesus is the Lamb of God. The Jews sacrificed lambs daily in similitude of the promised Messiah. John's words clearly proclaimed that the Messiah was before them.

FOOTNOTES:

1- **Jesus** – The name "Jesus" comes from the Greek word "Ἰησοῦς" or "Iēsous". The Greek name is actually a transliteration of the Hebrew name "יהושוע" or "Yēhowshuwa". It is the equivalent of the English name "Joshua" or "Jehoshua", which means "Jehovah is salvation". Jesus is the physical and literal Son of God the Father. His mother is Mary. He is the God of the Old Testament. Jesus is the Great I AM. He is Jehovah. Under the direction of His Father, the Great Elohim, Jehovah created the earth and all things thereon. He was born in the flesh with a sacred mission He accepted from His Father. That mission was to be born with a fragile mortal body, overcome the flesh, live a perfect life, and then sacrifice that life for the woes of all mankind. It is this Jesus that we find traveling from Nazareth to John in Bethabara. He was traveling to John as part of His mortal mission. He was executing the demands of perfection, and seeking to be baptized under the proper Priesthood authority.



Unfortunately, we have little to no information available regarding Jesus' life between His visit to the temple at 12 years of age and His appearance in this chapter. We do not know what prompted Jesus to seek out baptism at 30 years of age. Many suspect that the reason is based on Jewish law regarding male priesthood service and age. Males were prohibited to serve as a Priest or Rabbi until he turned 30 years old. It is speculated that Jesus waited to start His ministry until he reached the legal age to do so. It is further speculated that he waited to be baptized until His ministry was legally authorized to start. This speculation is based, at least in part, on the Scripture passage in the Old Testament which reads, "From thirty years old and upward even until fifty years old, all that enter into the host, to do the work in the tabernacle of the congregation." (Numbers 2:3).

2- **from** – The word "from" is translated from the Greek word "ἀπό" or "apo". The word means of separation, physical distance, or of the place whence anything is, comes, befalls or is taken. **"When Jesus 'began to be about thirty years of age,' He journeyed from His home in Galilee 'to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.'"** (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 116). This journey was not happenstance. Jesus traveled a significant distance to find John. The ancient road He would have walked from Nazareth to Bethabara is approximately 124 kilometers or 78 miles in length. It is difficult to say how many days it would have taken to travel this distance. Ancient Travel rates are somewhat speculative and vary by opinion. The author's opinion would place travel by foot at a conservative 11 to 18 miles per day and travel by camel or donkey at 20 to 25 miles per day. Using these estimates, Jesus would have traveled at least 4 days by foot or 3 days by animal. Google Maps calculates the time to walk the ancient road between Nazareth and Bethabara at 25 hours of continuous walking. Such a trip would have been well planned and thought out.

"Jesus was baptized at a spot more than a thousand feet below sea level, the lowest spot on earth where anyone could be baptized in fresh water. He not only descended to our condition; he descended (quite literally) below all things." (The Four Gospels: Verse by Verse, D. Kelly Ogden & Andrew C. Skinner, page 88).

3- **Galilee** – The name "Galilee" is translated from the Greek word "Γαλιλαία" or "Galilaia". Galilee is a transliteration of the Hebrew word "גליל" or "Galiyl". It means circuit or district.

Galilee reaches from the modern Jezreel Valley in the west to the Sea of Galilee in the East. It extends south to Mount Gilboa and North past the waters of Merom. At the time Jesus, Galilee was a Roman Province governed under a Vassal ruler named Herod Antipas. Relatively small, measuring only 50 miles north to south and 25 miles east to west.



When the average person thinks of Israel, he thinks of rocks, barren land, and warm temperatures. Galilee is located in the north of Israel. Galilee was a green, fertile land full of life and prosperity. Speaking of Galilee, the Historian Josephus wrote, **"...Its nature is wonderful as well as its beauty; its soil is so fruitful that all sorts of trees can grow upon it, and the inhabitants accordingly plant all sorts of trees there; for the temper of the air is so well mixed, that it agrees very well with those several sorts, particularly walnuts, which require the coldest air, flourish there in vast plenty; there are palm trees also, which grow best in hot air; fig trees also and olives grow near them, which yet require an air that is more temperate. One may call this place the ambition of nature, where it forces those plants that are naturally enemies to one another to agree together; it is a happy contention of the seasons, as if every one of them laid claim to this country; for it not only nourishes different sorts of autumnal fruit beyond men's expectation, but preserves them a great while; it supplies men with the principal fruits, with grapes and figs**

continually, during ten months of the year and the rest of the fruits as they become ripe together through the whole year" (Wars of the Jews, Flavius Josephus, book 3, chapter 10:8).



The natural beauty and abundance of Galilee attracted a large, racially mixed population who lived in rural towns and villages scattered throughout the hills and along the shores of the Sea of Galilee, the province's largest fresh water lake. In fact, the majority of the population lived around the Sea of Galilee. The Sea provided not only food for the local families, by many families found occupation as fishermen. Josephus recorded that the province of Galilee had 204 villages, each with a population of no less than 15,000 people. Once one does that math, the total population equals three million! Although Josephus was governor of the Galilee for a time, historians believe that his figure was greatly exaggerated. A more reasonable estimate for the time of Jesus would be about 350,000, including a large number of slaves and about 100,000 Jews. The primary language was Greek, which was widely known and spoken throughout the Roman Empire. Greek was the language of the rich and powerful, the language of the Herods; but it was also the language of international business. Many Jews, though, including Jesus and his disciples, spoke Aramaic, the language of the ordinary people. About 400 years before Jesus' time, it became customary, even among rabbis, to teach in Aramaic. It was preferred over Hebrew because it was more highly evolved and more suitable for expressing thoughts and ideas.

Galilee was a quiet place. It was, for the most part, free from the political unrest found in Jerusalem and southern Israel. It was a land of families, and ordinary people. It is no surprise that Galilee was the province that Jesus would have called home. In fact, most of His mortal ministry was spent teaching and performing miracles in the province of Galilee. Jesus dedicated His life to helping the ordinary and the poor. He reached out to the downtrodden and the sick. Galilee is seen by many as a sacred land.

4- **Jordan** – The name "Jordan" is translated from the Greek word "Ἰορδάνης" or "Iordanēs". The name Jordan is a transliteration from the Hebrew name "יַרְדֵּן" or "Yarden". It means the "descender". The meaning of the name is probably a reference to distance the river drops as it travels. The section of the Jordan River in which Jesus was baptized starts at the Sea of Galilee at 690 feet above sea level, and drops 1,986 feet until it empties into the Dead Sea at 1,296 feet below sea level.

There are two separate sections of the Jordan River. The upper Jordan is north of the Sea of Galilee. The section of the Jordan River being referenced in this section is south of the Sea of Galilee. This section has a significant drop in altitude, and the river meanders before entering the Dead Sea, which has no outlet. Two major tributaries enter the Jordan River from the east during this last section: the Yarmouk River and Zarqa River.



The Jordan River was called the Aulon by the Greeks and is sometimes called Al-Sharī' ah ("Watering Place") by the Arabs. The Jordan River proper varies from ninety to one hundred feet (twenty-eight to thirty-one meters) in width, and from three to ten feet (one to three meters) in depth, but the gorge that it has cut out varies in width from four miles

(seven kilometers) at the north to fourteen miles (twenty-three kilometers) near Jericho. The average width of the riverbed is about 98 feet while the depth ranges. During flood times, the Jordan swells to a width of one half mile in certain areas. From the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea the Jordan River is only 65 air miles. Due to its many twists and turns, it is between 165 to 200 miles in actual length.

There were some fifty-four fords on the Jordan which were used in ancient times. The Jordan River Valley, itself, is an extension of the major earthquake fault line known as the Great African Rift Valley that runs through the Red Sea's eastern finger (the Gulf of Aqaba) and Arabah to the Dead Sea. Continuing through the Jordan Valley, Sea of Galilee and the Hulah Valley, it finally ends in Lebanon's Beqah Valley. As part of this great fault line, the Jordan River Valley has experienced numerous earthquakes, many during the Biblical period.

The river and surrounding area did provide an appropriate habitat for a surprisingly wide variety of wild animals in antiquity. Archaeological remains from some of the Jordan Valley's earliest sites suggest the region was once home to elephants, lions, hippopotami, rhinoceroses, leopards, boars, ibexes and alligators. Throughout history, habitation in the Jordan Valley has been a challenge. Settlers have to consider the availability of water, arable land, security and a road system, as well as annual floods and periodic earthquakes.

Owing to its depression below sea-level the climate of the lower Jordan valley is even more than tropical. In the summer months, the thermometer scarcely falls below 100 degrees Fahrenheit, even in the night; but during the winter months, though the days are hot, the thermometer frequently goes down to 40 degrees Fahrenheit in the night time.

No famous river, in history, is so unproductive and useless. It is muddy, full of silt, and winding. "As Professor Glueck has vividly said, 'Squirring frantically, burrowing madly, seeking wildly to escape its fate, the Jordan course, from its crystal clear beginning, to its literal dark and bitter end, is a helpless race to a hopeless goal.' The surface of the Dead Sea is 1292 feet below sea level. The Jordan River proper varies from 90 to 100 feet in width, and from three to ten feet in depth, but the gorge which it has cut out varies from four miles at the north to 14 miles near Jericho." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, page 445).

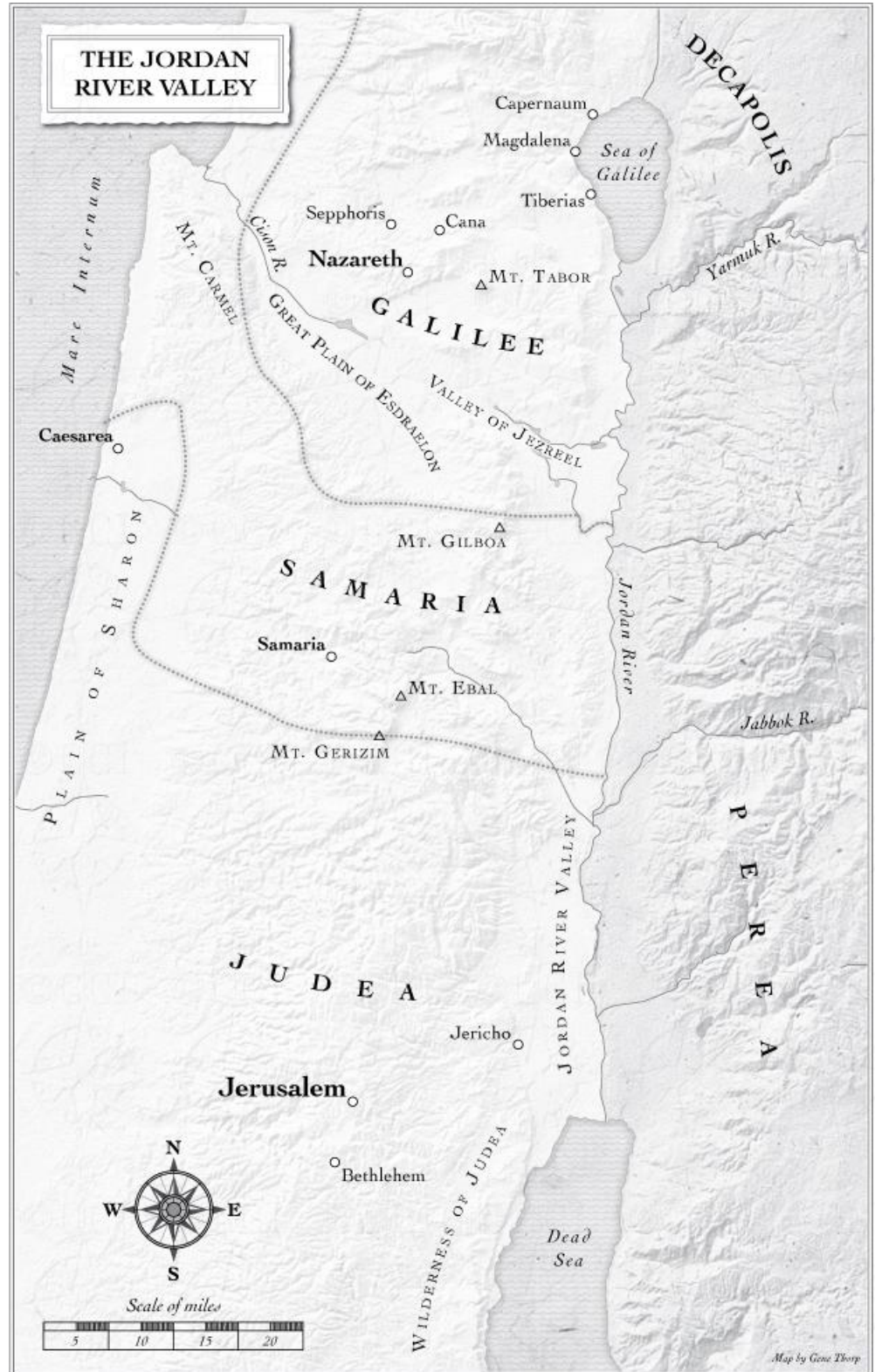
The Jordan River is mentioned some 195 times in the Bible with the majority of the references occurring in the Old Testament. Below are several significant passages that involve the Jordan River;

The Israelites cross the Jordan on dry ground - Joshua 3:14-17

Elijah crosses the Jordan on dry ground - 2 Kings 2:8

Naaman's leprosy is cured in the Jordan - 2 Kings 5:1-14

"Though the largest river of Palestine, the Jordan differs from the great national rivers in the fact that, due to the presence of 17 rapids between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea, it carries no traffic; and because of the swampy conditions of this part of the valley, the terrific heat in many places, and the presence of many wild animals, especially during Israel's history, no large city was ever built on the banks of the Jordan. These factors led George Adam Smith to say with his usual brilliance, 'There may be something on the surface of another planet to match the Jordan Valley; there is nothing on this.'" (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, page 446).

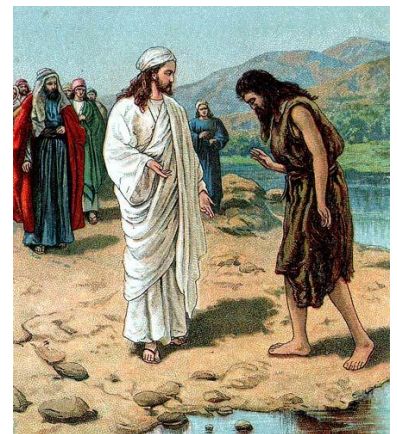




TRADITIONAL SITE OF
JESUS' BAPTISM ON
THE JORDAN RIVER

5 - **John** – The name "John" is translated from the Greek word "Ἰωάννης" or "Iōannēs". The name John is the English form of Johannes, which is transliterated from the Hebrew word "יְהוֹחָנָן" or "Yowchanan" or "Johanan". It means "Jehovah has graced". "John and Jesus were second cousins; as to whether there had existed any close companionship between the two as boys or men we are not told." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 116). "John, at that time, was the only legal administrator in the affairs of the kingdom there was then on the earth, and holding the keys of power. The Jews had to obey his instructions or be damned, by their own law; and Christ Himself fulfilled all righteousness in becoming obedient to the law which he had given to Moses on the mount, and thereby magnified it and made it honorable, instead of destroying it. The son of Zacharias wrested the keys, the kingdom, the power, the glory from the Jews, by the holy anointing and decree of heaven, and these three reasons constitute him the greatest prophet born of a woman." (Scriptural Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Joseph Smith, Arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith, pages 276).

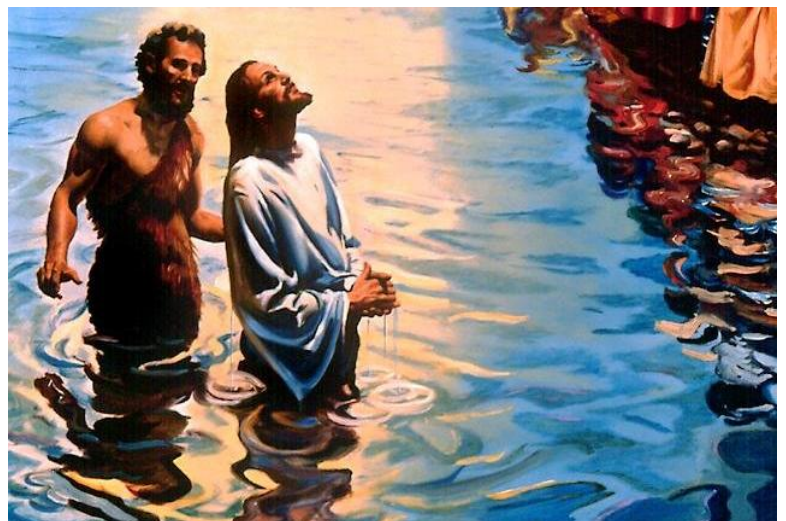
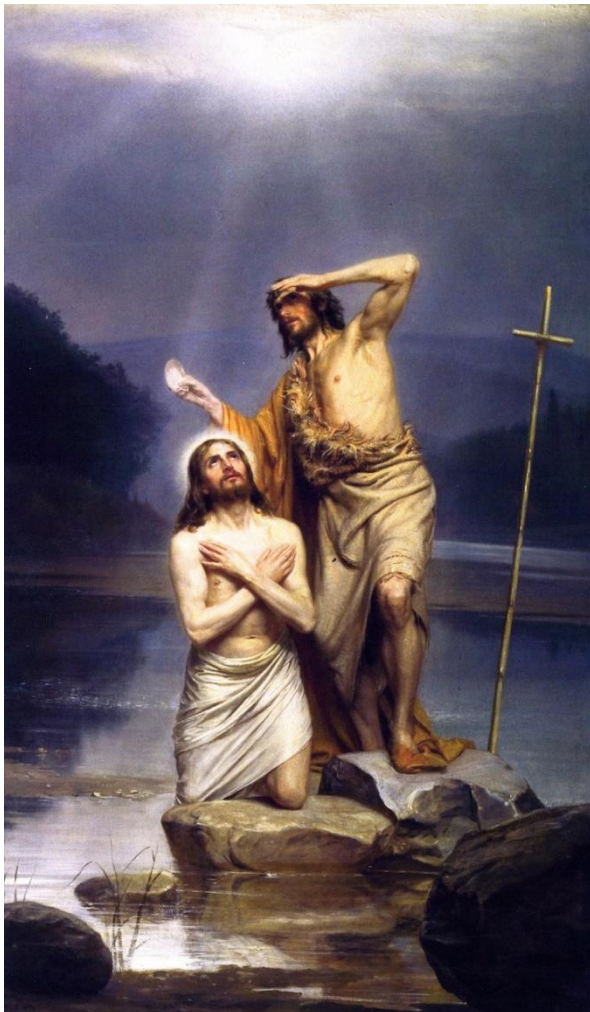
6 - **Baptize (d) (ing) (th)** – The word "baptized" is translated from the Greek word "βαπτίζω" or "baptizō". It means to dip repeatedly, to immerse or to submerge. It can also be used figuratively to mean "overwhelmed". "Instead of Mark's 'and was baptized' (Mark 1:9), Matthew uses 'to' with the infinitive, expressing purpose, this being one of seven such uses of the construction in this gospel." (Matthew: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, page 30). Baptism was more than just a rite of initiation. It has a significant and profound purpose. It is the gateway to all the ordinances of salvation. "Baptism is required of all persons who live to the age of accountability in the flesh. None are exempt. Jesus Christ, who lived as a Man without sin in the midst of a sinful world, was baptized 'to fulfil all righteousness.' Six centuries before this event, Nephi, prophesying to the people on the western continent, foretold the baptism of the Savior, and thus drew there from the necessity of baptism as a universal requirement: 'And now, if the Lamb of God, he being holy, should have need to be baptized by water, to fulfil all righteousness, O then, how much more need have we, being unholy, to be baptized, yea, even by water.... Know ye not that he was holy? But notwithstanding he being holy, he sheweth unto the children of men, that according to the flesh, he humbleth himself before the Father, and witnesseth unto the Father that he would be obedient unto him in keeping his commandments' (Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 31:5, 7). See The Articles of Faith, vi:18-29." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 122).

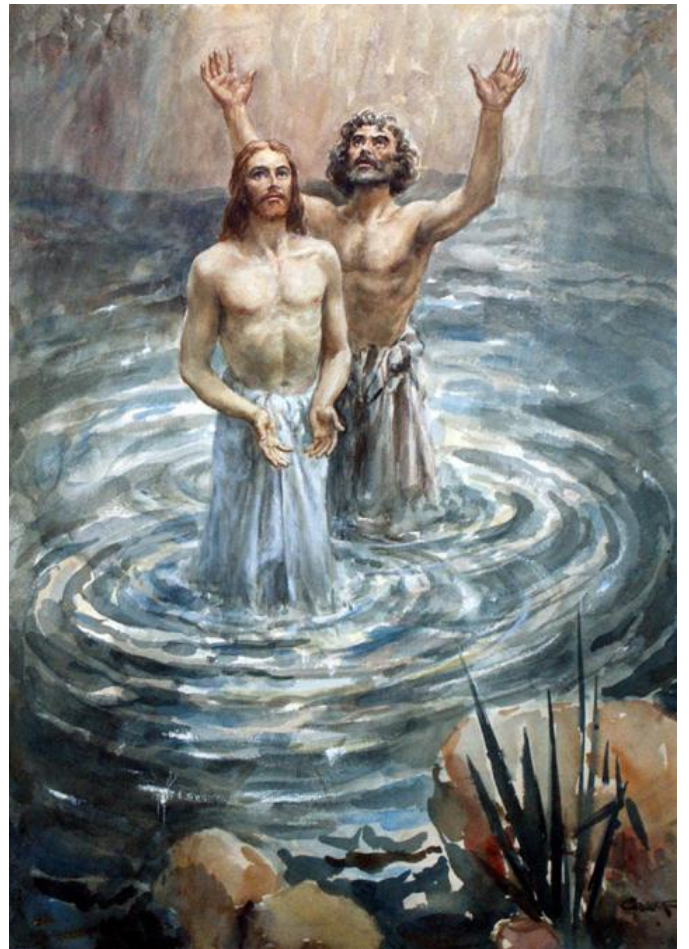
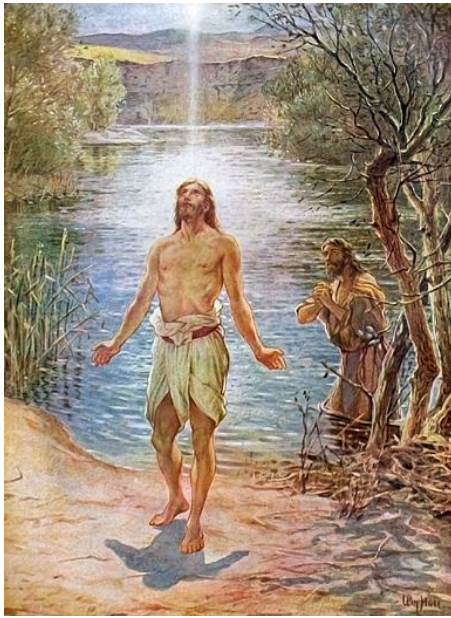


In our age, there is much debate over where baptism originated. Most believe that it started with John. They believe that prior to John, the ordinance of baptism did not exist. They believe this because there is no obvious evidence of baptism in the Old Testament. The Talmud does give pretty specific indications that baptism was practiced. One section reads, "A man who is guilty of sin, and makes confession, and does not turn from it, to whom is he like? To a man who has in his hand a defiling reptile, who, even if he immerses in all the waters of the world, his baptism avails him nothing; but let him cast it from his hand, and if he immerses in only forty seah of water, immediately his baptism avails him." (Talmud, Taan 16a). Unfortunately, evidence of Baptism in the Old Testament is hidden in the translations. "The use of the word *baptizo* in Jewish usage first appears in the Mosaic laws of purification (Exodus 30:17-21; Leviticus 11:25; 15:8; 17:15; Numbers 19:17-18; 31:22-23) where it undeniably means a mere 'washing' or 'cleansing'. In the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, translated into the Hellenistic idiom of the New Testament, the word is used but three times: II Kings 5:14 and Ecclesiasticus 34:25, where the meaning again is that of cleansing, and Isaiah 21:4, where the meaning is obscured." (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, page 96). Because ancient translators chose to translate the word *baptizo* as cleansing and washing, people have chosen to say it doesn't exist. Elder McConkie taught, "Baptism was an established way of life among faithful Jews in John's day. We do not suppose that all of the Jews of that day were baptized, for apostasy was rife and rebellion was common. But among the chosen seed there certainly were many faithful people who were baptized on the same basis and offered sacrifice. 'The Levitical Priesthood is forever hereditary - fixed on the head of Aaron and on his sons forever, and was in active operation down to Zacharias the father of John.' (Teachings, p. 319). This is the priesthood that has power to baptize in water. 'Zacharias was a priest of God, and officiating in the Temple, and John was a priest after his father, and held the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood, and was called of God to preach the Gospel of the kingdom of God.' (Teachings, p. 273). John himself 'was baptized while he was yet in his childhood.' (D&C 84:28). It goes without saying that Zacharias and his fellow priests were baptized. We cannot do other than believe that Elisabeth, Mary, Joseph, Simeon, Anna, the shepherds who heard the heavenly choirs, and hosts of others who waited patiently for the Consolation of Israel who had also partaken of this sacred ordinance, all before the ministry of John began." (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 260).

The BAPTISM OF JESUS CHRIST

By various artists

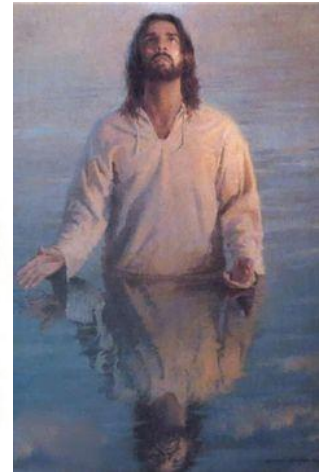




The BAPTISM OF JESUS CHRIST

performed by John the Baptist in the waters of the Jordan River near or at Bethabara





The BAPTISM OF JESUS CHRIST

performed by John the Baptist in the waters of the Jordan River near or at Bethabara



Because most men are living under the precepts and understanding of the dark ages, they cling to doctrines established in the apostasy. They hold to these corrupted beliefs as true doctrine. Consequently, the baptism of Jesus Christ is confusing to them. **"Early Christians, indeed, were rather embarrassed by John's baptism of Jesus, both because of the possible implication of Jesus' sinfulness and because of his apparent subordination to John the Baptist."** (Mark 1-8, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 164). Not fully understanding the ordinance of baptism makes it very difficult to understand why Jesus would need to comply with the ordinance. Baptism is more than a step to forgiveness from sin, but rather a required covenant to enter into God's presence. **"Thus baptism is essential for entry into the kingdom of God (D&C 76:50). It must obviously be performed by those having authority. None are exempt, even the Christ himself being baptized. The authority to baptize was conferred upon Joseph and Oliver on the banks of the Susquehanna River, by John the Baptist; the precise formula to be used in this ordinance had been given shortly before."** (Behold the Lamb of God, J. Reuben Clark, Jr. page 85). The covenant associated with Baptism is one of a solemn promise, made in the flesh, to follow all the commandments and will of the Father of Heaven and Earth. It is key that we each make this promise amid the temptations of our mortal probation. Christ was no different. His baptism was not for the remission of sins, for He had none, but He confirmed His resolved to complete the mission that His Father had given Him.

The Jews knew and understood the ordinance of Baptism, but misunderstood its universal need. They would have considered Jesus exempt from the need for a baptism. **"The Jews knew and used baptism, but only for proselytes who came into Judaism from some other faith. It was natural that the sin stained, polluted proselyte should be baptized, but no Jew had ever conceived that he, a member of the chosen people, a son of Abraham, assured of God's salvation, could never need baptism. Baptism was for sinners, and no Jew ever conceived of himself as a sinner shut out from God, for was he not a son of Abraham and therefore safe for eternity?"** (The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 1, The Daily Study Bible Series, William Barclay, pages 52-53). They did not see the need for a personal covenant, since they felt that the covenant Abraham made with God was sufficient for them. They believed this because they were in a state of apostasy. This incorrect view of baptism has not always existed. Joseph Smith taught, **"In the former ages of the world, before the Savior came in the flesh, "the saints" were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ to come, because there never was any other name whereby men could be saved; and after he came in the flesh and was crucified, then the saints were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, crucified, risen from the dead and ascended into heaven, that they might be buried in baptism like him, and be raised in glory like him, that as there was but one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and father of us all, even so there was but one door to the mansions of bliss."** (Scriptural Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Joseph Smith, Arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith, page 300).

Baptism is a vital and necessary ordinance required for salvation. It is no wonder that in every age or people who engaged in apostasy from the truth, the adversary changed or eliminated the ordinance of baptism. For the Jews of Jesus' time, they believed that baptism was not necessary for them. For the Christians of the Dark ages, they corrupted the form and sacred nature of baptism. They required children to be baptized and introduced the concept of sprinkling. Sprinkling started in order to accommodate the vain imaginations of man.

History and Origin of sprinkle baptism

On an unspecified day in or around the year 253CE, a wealthy and renown man named "Novatian" laid in illness, apparently upon his death-bed. It was common practice of the time for those professing to be Christians to delay baptism until later in life. This was done so that sins could be committed and just prior to death, one could wash away all one's sins and enter into heaven. "Novatian" believed in the necessity of immersion for salvation, and asked his servants to arrange for his baptism as he became old and sick. Unfortunately, when the time came, the clergy arrived to find him unable to leave his bed. Doctors believed him to be so close to death that moving his body would result in his death. There was no way that they could bring his body to the water for immersion. A local "bishop" solved the problem by permitting the substitution of immersion with the pouring of water all about him in his bed. This story was recorded in history by the famous church historian, Eusebius (Church History VI. xliii. 14, 17). It is believed to be the first known historical substitution of "sprinkling" in the place of immersion. Another author, Cyprian, writing close to the time of "Novatian", suggested that the substitution was appropriate in the case of "emergencies" clearly stating, however, that this was an **"accommodation"** and that **"everything else must be in order"** (Epistle 75:12). Since sprinkling or pouring was administered to those bed-fast with infirmities, the practice came to be known as **"clinical baptism"** after the Greek word for bed, **"kline"**. In reference to these exceptional substitutions and others which begin to appear infrequently following this period, we observe that to these writers, "baptism" still meant immersion and to describe another action (such as pouring or sprinkling) another word was used. Clearly, the origin of a substitute for immersion occurred in the context of extraordinary situations, (either the lack of sufficient depth of water or the circumstances of the candidate for baptism). Over time, the practice became more and more common and the exceptions became less and less exceptional. The false doctrine of child baptism was introduced in the 4th century CE. Due to the inherent dangers of immersing infants, clergy once again turned to a sprinkling option for baptism. Sprinkling increased in popularity. In 1,311CE, in the council held in Ravenna, the Pope declared **"the practice of baptism by modes other than immersion was officially legislated as a matter of indifference in any circumstances of conversion"**.



Outside of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, there are many Christian denominations that practice other forms of baptism. They lack the proper authority from heaven, and have lost the proper form. It is interesting that most pictures of Jesus' baptism, from outside the restored church, show Jesus being sprinkled by John. In many instances, John is using a sea shell to scope and pour the water on the Saviors head. **"All Christendom believes, as we suppose, that Jesus was baptized by John with water taken from Jordan. How and why and in what manner the ordinance was performed is a matter of the widest speculation, and, in many quarters, or almost total misunderstanding. In a great cathedral in Curitiba, Brazil, for instance, there is a stained-glass window depicting the baptism by John of the Lord Jesus. John is standing on dry ground on Jordan's bank; Jesus is standing ankle deep in the water itself; and John is pouring a handful of water from a cup onto the divine head."** (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 262).

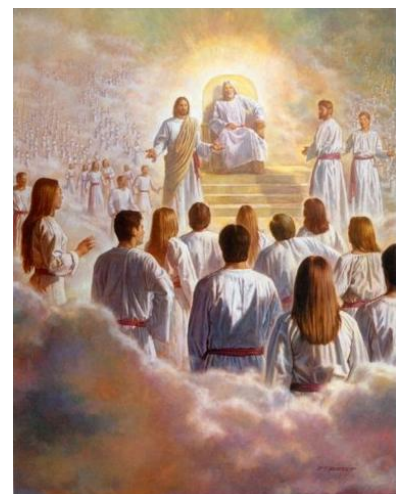
When man seeks to follow God, the ordinances of Salvation are always restored. This was the case at the time of John the Baptist. John was an instrument for restoration. Elder McConkie taught, **"Whenever the Lord's people on either continent enjoyed the fullness of the everlasting gospel, this means that they had faith in Christ, repented of their sins, were baptized for the remission of sins, and had the gift of the Holy Ghost. Whenever they were restricted to the lesser law, the law of Moses, and thus had only the preparatory gospel, they still exercised faith, sought repentance, and subjected themselves to baptism in water, but were unable to obtain the right to the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost."** (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 260).

"We cannot understand 'the baptism of John' - why multitudes flocked to him to receive the sacred ordinances; why even the Lord Jesus insisted on immersion at his hands - unless we know how the law of baptism operated both anciently and among the Jews in his day. It is commonly believed, as we suppose that baptism originated with John; that fired with heavenly zeal, he cried repentance, and baptized - by immersion, sprinkling, pouring, or what have you - for the remission of sins; that such was a new beginning, a new ordinance, a new rite that was then accepted by the so-called first Christians, and by them made a part of the new dispensation.

Such a concept has little comparison to the truth. There was a man named John; he did preach with heavenly zeal, and he did baptize repentant persons. But he did not originate the ordinance of baptism; it neither began nor ended with the son of Zacharias." (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 259).

- 7- **of** – The word "of" is translated from the Greek word "ὑπό" or "hypo". It means by or under. Jesus was baptized physically by John and under the authority of the Priesthood which John held. **"And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron."** (Hebrews 5:4).
- 8- **forbad** – The word "forbad" is translated from the Greek word "διακωλύω" or "diakōlyō". It means to hinder, shut out or prevent. The statement that John "forbad" Jesus when He requested to be baptized of him is given only in Matthew. The other three Gospels are missing this declaration.
- 9- **I have need** – The word "need" is translated from the Greek word "χρεία" or "chreia". It means necessity, need or duty. This phrase has puzzled other Christian denominations and sects. What need did Jesus have for baptism? Barclay wrote, **"A very early writer suggested that Jesus came to be baptized only to please His mother and His brothers, and that it was in answer to their entreaties that He was almost compelled to let this thing be done. The Gospel According to the Hebrews, which is one of the very early gospels which failed to be included in the New Testament, has a passage like this: 'Behold the mother of the Lord and His brethren said to Him, 'John the Baptist baptizeth for the remission of sins; let us go and be baptized by him'. But He said to them, 'What sin have I committed, that I should go and be baptized by him? Except perchance this very thing that I have said is ignorance.'** It can be seen that from the very earliest times thinkers were puzzled by the fact that Jesus submitted to be baptized." (The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 1, The Daily Study Bible Series, William Barclay, page 52). One can easily see that the true nature and purpose of baptism had been lost. Jesus had need to enter into the same covenant required for exaltation that we do. His perfection did not negate His need for baptism. We all need the saving ordinance of baptism regardless of who we are or how worthy we are. Those of us who have sinned have an additional need of baptism as it is also part of the repentance process.
- 10- **comest thou to me** – The word "comest" is translated from the Greek word "ἔρχομαι" or "erchomai". It means to come from one place to another. It is used metaphorically to convey the idea of showing oneself or something, to make something known or to come into being. Jesus understood that John held the Priesthood and was authorized by Heaven to Baptize. For this reason, Jesus "comest" to John. He came a long way, about 78 miles. No one else would do. Even John appeared taken back by the fact that Jesus had traveled so far to be baptized at his hand.
- 11- **Joseph Smith Translation for Matthew 3:13-17** – **"And Jesus, answering, said unto him, Suffer me to be baptized of thee, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And John went down into the water and baptized him. And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and John saw, and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Jesus. And lo, he heard a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him."** (Joseph Smith Translation of Matthew 3:43-46).
- 12- **Answering** – The word "answering" is translated from the Greek word "ἀποκρίνομαι" or "apokrinomai". It means to give an answer to a question proposed, or to just make a remark preceding something that was said or done. Jesus answered John's statement that it was John that had need to be baptized of Jesus, not the other way around. John was so confident in this opinion that he "forbad" Jesus. Jesus answered John. It is interesting in that Jesus is literally the answer to all the relevant issues associated with mortality. The Book of Mormon teaches, **"Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered."** (2nd Nephi 2:7). It was to this end that Jesus was to be baptized. He would covenant in the flesh to complete His mission here one earth, and answer the demands of justice by extending mercy to all mankind.
- 13- **Suffer** – The word "suffer" is translated from the Greek word "ἀφήμι" or "aphiēmi". It means to send away, or to bid to go away. The Savior was asking that John refrain from requiring or ask that He leave. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word "suffer" with "permit". (Codex Sinaiticus, Discovered by Constantine Tischendorf, Translated by H.T. Anderson, page 17). Jesus' request has more meaning than lies on the surface. He wanted John to permit His baptism. Helaman wrote his brother Moroni and said, **"But I would not suffer them that they should break this covenant which they had made, supposing that God would strengthen us, insomuch that we should not suffer more because of the fulfilling the oath which they had taken."** (Alma 56:8). Jesus was asking John to allow Him to honor His Father's will, and let Him enter the covenant of baptism. Jesus needed the strength that comes with the making and keeping of covenants. Perhaps this is why He "suffered" to make this covenant before starting His official ministry. The Lord taught Joseph Smith that **"There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated— And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated."** (Doctrine and Covenants 130:20-21). Jesus needed the blessings of heaven associated with baptism, among which is the companionship of the Holy Ghost.
- 14- **it to be so** – The phrase "it to be so now" is translated from a single Greek word; "ἄρτι" or "arti". It means just now, at this very time, or this moment. Jesus knew that the time had come for His ministry to begin. The moment of His baptism had arrived.
- 15- **now** – The urgency of the Lord's time line is depicted with the word "now". Jesus waited patiently for His ministry to begin. We are not told what the circumstances were that prompted the start of His ministry; but it is safe to say that He was directed from on High. Once word was given, the time was now.
- 16- **for thus it becometh** – The word "becometh" is translated from the Greek word "πρέπω" or "prepō". It means to stand out, to be conspicuous, to be eminent, seemly, or fit. Ammon taught, **"Thus God has provided a means that man, through faith, might work mighty miracles; therefore he becometh a great benefit to his fellow beings."** (Mosiah 8:18). Jesus is and was the prime example of this. The Father's plan extends opportunity for all men to exhibit faith and enter covenants. The effects of such covenants bring about mighty change and the works of heaven. Miracles proceed. All mankind benefit from those that follow Father's plan. Jesus was no exception, in fact, He is the model for all to follow.
- 17- **fulfil** – The word "fulfil" is translated from the Greek word "πληρῶω" or "plērōō". The Greek word means to make full, to liberally supply, to complete, or to carry into effect matters of duty, promises, prophesy, and obedience to laws. The statement that Christ was submitting to baptism to "fulfil all righteousness" is given only in Matthew. The other three Gospels are missing this declaration.

The word "fulful" or "fulfill", has interesting connotation, and requires some background. That which was needed to be fulfilled was established long before the world was created. **"It was the design of the councils of heaven before the world was, that the principles and laws of the priesthood should be predicated upon the gathering of the people in every age of the world. Jesus did everything to gather the people, and they would not be gathered, and He therefore poured out curses upon them. Ordinances instituted in the heavens before the foundation of the world, in the priesthood, for the salvation of men, are not to be altered or changed. All must be saved on the same principles."** (Scriptural Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith, page 308). Jesus filled the role of Savior and Redeemer. He, and He alone, would fulfill the Father's great plan of salvation of His children. It was necessary that Jesus not only offered Himself as an atonement for the sins of mankind, but that he did so as a perfect and worthy sacrifice. This required that he entered into the covenant of baptism. He was required to submit to every ordinance established under heaven.



The understanding of the Savior and the understanding of the Jews, with regard to the fulfillment of the ordinance of baptism, was quite different. Jesus knew it was an ordinance that was required by heaven to be fulfilled of all men, including Him. The Jewish understanding was somewhat apostate. Edersheim gives us some insight into their understanding. He wrote, "Hitherto the Law had it, that those who had contracted Levitical defilement were to immerse before offering sacrifice. Again, it was prescribed that such Gentiles as became 'proselytes of righteousness,' or 'proselytes of the Covenant' (Geray hatsedeq or Geray habberith), were to be admitted to full participation in the privileges of Israel by the threefold rites of circumcision, baptism, and sacrifice - the immersion being, as it were, the acknowledgment and symbolic removal of moral defilement, corresponding to that of Levitical uncleanness. But never before had it been proposed that Israel should undergo a 'baptism of repentance,' although there are indications of a deeper insight into the meaning of Levitical baptisms. Was it intended, that the hearers of John should give this as evidence of their repentance, that, like persons defiled, they sought purification, and, like strangers, they sought admission among the people who took on themselves the Rule of God? These two ideas would, indeed, have made it truly a 'baptism of repentance.' But it seems difficult to suppose, that the people would have been prepared for such admissions; or, at least, that there should have been no record of the mode in which a change so deeply spiritual was brought about. May it not rather have been that as, when the first Covenant was made, Moses was directed to prepare Israel by symbolic baptism of their persons and their garments, so the initiation of the new Covenant, by which the people were to enter into the Kingdom of God, was preceded by another general symbolic baptism of those who would be the true Israel, and receive, or take on themselves, the Law from God? In that case the rite would have acquired not only a new significance, but be deeply and truly the answer to John's call. In such case also, no special explanation would have been needed on the part of the Baptist, nor yet such spiritual insight on that of the people as we can scarcely suppose them to have possessed at that stage." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Alfred Edersheim, page 675-676).

18 - **all** – The word "all" is translated from the Greek word "πᾶς" or "pas". It means each, every, any, all, the whole, everyone, all things, or everything. In a collective sense it means some of all types. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word "all" with "every". (Codex Sinaiticus, Discovered by Constantine Tischendorf, Translated by H.T. Anderson, page 17). Jesus sent a powerful message when He proclaimed that He would fulfill "all" righteousness. The idea that we can pick and choose the covenants and ordinances of the kingdom is deceptive and dangerous. All accountable mortal beings are required to be baptized. BYU professors clarified, "**Baptism was a law given to God's covenant people from the beginning; it was a law that all must keep.**" (The Four Gospels: Verse by Verse, D. Kelly Ogden & Andrew C. Skinner, page 86).

19 - **righteousness** – The word "righteousness" is translated from the Greek word "δικαιοσύνη" or "dikaiosynē". It means a condition acceptable to God. It is a state of integrity, virtue, purity of life, rightness, correctness in thinking, feeling and acting. It is obedience to all of God's laws. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word "righteousness" with "righteous act". (Codex Sinaiticus, Discovered by Constantine Tischendorf, Translated by H.T. Anderson, page 17). Since righteousness is clearly defined as a condition that is acceptable to God, it follows that only God can define what is righteous and what is not. Mankind cannot arbitrarily dictate what God wants. Sadly, we often do. Reality is that if we want to be a righteous people, we must understand clearly what God's will is.

People have been perplexed by Jesus' decision to be baptized, since he was without sin. What they have failed to understand is that God has required that all partake in the covenant and saving ordinance of baptism. Elder McConkie wrote, "**Why was Jesus baptized? Not for the remission of sins for he was the one sinless person, the one person whose thoughts were pure, whose heart knew no guile, whose lips gave forth no improper words, and whose every act was in perfect harmony with the divine will of his Father. Yet baptism was required of him. Why? Nephi gives four reasons as to how our Lord fulfilled all righteousness in being baptized: (1) He humbled himself before the Father; (2) He covenanted to be obedient and keep the Father's commandments; (3) He had to be baptized to gain admission to the celestial kingdom; and (4) He set an example for all men to follow.** (2nd Nephi 31:4-11) To fulfill all righteousness is to perform every ordinance, keep every commandment, and do every act necessary to the attainment of eternal life." (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1, The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 123). In another work, he wrote, "...Nephi asks how the Lamb of God, he being holy and needing no remission of sins, fulfilled all righteousness by being immersed in Jordan by John. His answer falls into five parts, and Jesus was baptized for these reasons;



STAINED GLASS WINDOW
FROM THE NAUVOO TEMPLE

1. To signify his humility before the father;
2. As a covenant of obedience;
3. To receive the gift of the Holy Ghost;
4. To gain an inheritance in the celestial kingdom;
5. As an example to all men". (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 263-264).

20 - **went up** – The phrase "went up" is translated from a single Greek word "ἀναβαίνω" or "anabainō". It means to ascend, to be raised, or to go up. Jesus ascended out of the water. He was baptized by immersion, not sprinkled or poured upon.

21 - **straightway** – The word "straightway" is translated from the Greek word "εὐθύς" or "euthys". It means immediately or forthwith. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word "straightway" with "immediately". (Codex Sinaiticus, Discovered by Constantine Tischendorf, Translated by H.T. Anderson, page 17). Jesus was immersed under the water, and immediately raised from the water. This is the proper technique for baptism; however it must also follow a heavenly pattern. The proper Priesthood must be invoked, the candidate must be deemed worthy by the Priesthood, and the words uttered by Priesthood authority are dictated by heaven.

The Jews practiced a form of baptism for converts, though there are nuisances that are foreign to us. Elder McConkie wrote, "**As to how baptisms were performed for proselytes, Edersheim says: 'The person to be baptized, having cut his hair and nails, undressed completely, made fresh profession of his faith before what were designated 'the fathers of the baptism', and then immersed completely, so that every part of the body was touched by the water. The rite would, of course, be accomplished by exhortations and benedictions...It was indeed a great thing when...a stranger sought shelter under the wings of the Shekhinah, and the change of condition which he underwent was regarded as complete....As he stepped out of these waters he was considered as 'new born' - in the language of the Rabbis, as if he were 'a little child just born'...The past, with all that had belonged to it, was past, and he was a new man the old, with its defilements, was buried in the waters of baptism.'** (Edersheim 2:745-746)." (The Mortal Messiah, Volume 1, Collector's Edition, Bruce R. McConkie, page 261).

22 - **out of** – The phrase "out of" is translated from a single Greek word "ἀπό" or "apo". It means to be separated from something, to be taken out of, depart from, or flee from. "**Luke omits the mention of the coming out of the water.**" (The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 483). The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the words "out of" with "up from". (Codex Sinaiticus, Discovered by Constantine Tischendorf, Translated by H.T. Anderson,

page 17). This again is indication that Baptism was performed by immersion. **"Upon being baptized Jesus 'went up straightway out of the water', suggesting total immersion as the proper method of baptism"** (The Four Gospels: Verse by Verse, D. Kelly Ogden & Andrew C. Skinner, page 88).

The Jews knew of no other baptism other than immersion. Their failing was ignoring the fact that all mankind, who were at the age of accountability, were required to receive the ordinance. The Church of the dark ages accepted that baptism was required, but they required that even children were to be baptized or considered damned. They also corrupted the form of baptism and added sprinkling and pouring. Elder McConkie taught, **"As every informed person knows, Jesus was baptized by immersion. Baptism means immersion. There was no thought of any other mode or form of baptism in the Church our Lord set up until after that Holy Organization had fallen prey to the doctrine of men and of devils. (1st Nephi 13)."** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1, The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 124).

23 - water – The word "water" is translated from the Greek word "ὑδωρ" or "hydōr". It means any water or body of water. It can mean ocean, sea, river, or pool of water. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the words "with water" with "in water". (Codex Sinaiticus, Discovered by Constantine Tischendorf, Translated by H.T. Anderson, page 165). **"According to the ancients, the world consists of four basic elements: fire, air, earth, and water. The ethereal elements, fire and air, are associated with the heavens and the divine; the solid earth with humankind. Water is the transitional medium, the channel between realms. In most religions, from ancient times to the present, water is used symbolically for rites of passage, spiritual purification rituals, and sacred ceremonies. Water is also an agent of change, causing dissolution of matter, and by extension, spirit."** (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 187). Water is associated with creation, and life. It is often connected with a woman (because of mortal birth) or God (because of creation and rebirth). (An Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 188)

24 - lo – The word "lo" is translated from the Greek word "ἰδοὺ" or "idou". It means behold, see, or lo. It is used in a style of speech to alert or bid the reader or hearer you attend to what is said. In a way, it is a manner of saying what is going to follow is very important, Listen up. What follows is the testimony of God the Father. It is one of the few places in scripture that we record the voice of the Father of Heaven.

25 - heaven (s) – The term "heaven" is translated from the Greek word "οὐρανός" or "ouranos". It literally means the vaulted expanse of the sky with all things visible in it. It is used to reference the abode God, or the place where He resides.



26 - opened – In the Gospel according to Matthew and Luke, the word "opened" is translated from the Greek word "ἀνοίγω" or "anoigō". It means to open. The Gospel according to Mark used a different Greek word which has been translated as opened. Mark uses "σχίζω" or "schizō, which means to cleave asunder, divide by rending, or split into factions. **"This harsh word is not the usual one for the opening of heavens in visionary contexts."** (Mark 1-8, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 159). The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word "opened" with "rent". (Codex Sinaiticus, Discovered by Constantine Tischendorf, Translated by H.T. Anderson, page 69). **"In Mark, then, God has ripped the heavens irrevocably apart at Jesus' baptism, never to shut them again. Through this gracious gash in the universe, he has poured forth his Spirit into the earthly realm."** (Mark 1-8, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 165).

Jesus broke the bands of death, both spiritually and physically, with His atonement. His baptism represented a covenant or promise made with heaven that He would fulfill that mission. Jesus made a covenant at baptism, as do all that are baptized, that He would keep the commandments and follow the will of His Father in heaven. It would make sense that the heavens were rent at that point since He promised to reunite man with heaven. Why then were the heavens rent at His baptism? Regardless of our agreements in the pre-earth existence, we are required to covenant with the Lord in the flesh to follow Him here on earth and fulfill the measure of our creation. When Jesus entered the waters of baptism, He made that covenant, a covenant that bound Him to His Messianic mission. He reaffirmed His acceptance of the mission He accepted before mortality. Jesus' baptismal covenant would result in the great atonement for all mankind. It would rent the barrier between man and heaven. Baptism was the symbol of His mortal resolved. **"After ages of alienation, heaven itself has drawn near; the barrier between it and earth has been ripped apart, the power of the new age has begun to flood the earth, and 'the Father's voice spreads everywhere'."** (Mark 1-8, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 166).

27 - he – The word "he" is implied in the sentence and does not have a Greek word that it was translated from.

28 - saw – The word "saw" is translated from the Greek word "εἶδω" or "eidō". It means to see, to perceive with the eyes, or to perceive by any of the senses. The presence of the Holy Ghost was seen and felt. The third member of the Godhead came upon the Savior as a consequence of His baptism.

29 - the Spirit – The word "spirit" is translated from the Greek word "πνεῦμα" or "pneuma". The word is often used to refer to the divine body that houses our intelligences. It is a body in the literal sense, but more refined than that of our mortal physical bodies. Prior to mortality God created spiritual bodies for the intelligences that he organized. Such "spiritual" bodies, when housed in a mortal body form a living soul. The term can also be used in a much narrower scope to refer to the Holy Ghost or "the" spirit. The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead and is covered in more detail in footnote #53 of this chapter. Each of the Gospels has a slightly different description of the manifestation of the Holy Ghost.

Matthew 3:16	Mark 1:10	Luke 3:22	John 1:33
"the spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him"	"the spirit like a dove descending upon him"	The Holy Ghost descending in a bodily shape like a dove upon him"	"the spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him."

30 - God – The term "God" is translated from the Greek word "θεός" or "theos". The word is a generic word for deity; however, it is mostly used to refer to the only true and living God.

31 - descending – The word "descending" is translated from the Greek word "καταβαίνω" or "katabainō". It means to go down, to come down, or descend. Metaphorically, it means to go or be cast down into a lower state of existence. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word "descending" with "coming down". (Codex Sinaiticus, Discovered by Constantine Tischendorf, Translated by H.T. Anderson, page 69). The Holy Ghost descended from the royal courts on High to the mortal realm as a result of the righteous acts of Jesus.

This seems to be an appropriate time to discuss the concept of the Godhead. The world we live in has a difficult time comprehending the Godhead. Much of the Christian world follows a definition developed by men at the First Council held in Nicæe in 325CE by a developing and forming Catholic Church. Subsequent Churches have tried to redefine this creed; however, all other Christian Churches define the Godhead with this creed as their origins. Only a restored church has different origins. The Nicene creed reads as follows;

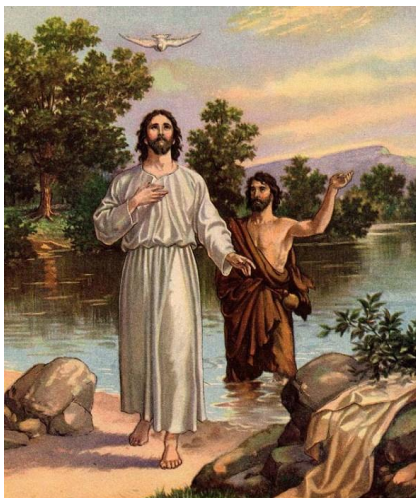
"We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten of his Father, of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten (γεννηθέντα), not made, being of one substance (ὁμοούσιον, consubstantialem) with the Father. By whom all things were made, both which be in heaven and in earth. Who for us men and for our salvation came down [from heaven] and was incarnate and was made man. He suffered and the third day he rose again, and ascended into heaven. And he shall come again to judge both the quick and the dead. And [we believe] in the Holy Ghost. And whosoever shall say that there was a time when the Son of God was not (ἦν ποτε ὅτε οὐκ ἦν), or that before he was begotten he was not, or that he was made of things that were not, or that he is of a different substance or essence [from the Father] or that he is a creature, or subject to change or conversion — all that so say, the Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes them." (The Nicene Creed, 325CE).



Most of the Christian world believes that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost are actually one singular God and that there is no distinction other than the role being executed at any specific moment in time. The restored Church of Jesus Christ teaches that the Godhead is comprised of three separate and distinct beings with a united purpose. The truthfulness of this doctrine can be seen at the baptism of Jesus. **"Our Lord's baptism is one of the classical illustrations of the separate and distinct individualities who comprise the eternal Godhead. Jesus is present in mortality; the personage of the Holy Ghost is seen descending from heaven to be with him; and the voice of the Father is heard introducing his Son to the world."** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1, The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, pages 124). This does not oppose the concept that there is only one God. We have but one Father in Heaven. He is the true and living God. Joseph Smith taught, **"There is much said about God and the Godhead. The scriptures say there are Gods many and Lords many, but to us there is but one living and true God, and the heaven of heavens could not contain him; for he took the liberty to go into other heavens. The teachers of the day say that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and they are all in one body and one God. Jesus prayed that those that the Father had given him out of the world might be made one in them, as they were one [one in spirit, in mind, in purpose]. If I were to testify that the Christian world were wrong on this point, my testimony would be true. Peter and Stephen testify that they saw the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God. Any person that had seen the heavens opened knows that there are three personages in the heavens who hold the keys of power, and one presides over all. If any man attempts to refute what I am about to say, after I have made it plain, let him beware."** (Scriptural Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Joseph Smith, Arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith, pages 311-312).

32 - like – The word "like" is translated from the Greek word "ὡσεὶ" or "hōsei". It means as though, as, like, like as, or as it were. **"All four gospel authors record that the Spirit descended 'like a dove'; Luke adds that he also came in 'bodily shape'; and the Book of Mormon accounts say he came 'in the form of a dove'.** (1st Nephi 11:27, 2nd Nephi 31:8). Joseph Smith said that John 'led the Son of God into the waters of baptism, and had the privilege of beholding the Holy Ghost descend in the form of a dove, or rather in the sign of the dove, in witness of that administration'." (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1, The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, pages 123-124).

33 - a dove – The term "dove" is translated from the Greek word "περιστερά" or "peristera". It means literally "a dove". **"The dove is a symbol of gentleness."** (The Gospel of Mark, The Daily Study Bible Series, William Barclay, page 20). **"Throughout the world, the dove, traditionally depicted as white, symbolizes purity, vulnerability, and innocence. It is also a traditional symbol of fidelity and affection. Like all birds, the dove symbolizes the soul striving towards God. In Jewish tradition, the dove similarly symbolizes purity, innocence and beauty."** (The Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, Ellen Frankel and Betsy Platkin Teutsch, page 41). **"Why a dove should be the symbol of the Spirit is not totally clear. Perhaps the hovering of the spirit over the primeval waters in Genesis 1:2 may have suggested the hovering of a bird; this observation appears in Jewish tradition."** (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Anchor Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 57).



The fact that the Holy Ghost descended in the form of a dove has caused much confusion, especially since the world struggles to understand the basic definition of the Godhead. Elder Talmage helps us understand that the dove is more of a sign than the actual Holy Ghost himself. He wrote, **"John the Baptist ... had the privilege of beholding the Holy Ghost descend in the form of a dove, or rather in the sign of the dove, in witness of that administration. The sign of the dove was instituted before the creation of the world, a witness for the Holy Ghost, and the devil cannot come in the sign of a dove. The Holy Ghost is a personage, and is in the form of a personage. It does not confine itself to the form of the dove, but in sign of the dove. The Holy Ghost cannot be transformed into a dove; but the sign of a dove was given to John to signify the truth of the deed, as the dove is an emblem or token of truth and innocence."**—From Sermon by Joseph Smith, History of the Church, vol. 5, pp. 260-261." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 129).



Since Elder Talmage referenced a sermon made by Joseph Smith on the matter of the Holy Ghost, it would be prudent to look at the words he uttered. Speaking of John the Baptist, Joseph said, "He was entrusted with the important mission, and it was required at his hands, to baptize the Son of Man. Whoever had the honor of doing that? Whoever had so great a privilege and glory? Whoever led the Son of God into the waters of baptism, and had the privilege of beholding the Holy Ghost descend in the form of a dove, or rather in the sign of the dove, in witness of that administration? The sign of the dove was instituted before the creation of the world, a witness for the Holy Ghost, and the devil cannot come in the sign of a dove. The Holy Ghost is a personage, and is in the form of a personage. It does not confine itself to the form of the dove, but in sign of the dove. The Holy Ghost cannot be transformed into a dove; but the sign of a dove was given to John to signify the truth of the deed, as the dove is an emblem or token of truth and innocence." (Scriptural Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Joseph Smith, Arranged by Joseph Fielding Smith, pages 275-276). It would appear that a dove was never the bodily form of the Holy Ghost, but that the dove was used to represent or symbolize the presence of the Holy Ghost.

So why is the sign of the Holy Ghost a dove? Where did that come from? "What is the significance of the dove symbolism? Pesch (1,9) points out that a bird makes an appropriate symbol for the spirit because it can cross the barrier between heaven and earth, but this does not explain why a dove rather than some other bird is used." (Mark 1-8, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible,

Joel Marcus, page 159). "The precise significance of the dove has been the subject of much discussion. Elaborate surveys of the attempts to identify the origin of the symbol can be found...The chief explanations, which appeal to Old Testament or Jewish backgrounds are the following;

- (a) The Spirit is compared to a dove because the 'Spirit of God' was likened to a bird soaring over the waters of the deep in the first creation account (Genesis 1:2); it would then be a symbol of a new creation.
- (b) It is compared to the dove released by Noah (Genesis 8:8) after the flood; it would then be a symbol of a new beginning or of deliverance.
- (c) It has been compared to Yahweh stirring up his people to a new exodus as an eagle stirs its nestlings (Deuteronomy 32:11).

...At any rate there is no passage in the older literature in which the dove would be a clear and distinct symbol for the Holy Spirit." (The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 483-484). "Thus, an actual dove was also present at Jesus' baptism. The sign of the dove, as an emblem for the Holy Ghost, was a pre-appointed signal by which John knew he was to recognize the Son of God' (LDS Bible Dictionary, 'John the Baptist', page 714). 'The personage of the Holy Ghost descended upon Christ with the grace of a dove, which imagery is chosen because the dove was present - it being the visible or outward sign of the presence of the Holy Ghost.' (McConkie and Ostler, Revelation of the Restoration, page 673)." (The Four Gospels: Verse by Verse, D. Kelly Ogden & Andrew C. Skinner, page 89).

34 - lighting – The term "lighting" is translated from the Greek word "ἐρχομαι" or "erchomai". It means to come, to appear, to make one's appearance, or to come before the public. It is used metaphorically to convey the idea of being established, to come forth or to find place or influence. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word "lighting" with "coming". (Codex Sinaiticus, Discovered by Constantine Tischendorf, Translated by H.T. Anderson, page 17).

It is clear that the Holy Ghost came and rested upon Jesus. This was a natural result of the covenant of Baptism, as the gift of the Holy Ghost naturally follows. The term "lighting" may just be a poor translation for the word "came" or "appeared". Even so, there is a correlation between the appearance of heaven and light. Even if the wording is just coincidental, there are several scriptures that connect the spirit to light. The most obvious is the appearance of the Godhead to the prophet Joseph Smith. Joseph records, "I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me. It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!" (Joseph Smith History 1:16-17). In the Book of Acts, Luke relates the story of the Apostle Paul as he saw the heavens opened and the Lord appeared before him. He said, "At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me." (Acts 26:13). Finally, the Great Prophet Isaiah wrote, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." (Isaiah 60:1).



35 - upon – The word "upon" is translated from the Greek word "ἐπί" or "epi". It means upon, on, at, or before. "Luke avoids the Marcan eis auton, literally 'into him', using instead ep' auton, 'upon him' as does Matthew 3:16." (The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 484).

36 - voice – The word "voice" is translated from the Greek word "φωνή" or "phōnē". It means a sound, a tone, a voice, or speech. It is often used to mean the sound of uttered words. "Literally, 'and there was a voice from heaven'. The idea of the God of Heaven speaking to his people is found in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 4:10-12). The 'voice' of the Lord was often associated with the thunder-clap (Isaiah 30:30-31; Psalms 18:14), thus stressing its heavenly origin. This Old Testament notion has been carried over into the New Testament." (The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 485).

"The voice of the Father was heard from heaven. Therefore, all three Beings in the Godhead were present. Where in all the universe would the other Two have wanted to be when the Son was baptized?" (The Four Gospels: Verse by Verse, D. Kelly Ogden & Andrew C. Skinner, page 88). The baptism of Jesus Christ was an important step in Father's plan for all of His children. The fact that He was present shows not only His support for His Son, but for all His sons, and daughters.

The fact that the voice of the Father of Heaven was heard is testimony to the true nature of the Godhead. The Father is obviously separate from the Son, and He bears testimony of who Jesus is from the distant Heavens. "For those who have been taught that the Trinity is 'three in one and one in three,' these verses are highly instructive. Here

was Jesus - as a mortal being - coming out of the water, while the Holy Ghost came down out of heaven; and the voice of the Father was heard coming out of heaven, assuring John that this was his Beloved Son." (The Days of the Living Christ, Volume 1, W. Cleon Skousen, page 80).

There are few places, in available scripture, that we can reference the voice of our Father in Heaven. In most of the cases, the message is the same; the Father testifies of the Son. "The voice of the Father is heard on rare and sacred occasions in this Telestial world. For example, his voice was heard at the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:5), in announcing his Son to the Nephites (3rd Nephi 11:7), and in presenting his Son to Joseph Smith (Joseph Smith - History 1:17). When the Father does come, he comes to say on specific thing: 'This is my Son.' Why does he testify of this one, single fact? Because that is the most important thing he could say, the most needed testimony he could bear." (The Four Gospels: Verse by Verse, D. Kelly Ogden & Andrew C. Skinner, page 88). Below are the scriptural accounts of the Father;

On the Mount of Transfiguration

"And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him." (Mark 9:7).

"While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him. And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen." (Luke 9:34-36).

In the Sacred Grove

"...One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!" (Joseph Smith History 1:17)

At the Temple in Bountiful

"Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name—hear ye him." (3rd Nephi 11:7)

The Jews referred to the "Voice of Heaven" as "Bath-Qol". It was a voice that they longed for, but had long since been quite. Their state of apostasy and wickedness had silenced Heaven and offended the Holy Ghost. Even so, there was a movement among the humble Jews to find God. Joseph and Mary were part of this movement. Every time that the people humbled themselves and sought the Lord, he reveals himself. Edersheim wrote, "We make bold to maintain that no one, who has impartially examined the matter, could find any real analogy between the so-called Bath-Qol, and the 'Voice from heaven' of which record is made in the New Testament. However opinions might differ, on one thing all were agreed: the Bath-Qol had come after the voice of prophecy and the Holy Ghost had ceased in Israel, and, so to speak, had taken, their place. But at the Baptism of Jesus the descent of the Holy Ghost was accompanied by the Voice from Heaven." (The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Alfred Edersheim, page 693). The Jews recognized the "Voice" from Heaven. It was their God, the Mighty Elohim.

37 - **This** – The word "this" is translated from the Greek word "οὗτος" or "houtos". It means this, these, those, etc.

38 - **my** – The word "my" is translated from the Greek word "μου" or "mou". It means I, me, my or of me.

39 - **beloved** – The word "beloved" is translated from the Greek word "ἀγαπητός" or "agapētos". It means beloved, esteemed, dear, favorite, or worthy of love. "You are my beloved son, or possibly, 'you are my son, the beloved one; in you...' This is the reading in the best Greek mss." (The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 485).

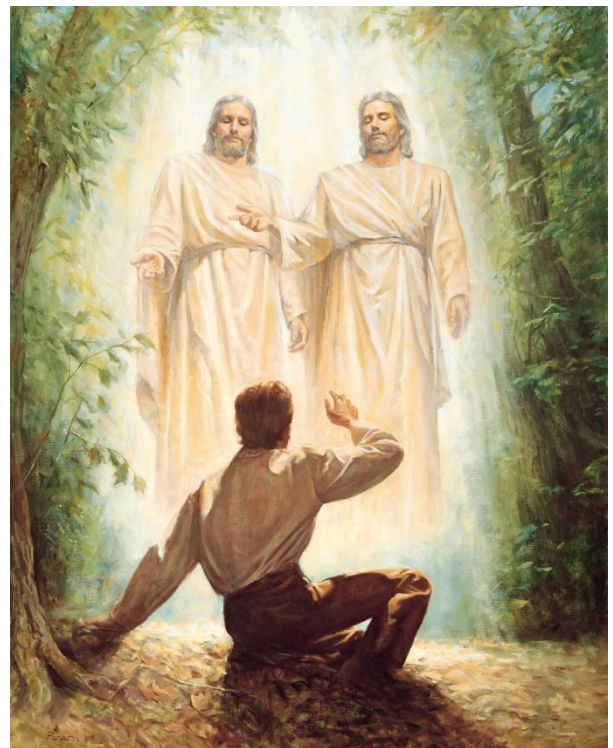
There is a theory among scriptorian's that the phrase, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" is a fulfillment of two ancient prophecies. "The voice which Jesus heard at the baptism is of supreme importance. 'This is my beloved Son,' it said, 'in whom I am well pleased.' That sentence is composed of two quotations. 'This is my beloved Son,' is a quotation from Psalm 2:7. Every Jew accepted that Psalm as a description of the Messiah, the mighty King of God who was to come. 'In whom I am well pleased' is a quotation from Isaiah 42:1, which is a description of the Suffering Servant, a description which culminates in Isaiah 53." (The Gospel of Matthew, Volume 1, The Daily Study Bible Series, William Barclay, page 53).

The prophecies being referred to read as follows;

"I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." (Psalms 2:7).

"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." (Isaiah 42:1).

In every instance that the Father is recorded speaking, in modern scripture, He refers to His Son as "beloved". On the Mount of Transfiguration, the Father proclaimed "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." (Matthew 17:5). To the Nephites he said, "Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name—hear ye him." (3rd Nephi 11:7). To Joseph Smith he said, "This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!" (Joseph Smith History 1:17). It is a term of endearment and love. It tells us of the relationship the Father has with His son. This term is missing from the Old Testament prophecies. "In addition of the adj. 'beloved' adds a specification about the sonship that is not present in Psalms 2:7, expressive of a special love-relationship between the heavenly Father and the Son, Jesus." (The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 485-486).



- 40 - **Son** – The term "son" is translated from the Greek word "υἰός" or "huios". The word means a son, and is generally used of the offspring of men. **"In the Old Testament, Israel (Exodus 4:22; Hosea 11:1, etc.), angels (Genesis 6:2,4; Job 1:6, etc.), or the king (2nd Samuel 7:14; Psalms 2:7) may be referred to as Yahweh's son."** (Mark 1-8, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 162). In the case of a "son" with a lower-case "s", it refers to the fact that we are sons and daughters of God in a spiritual sense. He is the Father of our spirits, and thus we revere Him as our Father in Heaven. This relationship is illustrated in the Old Testament, **"I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men:"** (2nd Samuel 7:14).

The term "Son" with an upper case "S" refers to the Son of Man, or the only begotten of the Father in the Flesh. Like you and I, Jesus is a spiritual son of God. We are literal brothers and sisters to him in the spirit. Unlike you and I, Jesus is the literal offspring of the Father in the flesh. He is the Son of God in mortality. **"The Jews do not believe God, Elohim, would have a Son. The Muslims (many hundreds of millions of them on earth now) do not believe God, Allah, would have a Son who would come to live with the rest of us groveling humans in this world (the Qur'an declares: 'Far is it removed from his transcendent majesty that he should have a son')."** (The Four Gospels: Verse by Verse, D. Kelly Ogden & Andrew C. Skinner, page 89). It is therefore no surprise that the Father would use the few words He spoke to bear testimony of the fact that Jesus was indeed the Son of the All Mighty Elohim.

- 41 - **in whom** – The word "whom" is translated from the Greek word "ὃς" or "hos". It means who, which, what or that.
- 42 - **well** – This word is not directly translated but inserted by translators as an implied translation. It is significant because the Lord was not just accepting of Jesus, but VERY please.
- 43 - **pleased** – The word "pleased" is translated from the Greek word "εὐδοκῶ" or "eudokēō". It means to think it is good, to be well pleased with, to take pleasure in, or to be favorably inclined towards one. **"This is an allusion to Isaiah 42:1, a verse that Matthew 12:18 renders as ἡ ἀγαπητός μου εἰς ἡν εὐδοκῆσεν ἡ ψυχή μου, 'my beloved one, in whom my soul has taken delight.'"** (Mark 1-8, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 163).

Why was the Lord pleased with Jesus and His baptism? Can we find ourselves with this same designation from on High? The Lord told Joseph Smith, **"Verily I say unto you, ye are clean, but not all; and there is none else with whom I am well pleased;"** (Doctrine & Covenants 38:10). The Father was pleased with the Son because of His worthiness before Him. He was righteous and obedient. Through Christ, His atonement and His example, we too can find ourselves pleased before the Father.

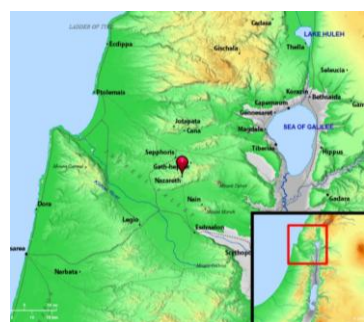
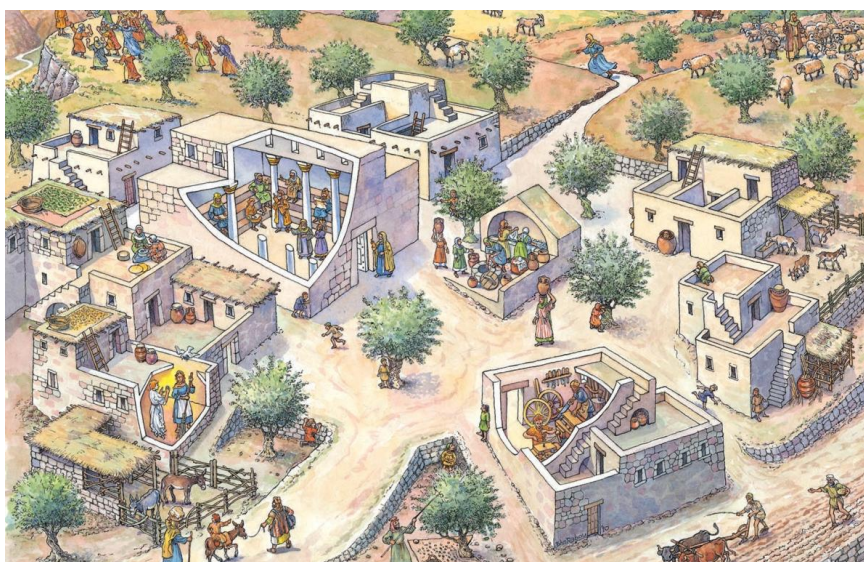
- 44 - **And it came to pass** – The phrase "And it came to pass" is translated from a single Greek word; "γίνομαι" or "ginomai". The word means to become, to come into existence, to happen, to appear in history, or to come upon the stage. **"These words, in conjunction with finite verb, are an Old Testament idiom that is not found in non-biblical Greek."** (Mark 1-8, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 158). The term is an indication that the original words of the text are Hebrew or Aramaic in origin. "And it came to pass" is a Hebrew idiom.

The phrase "and it came to pass" is a term used to establish the time table of events. Each Gospel differs in the way they establish the time table. They are listed as follows;

Matthew 3:13	Mark 1:9	Luke 3:21	John 1:19
"then cometh"	"And it came to pass"	"Now when all the people were baptized"	"The next day"

- 45 - **in those days** – The word "days" is translated from the Greek work "ἡμέρα" or "hēmera". It means the day, used of the natural day, or the interval between sunrise and sunset, as distinguished from and contrasted with the night. It can also be used of time in general, i.e. the days of his life.

- 46 - **Nazareth** – The name "Nazareth" is translated from the Greek word "Ναζαρέτ" or "Nazara". It is of uncertain origin. Translated literally, it means "the guarded one". It is considered the home city of Jesus' adolescence, and young adult life. Many refer to it as the home town of Jesus. In comparison to other towns in Galilee, Nazareth was tiny, with two or three clans (extended families) living in 35 homes spread over 30,000 square yards. Even though Nazareth was very small, it was definitely not non-existent, not uninhabited, and not merely one family. It was indeed a viable town. Archeologist have found evidence of a synogoge, and public buildings. There is even evidence that the Romans at some point built a public bath, which would have offended the faithful Jews. The town would have had been an agricultural town with supporting trades. They would have had a smith and a carpenter. They would likely have potters and weavers and well as wine makers. Because of the lack of records and archeological remains, much of ancient Nazareth is left to our imaginations. The ancient homes of Nazareth were ruined by invaders some centuries after Christ. It is believed that the ancient city survived until the 700's CE. What is left of the ancient city of Jesus are several basement caves, cisterns and silos excavated in the late 1950s during reconstruction of the Church of the Annunciation.



Geographically, **"Nazareth is a town in lower Galilee belonging to the tribe of Zebulun, ...the home town of Mary and Joseph, the human parents of Jesus...In regard to the city of Nazareth itself, the ancient site is located by the modern en-Natzirah, a Moslem village of about 10,000 inhabitants, on the most southern ranges of lower Galilee. Nazareth itself lies in a geographical basin so that not much of the surrounding countryside is in plain view. However, if one scales the edge of the basin, the sights of Esdraelon with its 20 battlefields and the place of Naboth's vineyard meet the eye. A distance of 30 miles can be observed in three directions. Unfortunately, however, the people of Nazareth had established a rather poor reputation in morals and religion. This is seen in Nathaniel's question: 'Can any good come out of Nazareth? (John 1:47)."** (The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, General Editor Merrill C. Tenney, page 573-574).

- 47 - **man** – The term "man" is translated from the Greek word "άνθρωπος" or "anēr". It means a male, a husband, a betrothed husband or any male. Here the term is used in reference to Jesus conveying the idea that he was a mortal man, and subject to all the pains, trials, and difficulties associated with mortality. While it is true that His Father was indeed Deity, it is also true that His mother was Mary who was mortal in very way.

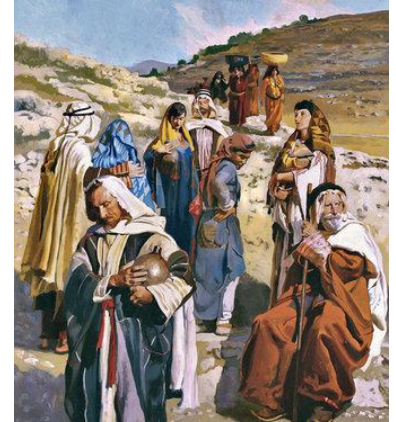
48 - **Thou** – The word "thou" is translated from the Greek word "σύ" or "sy". It means you. **"This is near-exact quotation of Ps. 2:7 LXX, the only difference being that the psalm verse puts the predicate nominative first ('my son you are')"** (Mark 1-8, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joel Marcus, page 162).

Matthew 3:17	Mark 1:11	Luke 3:22	John 1:33
"This is my"	"Thou art my"	"Thou art my"	John bore testimony, "this is the"

49 - **art** – The word "art" is translated from the Greek word "εἶ" or "ei". It means "you are" or "thou art".

50 - **Now when** – The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the words "now when" with "that while". (Codex Sinaiticus, Discovered by Constantine Tischendorf, Translated by H.T. Anderson, page 111).

51 - **the people** – The word "people" is translated from the Greek word "λαός" or "laos". It is used to mean a people, a group of people, tribe, nation, or all those who are of the same stock and language. It can also be used of a great part of the population gathered together anywhere. **"The phrase 'all the people' is a summary reference to 'the crowds' that had been mentioned in Luke 3:7. Luke stresses again the universal reaction of the people (laos). The distinction between the people and their leaders has not yet been introduced; but the stress given to 'all' here will heighten the distinction when it is made."** (The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 483). The "people" referenced in this footnote were the gathering of people interested in John's teachings whether out of curiosity or a desire to be baptized.



52 - **praying** – The word "praying" is translated from the Greek word "προσεύχουμαι" or "proseuchomai". It means to offer prayer or pray. Luke adds something to the story that is missing from the other stories. It is **"The first occurrence of what will become a familiar Lucan motif, Jesus at prayer."** (The Gospel According to Luke I-IX, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, The Anchor Yale Bible, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, page 483). We do not know what was uttered in Jesus' prayer, but we can speculate that the Lord was confirming the covenant He just made and thanking His Father for the strength that was being bestowed upon Him. It is interesting to think that Jesus may also have been seeking direction from the Father as to His next course of action. We believe that Jesus sought the will of the Father in all things. It is also interesting that such a significant detail would be missing from the other Gospels account of the same story. Additionally, in a Jewish baptism immersion was accompanied by exhortations and benedictions (Maimonides Hilkh. Milah iii.4; Hilkh. Iss, Biah Xiv .6). A convert would reaffirm his acceptance of the Torah by declaring, "I will do and I will hear" which was a phrase from the oath that was originally taken by the priests not to forsake the Torah (Deuteronomy 29:9- 14). This ritual demonstrates the willingness of the convert to forsake his Gentile background and assume his Jewish identity by taking on the status of one who keeps the commandments. Additionally, it was always followed by prayers.

53 - **Holy Ghost** – The word "Holy" is translate from the Greek word "ἅγιος" or "hagios". It means the most holy thing, or a saint. The word "Ghost" is translated from the Greek word "πνεῦμα" or "pneuma". It means spirit and is the same word used in footnote #29 of this chapter. **"The four Gospel-writers record the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the baptized Jesus as accompanied by a visible manifestation "like a dove;" and this sign had been indicated to John as the foreappointed means by which the Messiah should be made known to him; and to that sign, before specified, was now added the supreme testimony of the Father as to the literal Sonship of Jesus. Matthew records the Father's acknowledgment as given in the third person, "This is my beloved Son;" while both Mark and Luke give the more direct address, "Thou art my beloved Son." The variation, slight and essentially unimportant as it is though bearing on so momentous a subject, affords evidence of independent authorship and discredits any insinuation of collusion among the writers. The incidents attending the emergence of Jesus from the baptismal grave demonstrate the distinct individuality of the three Personages of the Godhead. On that solemn occasion Jesus the Son was present in the flesh; the presence of the Holy Ghost was manifest through the accompanying sign of the dove, and the voice of the Eternal Father was heard from heaven. Had we no other evidence of the separate personality of each member of the Holy Trinity, this instance should be conclusive; but other scriptures confirm the great truth."** (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 117).

54 - **bodily** – The word "bodily" is translated from the Greek word "σωματικός" or "sōmatikos". It means having a bodily form or nature. **"It turns out that the Spirit of the Holy Ghost personally descended upon Jesus 'like a dove, but there was also a dove present as a symbol or 'sign' of the Holy Ghost."** (Days of the Living Christ, Volume 1, W. Cleon Skousen, page 79). Indeed, there was a dove present, but the dove was not the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is a spirit without a physical body. It descended upon the Savior. There was a dove present, in physical body, and the Holy Ghost was not a dove. The Dove was a bodily representation or symbol that the Holy Ghost was present.

55 - **shape** – The word "shape" is translated from the Greek word "εἶδος" or "eidos". It means the external or outward appearance, form, figure or shape. **"It thus appears that John witnessed the sign of the dove, that he saw the Holy Ghost descend in the 'bodily shape' of the personage that he is, and that the descent was 'like a dove.'"** (The Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, Volume 1, The Gospels, Bruce R. McConkie, page 124). The term shape may be a literary term indicating a figurative or symbolic expression.

56 - **in thee** – The word "thee" is translated from the Greek word "σοί" or "soi". It means "to you".

57 - **The next day** – The phrase "the next day" is translated from a single Greek word; "ἐπαύριον" or "epaurion". It means on the morrow, or the next day. **"Seemingly the Johannine scene takes place after the baptism of Jesus, not mentioned by John."** (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Anchor Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 55).

58 - **seeth** – The word "seeth" is translated from the Greek word "βλέπω" or "blepō". It means to see, or to discern visually or through the senses.

59 - **Behold** – The word "behold" is translated from the Greek word "ἴδε" or "ide". It means to behold or see.

60 - **The Lamb** – The term "lamb" is translated from the Greek word "ἀμνός" or "amnos". It means a lamb. The lamb is a symbol of gentleness, innocence, meekness, purity, and unblemished. (An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Traditional Symbols, J.C. Cooper, page 94). **"The meaning of the genitive will depend on the interpretation of 'the Lamb'. If the Lamb is the Servant, then John's phrase is patterned after the Servant of Yahweh. If the Lamb is the paschal lamb, then the genitive may have the sense of 'supplied by God' "** (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Anchor Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 55).





The lamb was a significant and well known symbol among the Jews. It has its origins in ancient Israel and references the Passover. Based on the Gospel according to John, the baptism of Jesus was just prior to the Passover celebration. Calling Jesus the Lamb of God would have had significant symbolic meaning. Barclay says, "The Passover Feast was not very far away (John 2:13). The old story of the Passover was that it was the blood of the slain lamb which protected the houses of the Israelites on the night when they left Egypt (Exodus 12:11-13). On that night when the Angel of Death walked abroad and slew the first-born of the Egyptians, the Israelites were to smear their doorposts with the blood of the slain lamb, and the angel, seeing it, would pass over that house. The blood of the lamb delivered them from destruction. It has been suggested that even as John the Baptist saw Jesus, there passed by flocks of lambs, being driven up to Jerusalem from the country districts to serve as sacrifices for the Passover Feast. The blood of the Passover Lamb delivered the Israelites in Egypt from death; and it may be that John was saying: 'There is the one true sacrifice who can deliver you from death.' Paul too thought of Jesus as the Passover Lamb (1st Corinthians 5:7). There is a deliverance that only Jesus Christ can win for us." (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, The Daily Study Bible Series, William Barclay, page 80-81).

without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats:" (Exodus 12:5). These symbolic qualifications point to Jesus, and were designed to prepare the faithful to receive Him as their Redeemer. Isaiah recognized the symbolic teachings and taught, "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." (Isaiah 53:7). This prophecy was fulfilled when Jesus was brought to trial, and though He was beaten and abused, he did not open His mouth and submitted Himself to be the Great sacrifice. Jeremiah prophesied similarly and revealed the motives of those that killed Jesus. He wrote, "But I was like a lamb or an ox that is brought to the slaughter; and I knew not that they had devised devices against me, saying, Let us destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more remembered." (Jeremiah 11:19)

After the children of Israel left Egypt, the Lord gave them specific instructions related to the sacrifice of lambs and other ceremonially clean animals. In the Book of Exodus we learn, "Your lamb shall be



The Children of Israel were constantly taught that the Lamb was necessary for forgiveness. They were repeatedly taught the necessity of a Redeemer. "In the Temple a lamb is offered every night and every morning for the sins of the people; but in this Jesus is the only sacrifice which deliver men from sin." (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, The Daily Study Bible Series, William Barclay, page 81). Symbolically, every lamb that was sacrificed was Jesus.

The process of sacrifice contains additional symbolic teachings. The Mishnah records that the Lamb shall be brought forth and "all lay on hands except for (1) the deaf-mute (2) the idiot and (3) the minor, (4) the blind, and (5) the gentile, and (6) the slave, and (7) the agent, and (8) the woman. And the laying on of hands constitutes the residue of the requirement [which may, in fact, be omitted without effecting the efficacy of atonement]. [It is done] on the head [of the animal] with both hands. And in the place in which they lay on hands [there do] they slaughter [the animal]. And forthwith after laying on of hands is the act of slaughter." (The Mishnah, page 752-753). Aside from the fact that the writers of the Mishnah considered the qualifications to participate in the setting apart of the redemptive sacrifice to be physical without regard to spiritual cleanliness, they do point out that the Lamb must be set apart to that end. It is clear that Jesus was set apart before the foundations of this world to be the sacrificial lamb for all mankind. "John's use of the designation "Lamb of God" implied his conception of the Messiah as One appointed for sacrifice, and his use of the term is the earliest mention found in the Bible. For later Biblical applications,

direct or implied, see Acts 8:32; 1 Peter 1:19; Rev. 5:6, 8, 12, 13; 6:1, 16; 7:9, 10, 17; etc." (Jesus the Christ, James E. Talmage, page 129).

The term Lamb of God "becomes one of the most precious titles of Christ. In one word it sums up the love, the sacrifice, the suffering and triumph of Christ." (The Gospel of John, Volume 1, The Daily Study Bible Series, William Barclay, page 82). Similarly, Paul admonished the members of the church in Corinth to "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:" (1 Corinthians 5:7).



61 - taketh away – The phrase "taketh away" is translated from the single Greek word "αἴρω" or "airō". It means to raise up, elevate, or lift up. It can mean to bear away, carry off, or remove. This phrase makes reference to the redemptive effects of the Lamb. The sacrificing of lambs in ancient Israel, redeemed sinners from their sins. Those lambs were just symbols for the real deal. Jesus is the one and only true lamb. Only through His sacrifice do sins truly become absolved.

62 - the sin – The word "sin" is translated from the Greek word "ἁμαρτία" or "hamartia". It means to be without a share in, to miss the mark, to err, to be mistaken, to wander off the path of uprightness and honor, or to violate God's laws. "The plural refers to sinful acts, while the singular refers to a sinful condition." (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Anchor Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 56).

63 - the world – The term "world" is translated from the Greek word "κόσμος" or "kosmos". The word means the world, the universe, the inhabitants of the earth, or everything on and associated with the earth. This term conveys the all encompassing nature of the atonement of Jesus Christ. It is universal. It applies to everyone who has lived on the earth or who will live upon the earth. It is infinite in nature. An Apostle of the Lord taught, "In preparatory times of the Old Testament, the practice of atonement was finite—meaning it had an end. It was a symbolic forecast of the definitive Atonement of Jesus the Christ. His Atonement is infinite—without an end. It was also infinite in that all humankind would be saved from never-ending death. It was infinite in terms of His immense suffering. It was infinite in time, putting an end to the preceding prototype of animal sacrifice. It was infinite in scope—it was to be done once for all. And the mercy of the Atonement extends not only to an infinite number of people, but also to an infinite number of worlds created by Him. It was infinite beyond any human scale of measurement or mortal comprehension. Jesus was the only one who could offer such an infinite atonement, since He was born of a mortal mother and an immortal Father. Because of that unique birthright, Jesus was an infinite Being."



- 64 - **After** – The word "after" is translated from the Greek word "ὀπίσω" or "opisō". It means back, behind, after or afterwards. It can be used in reference to time.
- 65 - **cometh** – The word "cometh" is translated from the Greek word "ἐρχομαι" or "erchomai". It means to come from one place to another, to make an appearance, or come before the public.
- 66 - **preferred** – The word "preferred" is translated from the Greek word "γίνομαι" or "ginomai". It means to come to pass, to happen, to come into existence, to come upon the stage, or appear in history. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word "preferred" with "advanced". (Codex Sinaiticus, Discovered by Constantine Tischendorf, Translated by H.T. Anderson, page 165).
- 67 - **before** – The word "before" is translated from the Greek word "ἐμπροσθεν" or "emprosthen". It means in front of, before, in the sight of, in the presence of or opposite of.
- 68 - **he was before** – The phrase "he was" comes from a single Greek word, "ἦν" or "ēn", meaning "I was"; the I being implied and could very well take on the context of he or her. The word "before" is translated from a different Greek word than footnote #67 in this chapter. It is translated from the Greek word "πρῶτος" or "prōtos" meaning first in time or place, first in any succession of things or persons or first in rank, stature or influence. **"He existed before me. Literally 'he was [eina] before me'; when the existence of Jesus is involved, John prefers the verb 'to be', rather than the verb 'to become'. Seemingly the word for 'before', the adjective protos ('first') used as a comparative, has temporal significance... The real reason that commentators avoid the temporal reference in the third clause is that it places the theme of the pre-existence of Jesus on the lips of John the Baptist."** (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Anchor Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 56).
- 69 - **I knew him not** – The word "knew" is translated from the Greek word "εἶδω" or "eidō". The Greek word means to see, perceive with the eyes, to notice, discern, or discover. It is ridiculous to believe that John did not know Jesus. They were cousins, or rather the sons of cousins, and they lived in a culture which was very familial. John was called and prepared from a very early age that he was to be the forerunner of the Messiah. Elisabeth, John's mother, knew that her cousin Mary carried the Messiah. The proper translation is that John had not yet seen the Messiah come to the Jordan, but knew that he would show Himself. John knew it was time of the Messiah to go public. His ministry was to begin, and John's was coming to an end. John's work was nearly complete. He had but to perform a crucial Priesthood task and baptize the Messiah.
- 70 - **he should be made manifest** – The phrase "he should be made manifest" is translated from a single Greek word; "φανερῶω" or "phanerōō". The Greek word means to make manifest or visible or known what was hidden or unknown, to manifest, whether by words, or deeds, or in any other way. It means to reveal, to teach that which was unknown, or give new understanding. Manifest is probably better translated as **"revealed...particularly for Jesus' coming out of obscurity and being seen by men."** (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Anchor Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 56).
- 71 - **Israel** – The name "Israel" is translated from the Greek word "Ἰσραήλ" or "Israēl". It is a transliteration of the Hebrew word "יִשְׂרָאֵל" or "Yisra'el". Translated literally it means "God prevails". **"Israel - In general, this term in Johannine usage has a good connotation, and refers to God's people."** (The Gospel According to John I-XII, The Anchor Yale Bible, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., page 56). We often think of Israel in terms of a Nation with boundaries and districts. Here it relates to the covenant people. Today, like in ancient times, converts of the Church are adopted into the house of Israel through the process of baptism. Regardless of their nationality, they are of Israel.
- 72 - **remaining** – The word "remaining" is translated from the Greek word "μένω" or "menō". It means to remain or abide. It means to be held or kept continually. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the word "remaining" with "abiding". (Codex Sinaiticus, Discovered by Constantine Tischendorf, Translated by H.T. Anderson, page 165).
- 73 - **bare** – The term "bare" carries the idea of a burden. It is better translated as "bear" in modern English. Old English uses the word bare interchangeably. Our modern word "bare" means not clothed or naked, which is not the appropriate use of the word here. Bearing a testimony implies that one who possesses a testimony of the everlasting gospel is willing to bear up the burdens and responsibility that are associated with it.
- 74 - **bear record** – The phrase "bear record" is translated from a single Greek word; "μαρτυρέω" or "martyrēō". It means to be a witness, to bear witness, to give testimony, or give a good report. The Codex Sinaiticus replaces the words "bear record" with "testified". (Codex Sinaiticus, Discovered by Constantine Tischendorf, Translated by H.T. Anderson, page 165). John bore his testimony of the truth. He held to the truths of eternity even unto his own death. Modern day revelation reveals John's testimony. The Doctrine and Covenants records, **"And I, John, bear record that I beheld his glory, as the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, even the Spirit of truth, which came and dwelt in the flesh, and dwelt among us. And I, John, saw that he received not of the fulness at the first, but received grace for grace; And he received not of the fulness at first, but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness; And thus he was called the Son of God, because he received not of the fulness at the first. And I, John, bear record, and lo, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove, and sat upon him, and there came a voice out of heaven saying: This is my beloved Son."** (Doctrine and Covenants 93:11-15).
- 75 - **abode** – The word "abode" is translated from the Greek word "μένω" or "menō". It is the same word used in footnote #72 on this chapter which was translated as "remaining".
- 76 - **sent me** – The word "sent" is translated from the Greek word "πέμπω" or "pempō". It means to send, to bid a thing to be carried to one, or to send a thing to another. It carries the idea that Jesus was not fulfilling His own will, but rather he was doing that which His Father had sent Him to do.

