

December 8, 2019 – Matthew 3:4-6; 11-12 (NIV)

Theme: Entrance Into God's Barn.

“John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat (of HIM) into the barn - Αποθηκη - and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

As people we may not appreciate these words of our text today where John the Baptist speaks of God gathering the wheat – of HIM - σιτον αυτου - into the barn.

But when it is compared to the alternative – The Chaff which will be in unquenchable fire. A Barn becomes quite nice.

John the Baptist came preaching. John the Baptist was preaching In the Desert – Dry and arid. (A symbol of the Spiritual state of Israel at the time.)

He was not gathering together in a large Stadium or an Auditorium with lots of lights and a spectacular speaker system.

John the Baptist is in the Wilderness. He did not look spectacular, but he was dressed just like the Prophets of the Old Testament. (See II Kings 1:8)

His Message was: *“Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is near!”*

Turn away from Sin and Satan and follow God the Creator of the universe and the Savior of your soul.

In other words:

1. **Recognize** your sin by checking the 10 Commandments
2. Have **Sorrow** over your sin.
3. **Stop sinning**
4. And most important: **Know you are forgiven.** (By the Blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God Who has taken away the sin of the world.

John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus as prophesied by the O.T. Prophet Isaiah in Chapter 40:3.

The Baptism of John was not just a symbolic Baptism but as we learn from the Gospel of Luke.

“He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for (IN) the forgiveness of sins.” (Lk. 3:3 NIV)

And In Christ Jesus we are HIS Wheat and He will gather us into His BARN where there will be no more sin or death or pain and we will receive those new glorified bodies because of the Lamb Who sits upon the throne. AMEN