

Luke 3:1-20

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, while Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, 2 during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, God's word came to John the son of Zechariah in the wilderness. 3 He went into all the vicinity of the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, 4 as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

Prepare the way for the Lord;

make his paths straight!

5 Every valley will be filled,

and every mountain and hill will be made low;

the crooked will become straight,

the rough ways smooth,

6 and everyone will see the salvation of God.

7 He then said to the crowds who came out to be baptized by him, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? 8 Therefore produce fruit consistent with repentance. And don't start saying to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. 9 The ax is already at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

10 "What then should we do?" the crowds were asking him. 11 He replied to them, "The one who has two shirts must share with someone who has none, and the one who has food must do the same."

12 Tax collectors also came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" 13 He told them, "Don't collect any more than what you have been authorized."

14 Some soldiers also questioned him, "What should we do?" He said to them, "Don't take money from anyone by force or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

15 Now the people were waiting expectantly, and all of them were questioning in their hearts whether John might be the Messiah. 16 John answered them all, "I baptize you with water, but One who is more powerful than I am is coming. I am not worthy to untie the strap of His sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 His winnowing shovel is in His hand to clear His threshing floor and gather the wheat into His barn, but the chaff He will burn with fire that never goes out." 18 Then, along with many other exhortations, he proclaimed good news to the people. 19 But when John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and all the evil things he had done, 20 Herod added this to everything else—he locked up John in prison.