

## Jesus, Our Resting Place

**Matthew 3:11-17:** *“<sup>11</sup> I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: <sup>12</sup> Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. <sup>13</sup> Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. <sup>14</sup> But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? <sup>15</sup> And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. <sup>16</sup> And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: <sup>17</sup> And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”*

### I. Verse 11—*“He that cometh after me is mightier”*

A. In our last study, we saw the great importance to the statement that John the Baptist made in verse 11.

1. **Matthew 3:11** says, *“He that cometh after me is mightier than I.”*

B. With those words, John has introduced the Messiah to the people.

1. This was the Great Messiah Who was promised over and over again to the people that He would come as the Great Deliverer. He would crush the head of the devil that had tyrannized the people for ages.

2. The Great Messiah would come as the seed of the woman; the Great Messiah would come as the Son of David.

3. The people longed for the coming of the Great Messiah like the hymn states:

*“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel  
And ransom captive Israel  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear”*

C. Finally, He is about to come, and God has sent John the Baptist to announce His soon coming with the words.

1. **Matthew 3:11** says, *“He that cometh after me is mightier than I.”*

### II. Verse 13—*“Then cometh Jesus”*

A. After that announcement, we read that He finally came in verse 13.

1. The verse says, *“Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.”*

B. With those simple words, He has come. The Messiah has come to Israel. The Deliverer has arrived.

### III. Verse 13—*“Cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan”*

A. Verse 13 says, *“Then cometh Jesus.”* This is his emergence from behind the drapes of His concealment on to the open stage of His open public ministry.

B. We saw Him at His birth when the angels sang of His coming. The shepherds and magi came to worship Him.

C. We saw Him again when He was brought to the Temple in Jerusalem to be dedicated to the Lord in **Luke 2:22-39**.

1. **Luke 2:22-39** says, *“<sup>22</sup> And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; <sup>23</sup> (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth*

the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;)<sup>24</sup> And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.<sup>25</sup> And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.<sup>26</sup> And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.<sup>27</sup> And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,<sup>28</sup> Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,<sup>29</sup> Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:<sup>30</sup> For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,<sup>31</sup> Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;<sup>32</sup> A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.<sup>33</sup> And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.<sup>34</sup> And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;<sup>35</sup> (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.<sup>36</sup> And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity;<sup>37</sup> And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.<sup>38</sup> And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.<sup>39</sup> And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth."

D. Then, He was not seen until one Passover in **Luke 2:40-49**.

1. **Luke 2:40-49** says, "<sup>40</sup> And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.<sup>41</sup> Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.<sup>42</sup> And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.<sup>43</sup> And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not of it.<sup>44</sup> But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and acquaintance.<sup>45</sup> And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.<sup>46</sup> And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.<sup>47</sup> And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.<sup>48</sup> And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.<sup>49</sup> And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

E. Those were the first recorded words of the Lord Jesus where He spoke of having to be about His Father's business.

1. His Father's business was for Him to make possible the Father's love of the world by being the Son referred to in **John 3:16**.
  - a. **John 3:16** says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
2. He was twelve years old when He was in the Temple hearing the rabbis and asking them questions because he was about His Father's business.

- F. Then, there was silence as He was hid from Israel's eyes.
- G. Eighteen years later, He is thirty years old. He comes out from the shadows and is presented to Israel with "Then cometh Jesus."
- H. He was in Galilee, and there the Spirit of God had indicated to Him it was time. Later, when the time came for Him to be sacrificed on the Cross, He said about that time in **John 17:1**.
  - 1. The verse says, "*These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.*"
  - 2. At that time, when it was time for His sufferings to start, that would culminate in His death on the Cross.
  - 3. His comment about the call to start the road to the cross was "*Father, the hour is come.*"
- I. His whole life was one long road to the cross.
- J. When John the Baptist saw Him, John said in **John 1:29**, "*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*"
- K. When the Lord Jesus heard those words of John, the Lord must have thought to Himself, "Yes, I am the Lamb of God, and I have started that long road that leads to the Cross."
  - 1. The Lord knew that His life was one long walk to the Cross.
- L. Jesus hears the call to begin his three years of public ministry.
- M. Jesus started on that road that took several days to walk from Galilee to the Jordan River where John was baptizing.
- N. That is a very important walk. There was the Lord on that walk all alone for those days. He walked alone and as He walked He had time to think, "Are you really sure that you are willing to do this?"
  - 1. "Are you really sure that you are willing to sacrifice your high place as God to be a servant of man?"
  - 2. "Are you really sure that you are willing to sacrifice your honor to be disgraced and despised and mocked?"
  - 3. "Are you really sure that you are willing to sacrifice your happiness in life to become a 'man of sorrows and acquainted with grief?'"
  - 4. "Are you really sure that you are willing to sacrifice your life and die not just any death, but the horrible, tortuous death of the Cross?"
- O. Those questions were in front of each of His steps, and He had to answer those questions.
- P. With each step He took during those days from Galilee to Jordan, He made His affirmed resolution of "Yes, I am sure. Yes, I am sure. Yes, I will be the Lamb of God. Yes, my delight is to do the will of my Father. The will of my Father is that no man should perish, but that all would believe in me."
- Q. He walked alone for those days in a walk that could be called "The Walk of His Resolve."
  - 1. The Lord Jesus came to the Jordan River to present Himself as the sacrifice in obedience to God.

#### IV. Verse 13—"Unto John to be baptized of him"

- A. The Lord Jesus comes and wants to be baptized by John. He comes to be baptized which was humiliating for the Lord.
- B. He stands among sinners who are confessing their sins and repenting and being baptized. He stands among them to be baptized in the baptism of sinners.
- C. He is not a sinner, and He is not confessing any sins. He is not repenting of any sins because He is sinless. He has never sinned as it says in **Hebrews 4:15**.

1. The verse says, *“For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, **yet without sin.***
  2. **Hebrews 7:26** says, *“For such an high priest became us, who **is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners,** and made higher than the heavens;”*
  3. **2 Corinthians 5:21** says, *“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who **knew no sin;** that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”*
  4. **1 John 3:5** says, *“And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and **in him is no sin.**”*
- D. He is with no sin standing in the line of the baptism of sinners, but if there was to be made a count of the people in line to be baptized, He would be counted as one among them.
1. **Isaiah 53:12** says, *“He was **numbered with the transgressors;** and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”*
- E. He has not sinned, but He is among the sinners. He will bare the sin of the sinners, and He will make intercession to save the sinners from their sins.
- F. As He is in that line among the sinners to be baptized, this is another one of the many humiliations He will suffer.
1. First was the humiliation of coming from a home in Nazareth down to being born in a stable in Bethlehem.
  2. Second was the humiliation of being dedicated in the Temple in Jerusalem to going down into Egypt,
  3. Third was the humiliation of going from His home in Nazareth to a muddy Jordan River in the wilderness,
  4. Fourth was the humiliation of going from being called by the angel in **Luke 1:35**, *“That Holy Thing”* to the baptism of sinners.
- G. These humiliations reflect the mind of Christ that we are to adopt from **Philippians 2:5-8**.
1. **Philippians 2:5-8** says, *“<sup>5</sup> Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup> Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: <sup>7</sup> But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: <sup>8</sup> And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”*
- V. Verse 13—*“Then cometh Jesus...to be baptized”*
- A. That word *“then”* comes as a word that means as opposed to the last group that came to be baptized which were the Pharisees and the Sadducees.
  - B. The word *“then”* in verse 13 makes it sound like there was a line of sinners to be baptized. The group just before the Lord Jesus were the Pharisees and the Sadducees.
    1. They were hypocrites; they were called the “generation of vipers.”
    2. They were called hypocrites because they were just going through the motions of the baptism of repentance, but they had no heart of repentance.
  - C. Because of their hypocrisy, they dishonored baptism.
  - D. The Pharisees and the Sadducees were false, and they were bad.
  - E. Next in line was the Lord, and He was true and He was good
  - F. That shows how false is always mixed in with truth. Bad is always mixed in with good.
  - G. He has come to be baptized, and no one baptizes himself. Each person submits to baptism by another.

1. The person being baptized rests his weight on the hands of the other person who then lowers him into the water. He relies on the other person to lift him up out of the water.
  2. That is why it is called “submitting to baptism” because the candidate submits himself to be baptized by another.
- H. Similarly, the Lord Jesus submitted Himself to be baptized by John. Baptism was symbolic of death.
1. Going under the water symbolized death.
  2. By submitting Himself to be baptized by John, the Lord in essence was saying, “Today, I submit myself into the hands of John to baptize me as a symbol of death as eventually, I will submit myself into the hands of the Roman soldiers who will kill me.”

VI. Verse 14—*“John forbad Him...I have need to”*

- A. The Lord has come to John the Baptist to be baptized. John said to the Lord in verse 14, *“I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?”*
- B. When the Lord got close to John, John saw himself as a sinner.
  1. This is what happened to the prophet Isaiah when he saw the Lord in Heaven.
    - a. **Isaiah 6:5** says, *“Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.”*
  2. This is what happened to Job when he saw the Lord in **Job 42:5-6**.
    - a. The verses say, *“<sup>5</sup> I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. <sup>6</sup> Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”*
  3. This is what happened to Peter before the Lord Jesus Christ in **Luke 5:8**.
    - a. **Luke 5:8** says, *“When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.”*
  4. This is now what is happening to John the Baptist when he sees the Lord Jesus Christ. John who has been baptizing sinners to repentance now sees himself as a sinner in repentance. He asks the Lord to take his place and baptize him.
- C. John, who had just pronounced the Pharisees as not right to be baptized because they were not confessing and repenting, now sees that it is not right for the Lord Jesus to be baptized because the sinless Lord has nothing to confess and repent of.

VII. Verse 15—*“To fulfill all righteousness”*

- A. John was right that the sinless Lord had not sin to confess and repent of. That leaves the question, “Why did the Lord want to be baptized?”
- B. The answer to that question is contained in two words that the Lord told John the Baptists. Those two words were “now” and “righteousness.”
- C. The word “righteousness” means what is right.
  1. The Lord was telling John, “We need to do this now, so we can do what is right.”
- D. The Lord had started the last three year road to the cross where He would die for the sins of man and going down into the waters of baptism was a symbol of death.
  1. It was right for the Lord to be commissioned by baptism for His sacrificial death for the sins of man.
- E. Going into the waters of baptism is also a symbol of being totally immersed in the waters of judgment.
  1. Since on the cross, the sinless Lord was going to suffer all the judgment that was for sinful man.
  2. It was right for the Lord to be baptized as a symbol of the judgment that would be all on Him instead of us.

- F. Baptism was for sinful people who stood in that line confessing and repenting of their sins. Since the sinless Lord was going to take the sins of the world on Himself, it was right for the Lord Jesus to line up shoulder to shoulder with those persons being baptized.
- G. Baptism is not only being immersed in the water as a symbol of judgment and death; baptism is also rising out of the water—a symbol of salvation and resurrection from the dead.
  - 1. Therefore, it was right for the Lord to go under the waters of baptism and be lifted out of the waters of baptism. Not only would He be raised from the dead, but also he would raise all those who followed Him.
- H. For those facing death, what an encouragement this is to see the Lord rising out of the waters of baptism!
- I. Going under the waters in baptism is symbolic of judgment and rising out of the waters of baptism is symbolic of a change of judgment.
  - 1. When the Lord was baptized, he stood in man's place and rising from the waters of baptism, He showed how He changed man's judgment from guilty to pardoned.
- J. It was "right" for the Lord Jesus to be baptized, for the Lord to be baptized was a fulfillment of all righteousness.
  - 1. This is what the Lord Jesus meant when He said that it was necessary for Him to be baptized as a fulfillment of all righteousness.

VIII. Verse 15—*"Suffer it to be so now"*

- A. The other important word that explains why the Lord Jesus was baptized is the word "now."
  - 1. **Matthew 3:15** says, *"Suffer it to be so now."*
- B. The Lord told John, "Allow my baptism to be done just now."
- C. When the Lord said, "Now," He was saying that after thousands of years of waiting for the Messiah to redeem man from death and hell, the time had finally come.
- D. When the Lord said, "Now," He was saying that His suffering into death was going to occur now.
- E. When the Lord said, "Now," He was saying that His sufferings and humiliation were going to be just in the "now." It would only be once for all time—not to be repeated again.
  - 1. **Hebrews 10:10** says, *"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."*
  - 2. By saying "now," the Lord Jesus was saying that His state of being humiliated was only for that short period of time He called "now."
    - a. **Hebrews 2:9** says, *"But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man."*
  - 3. The Lord will never again be made lower than the angels for the suffering of death. That was only for the "now" He was referring to.
  - 4. After that "now" period of time, the Lord will always be seen as Lord of lords and King of God—the Lord God Omnipotent.
- F. This baptism was the time of the great commissioning of the Lord for His death.
  - 1. Most people accomplish their greatest work during their lifetimes. The Lord accomplished His greatest work in His death when He destroyed death and the devil.
    - a. **Hebrews 2:14** says, *"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that*

*through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;”*

2. What an honor and encouragement it was for John the Baptist to hear the Lord say the word “us” in **Matthew 3:15**.
  - a. **Matthew 3:15** says, *“Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.”*
  - b. That is when John agreed in verse 15 which says, *“Then he suffered him.”*

IX. Verse 16—*“Baptized, went up straightway out”*

- A. The Lord was baptized in verse 16.
  1. **Matthew 3:16** says, *“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:”*
- B. A special note is added about His baptism where it says, *“Went up straightway out of the water.”*
- C. That statement *“out of the water”* is a statement of salvation.
  1. During Creation, the earth was saved and came out of the water.
  2. During the flood, Noah and his family were saved and came out of the water.
  3. In Egypt, Moses was saved and came out of the water.
  4. At the Red Sea, Israel was saved and came out of the water.
- D. Baptism is a symbol of how all followers of the Lord Jesus will be saved and come out of death into eternal life.

X. Verse 16—*“The heavens were opened...a dove”*

- A. As soon as the Lord Jesus came out of the waters, verse 16 continues, saying, *“Lo, the heavens were opened unto Him.”*
- B. That was a message that after His death on the cross (symbolized by going under the waters of baptism), three days later, He would rise from the dead (symbolized by Him coming up from the waters of baptism). Then, He would be received back into Heaven (symbolized by the heavens being opened to Him after He came out of the waters of baptism).
- C. The heavens were opened, and the Spirit of God like a dove descended on Him.
- D. The dove was the animal that God chose to represent the Spirit of God.
  1. The dove is a gentle animal, and the Spirit of God is gentle. The Spirit of God speaks to us gently as 1 Kings describes.
    - a. **1 Kings 19:11-12** says, *“<sup>11</sup> And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: <sup>12</sup> And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.”*
  2. The prophet Elijah heard the Spirit of God is as gentle as a dove speaking in a still small voice.
- E. The prophet Isaiah heard the Spirit of God speaking from behind him as gentle as a dove in **Isaiah 30:21**.
  1. The verse says, *“And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.”*
- F. That is what the Spirit of God does for us. He guides us through life with a still small voice like a dove.
- G. The Spirit of God was seen like a dove descending and landing on the Lord Jesus. When that happened, it was a call to remember the first mention of a dove in the Bible. This occurred when Noah took the dove in **Genesis 8:10-12**.

1. **Genesis 8:10-12** says, *“<sup>10</sup> And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; <sup>11</sup> And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf pluckt off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. <sup>12</sup> And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more.”*
  - H. There was Noah in the treacherous waters of the flood, needing to know if there was going to be dry land for him to land on and come out of the ark.
  - I. Noah opened the window, took the dove, and let it loose in the morning. In the evening as Noah looked at the window and only saw water, the dove appeared again with an olive leaf in her mouth.
  - J. That olive leaf that the dove brought back was a message that there was a place of dry land for Noah to be saved from the waters.
  - K. It was the dove that brought that message of hope to Noah. In the same way, before we were saved, we were like Noah on the waters, desperate and fearing we would drown in our sins. We were wondering if there was any hope for us.
  - L. Like the dove, the Spirit of God brought us the message that there was hope of being saved and revealed to us that our hope was in the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - M. After seven days, Noah took the dove again and turned it loose. This time the dove did not return again because the dove found her resting place. She did not need to return to the ark again.
  - N. In the same way, when the Lord Jesus came out of the waters of baptism, the dove descended from the sky and landed on the Lord Jesus.
    1. The Lord Jesus is the only true resting place. The dove from Noah’s ark found a resting place and did not return to the ark. We find a resting place in the Lord Jesus when we accepted His invitation of **Matthew 11:28-29**.
      - a. The verses say, *“<sup>28</sup> Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”*
    2. We find a resting place in the Lord Jesus and do not return again to our old lives outside of Jesus.
  - O. After His baptism the Holy Spirit as a dove landed on Jesus, showing us our resting place.
- XI. Verse 17—*“This is my beloved Son...pleased”*
- A. Then, there was the voice from verse 17.
    1. **Matthew 3:17** says, *“And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”*
  - B. God the Father spoke from heaven and made the glorious announcement that here standing in front of them was God the Son in whom God the Father was well pleased. He was delighted with Him as we know from **Proverbs 8:30**.
    1. **Proverbs 8:30** states, *“When I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;”*
  - C. There is such a union of love and delight between God the Father and God the Son that is really only expressed by what the Lord Jesus expressed in **John 10:30**.
    1. He clearly states, *“I and my Father are one.”*
  - D. There are just a few unique times in the Bible where all three members of the Trinity are seen together in **Isaiah 48:16**.
    1. The verse says, *“Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me.”*



- E. Here is a unique time when God the Spirit is present in the dove that descended from Heaven and landed on the Lord Jesus.
  - 1. God the Father is present speaking from Heaven saying that here was His beloved Son in whom He is well pleased.
  - 2. God the Son is coming up from the waters of baptism.
- F. The occasion for the presence of the Trinity of the Godhead was the commissioning of the Lord Jesus for His death for the sins of man.
  - 1. The death of the Lord Jesus was just that important.
  - 2. The first Adam closed the door of Heaven and was driven out of the Garden of Eden for his rebellion against God.
  - 3. The second Adam opens the door of Heaven by His obedience to God the Father in becoming the great sacrifice for man's sins.
- G. This baptism of the Lord Jesus was the start of His public ministry.