

The Forgotten Jesus Podcast

S4E1

The Riverside Revival Of John The Baptist - (Luke 3:1-3)

Description – Join us as we begin to look at the adult years of Jesus’s ministry, by going to the Jordan River to meet a man named John.

Today we begin Season 4, We’ll begin by looking at John the Baptist.

Luke 3:1-2

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, ²during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas...

So right out of the gate, before we even talk about John the Baptist, Luke is timestamping this as a real person, at a real time in history.

Luke 3:2-3

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Who was John? He was the cousin of Jesus, a little bit older than Jesus. His parents, Zechariah & Elizabeth were devout Jews. Zechariah was even in the priesthood. So it’s odd that John, who by birth is part of the priesthood, had every right to be in the temple in Jerusalem.

Where was John? He was in the wilderness. Think dry, desert, rocky place, like Arizona.

John is preaching in the wilderness, near the Jordan, which is below sea level. From the dead sea to the temple mount in Jerusalem is about a 17 mile journey, and an elevation change of 5,000 feet.

Even in Jesus’s baptism, he’s demonstrating humility in that he’s being baptized at the lowest place on earth.

John is baptizing, and his message is one of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

Three clues on where John was baptizing:

1. Matthew 3:1 - In the wilderness of Judea
In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ² and saying, “Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near!”

2. Luke 3:3 - In the vicinity of the Jordan

³ He went into all the vicinity of the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins,

3. Mark 1:4-5

⁴ John came baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

John is baptizing in a particular area of the country that is important to Jewish history.

1. Moses's farewell speech to the Nation

a. Deuteronomy 29

b. Remember, Moses was their "messiah" like figure, but he failed, was disobedient to God and couldn't enter the land.

2. The crossing of the river into the promised land

a. Joshua 3

b. Joshua commands the people to get 12 large stones, one for each of the tribes, to set up a memorial there on the banks of the Jordan.

3. Elijah split the water of the Jordan

a. 2 Kings 2:8

b. Elijah split the waters of the river.

This is where John is baptizing. This is the history of the place, that all the people know. It would be like us going to visit the ground zero memorial for the world trade center in New York City.

Burton Throckmorton: Gospel Parallels

<https://www.amazon.com/Gospel-Parallels-Comparison-Synoptic-Standard/dp/0840774842/>

Matthew 3:1-6

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ² and saying, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near!" ³ For he is the one spoken of through the prophet Isaiah, who said: A voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way for the Lord; make his paths straight! ⁴ Now John had a camel-hair garment with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then people from Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the vicinity of the Jordan were going out to him, ⁶ and they were baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

There are three major ideas John is proclaiming and even borrowing from other groups. We'll discuss those more next week.

1. Repent
2. The Kingdom of Heaven is Near
3. Baptism for the forgiveness of sins