



CAPITOL COMMISSION®

The Baptism of the Beloved Son

JUNE 10-11, 2026

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Luke 3:21-22 *When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened. 22) And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased." (NKJV)*

THEN JESUS CAME FROM GALILEE TO JOHN AT THE JORDAN TO BE BAPTIZED BY HIM. AND JOHN TRIED TO PREVENT HIM, SAYING, "I NEED TO BE BAPTIZED BY YOU, AND ARE YOU COMING TO ME?" BUT JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID TO HIM, "PERMIT IT TO BE SO NOW, FOR THUS IT IS FITTING FOR US TO FULFILL ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS." THEN HE ALLOWED HIM. WHEN HE HAD BEEN BAPTIZED, JESUS CAME UP IMMEDIATELY FROM THE WATER; AND BEHOLD, THE HEAVENS WERE OPENED TO HIM, AND HE SAW THE SPIRIT OF GOD DESCENDING LIKE A DOVE AND ALIGHTING UPON HIM. AND SUDDENLY A VOICE CAME FROM HEAVEN, SAYING, "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED." MATTHEW 3:13-17

Is this a public or private event? What was Jesus doing while He was being baptized? Why the significant emphasis on prayer here? Did God answer His prayer? What does it mean for the heaven to be opened? Why does the invisible Holy Spirit take a visible "bodily form"? What would it have been like to hear the voice of God the Father? Is this Jesus' Coronation Ceremony by His Father? How does Jesus contrast all the others who were baptized? Is it especially personal here for Jesus? Does this reveal His dependence?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES AND EVENTS:

- JUNE 17-18: LUKE 3:23-38 *THE LINEAGE OF THE MESSIAH*
- NOVEMBER 2: *THE 23RD ANNUAL CAPITOL COOKOUT AND PRAYER WALK*

It is likely fall in the Sabbatical year (Lev. 25:1-7) of AD 26, so the people have been released from their normal business and agricultural responsibilities and are flocking to go hear John preach near the Jordan River. By this time, not only has everyone in the cities heard of John, but even the remotest towns, villages and hamlets have heard about John and his baptism of repentance. So great was the anticipation of the coming Messiah, aroused to a fever pitch by John's powerful preaching of preparation for Him, that John was also having to include in his every message that he is not the Messiah, but that much greater One was coming. John had especially shown with great boldness that he was not interested in allowing his baptism as an empty ritual to hide a life of unrepentance or scandal, but that the repentance he called for with his baptism was to be revealed by a change of heart and life. These penny-pinching Jews were to show repentance by looking for those among them who were destitute and in great need and giving to them personally to meet their needs. The thieving tax collectors were to demonstrate their baptism by only taking what was required for taxes. And those in military, police or magistrate/political authority were to reveal their repentance by forsaking intimidation, lying or false accusations, and instead, in contrast, being content with what God had given them.

IT CAME TO PASS IN THOSE DAYS THAT JESUS CAME FROM NAZARETH OF GALILEE, AND WAS BAPTIZED BY JOHN IN THE JORDAN. AND IMMEDIATELY, COMING UP FROM THE WATER, HE SAW THE HEAVENS PARTING AND THE SPIRIT DESCENDING UPON HIM LIKE A DOVE. THEN A VOICE CAME FROM HEAVEN, "YOU ARE MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED." MARK 1:9-11

I. HEAVEN OPENING PRAYER

LUKE 3:21

Luke the physician has been stacking the evidence for Governor Theophilus by revealing witness after witness to the reality that Jesus is the Messiah. But none of the

BIBLE STUDIES

WEDNESDAY @ 8:30 AM – FREDERICKSBURG – PARADISE DINER – 260 WARRENTON RD & NOON – FAIRFAX – DENNY'S, 10473 FAIRFAX BLVD.

THURSDAY @ 8:00 AM – RICHMOND – SHONEY'S, HULL & COURTHOUSE & NOON – LYNCHBURG – PANERA BREAD, 3901 OLD FOREST RD.

Virginia

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previous witnesses compare to what Jesus is asking for when he continues praying at his baptism. The sinless Savior has overcome all the objections of John the Baptist to His baptism by helping John understand that it was necessary to "*fulfill all righteousness*." This is the most solemn day of dedication to ministry in the life of Jesus Christ. He has chosen John's baptism of repentance, though without sin, to identify with us in our sin and to commit Himself to be the sacrifice for our sin (Isaiah 53:12), all in obedience to His Father as an example to us. The Greek construction that Luke uses here allows the governor to understand that both the prayer and the answer to it exactly matches. Jesus constantly prayed for the greatest witness possible that He is the Messiah, to occur in conjunction with His commitment to the cross at His baptism in front of "*all the people*!" First, Jesus was constantly praying for the "*heaven to be opened*." This request, which was immediately answered after His baptism, seems to involve a visible manifestation of the throne room of God Himself, as seen by Stephen, the first martyr of the Church on the day he was martyred.

BUT HE, BEING FULL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, GAZED INTO HEAVEN AND SAW THE GLORY OF GOD, AND JESUS STANDING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE THRONE OF GOD, AND SAID, "LOOK! I SEE THE HEAVENS OPENED AND THE SON OF MAN STANDING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD!"
ACTS 7:55-56

II. HOLY SPIRIT POWER

LUKE 3:22A

The second thing that Jesus had constantly prayed for was the visible witness of the Holy Spirit. Everyone in Israel knew that, in some obvious way, though invisible, the Holy Spirit would be given to the Messiah. It had been prophesied so clearly in Isaiah 11:1-2 that "*The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him*." And God personally verifies the same in Isaiah 42:1, "*Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, My Elect One in whom my soul*

delights! I have put My Spirit upon Him." Then the words of the Messiah Himself are prophesied in Isaiah 61:1, "*The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound*." It is Luke alone, of all the Gospel accounts who emphasized the invisible "*Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him*." An undeniable supernatural witness to fulfilled prophecy in answer to Jesus' prayer!

AND JOHN BORE WITNESS, SAYING, "I SAW THE SPIRIT DESCENDING FROM HEAVEN LIKE A DOVE, AND HE REMAINED ON HIM. I DID NOT KNOW HIM, BUT HE WHO SENT ME TO BAPTIZE WITH WATER SAID TO ME, "UPON WHOM YOU SEE THE SPIRIT DESCENDING, AND REMAINING ON HIM, THIS IS HE WHO BAPTIZES WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT. AND I HAVE SEEN AND TESTIFIED THAT THIS IS THE SON OF GOD."
JOHN 1:32-34

III. HEAVENLY FATHER'S PRAISE LUKE 3:22B

The final witness Jesus constantly prays for is a direct verification that He is the Messiah from the voice of God His Father. So, while the heavens are opened and "*all the people*" from all over Israel are at Jesus' baptism, viewing the throne room of God Himself, suddenly they hear the thunderous voice of God the Father proclaiming literally, "*You are The Son of Me, The Beloved; in You I am well pleased*." This is the main clause of the entire passage, to be repeated again from heaven (Mt. 17:5, cf. Jn. 12:28-9). The prophecies that would have crossed their minds would have been the great Messianic Psalm, "*I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, You are My Son, Today I have begotten You*" (2:7) and Isaiah 42:1. It's no wonder, "*The next day John saw Jesus ... and said, 'Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!'*" (Jn. 1:29) There can be no greater witness than God Himself in all the Trinity to prove Jesus is the foretold Messiah!

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Do you see baptism as a ritual, and trusting in it for entry to heaven and hiding your sin?
- 2) Have you received Jesus Christ as your Messiah, turning from your sin to trusting Him as your Savior?
- 3) Do you believe the promises of God enough to pray and continue in prayer until God graciously answers?