

## THE BAPTISM OF JESUS CHRIST



MARY'S RELATIVES, ZACHARIAS, WHO WAS A PRIEST, AND HIS WIFE ELIZABETH, WERE A PIOUS AND GOD-FEARING COUPLE. JUST LIKE ABRAHAM AND SARAH, THIS COUPLE WAS OLD WHEN THEY HAD A WONDERFUL SON WHOM GOD HAD CHOSEN FOR A SPECIAL PURPOSE. WHEN HE WAS EIGHT DAYS OLD, HIS PARENTS NAMED HIM JOHN, WHICH MEANS "GOD IS GRACEFUL".

AT AN EARLY AGE, JOHN LEFT HOME AND MOVED TO THE WILDERNESS WHERE HE LIVED ON WILD HONEY AND LOCUSTS, WEARING ROUGH AND PLAIN CLOTHES OF CAMEL'S HAIR. HOWEVER, JOHN HAD BEEN CALLED INTO THE WILDERNESS FOR A SPECIAL PURPOSE: TO PREPARE PEOPLE TO MEET THE PROMISED CHRIST. THE PROPHETS HAD ALREADY PREDICTED ABOUT HIS BIRTH SEVERAL HUNDRED YEARS EARLIER, SAYING: "I WILL SEND MY MESSENGER BEFORE YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY."

WHEN JOHN WAS THIRTY YEARS OLD, GOD APPEARED AND COMMANDED HIM TO BEGIN HIS MISSION. JOHN LEFT THE WILDERNESS AND BEGAN TO SPEAK TO THE PEOPLE ABOUT THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE COMING OF THE CHRIST. HE PREACHED TO STAY AWAY FROM SIN AND ACT RIGHTEOUSLY. MANY OF THE FOLKS WHO HEARD HIS WORDS REPENTED AND WERE BAPTIZED IN THE JORDAN RIVER.

JOHN'S FAME SPREAD SO FAST THAT PEOPLE THOUGHT HIM TO BE THE PROMISED MESSIAH. WHEN HE KNEW WHAT THEY

WERE THINKING, HE BOLDLY DECLARED THAT HE WAS NOT THE MESSIAH AND SAID: "I BAPTIZE YOU WITH WATER FOR REPENTANCE, WHILE THE ONE WHO IS COMING AFTER ME IS MIGHTIER THAN ME AND WHOSE SANDALS I AM NOT WORTHY TO UNTIE. HE WILL BAPTIZE YOU WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND FIRE."

AT THAT TIME, JESUS LEFT NAZARETH AND CAME TO JOHN TO BE BAPTIZED. WHEN JOHN SAW JESUS, HE SAID: "BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD WHO IS TO REDEEM THE SINS OF THE WORLD. HE IS THE ONE ABOUT WHOM I SAID THAT THE ONE COMING AFTER ME IS MIGHTIER, BECAUSE HE WAS LONG BEFORE ME."

**WHEN JESUS APPROACHED JOHN TO BE BAPTIZED, JOHN DID NOT WAIT TO BAPTIZE HIM, SAYING THAT JESUS SHOULD BAPTIZE HIM FIRST. JESUS EXPLAINED TO HIM THAT IT WAS TO BE DONE SO THAT GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS WOULD BE ACCOMPLISHED. HEARING THESE WORDS, JOHN BAPTIZED JESUS IN THE JORDAN RIVER. THAT IS WHY FUTURE CHURCH FATHERS HAVE NAMED HIM JOHN THE BAPTIST, SINCE HE HAD THE HONOR OF BAPTIZING THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD, JESUS CHRIST.**

**AFTER THE BAPTISM, JESUS CAME OUT OF THE JORDAN RIVER AND SAW THE HOLY SPIRIT DESCENDING AS A DOVE TO REST ON HIM. AND A VOICE WAS HEARD FROM HEAVEN SAYING: "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED."**

**BY HIS BAPTISM, JESUS DEMONSTRATES TO US THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BAPTISM. BAPTISM IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH. MAN IS CLEANSED OF HIS OLD SINS AND RECEIVES THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. THROUGH BAPTISM, MAN BECOMES A TRUE CHRISTIAN AND A MEMBER OF CHRIST'S CHURCH.**

**IN THE ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH, THE PRIEST BAPTIZES US IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, THE SON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, BECAUSE GOD THE FATHER, GOD THE SON, JESUS CHRIST AND THE HOLY SPIRIT WERE PRESENT DURING THE BAPTISM.**

### **QUESTIONS AND PROPOSALS**

- 1) WHO WAS JOHN THE BAPTIST AND WHERE DID HE LIVE?**
- 2) FOR WHAT PURPOSE HAD GOD CHOSE JOHN?**
- 3) WHAT DID JOHN DO BY THE JORDAN RIVER?**
- 4) WHAT HAPPENED WHEN JESUS CHRIST AND JOHN THE BAPTIST MET?**
- 5) WHAT EXPIRED AFTER THE BAPTISM OF JESUS?**
- 6) WHY IS BAPTISM SO IMPORTANT TO MANKIND?**
- 7) HOW DO YOU INTERPRET GOD'S WORDS: "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED."**

### **LEARN BY HEART**

**WHAT A MARVELOUS MYSTERY HAS BEEN REVEALED,  
GOD THE CREATOR HAS COME TO JORDAN.  
O RIVER, DO NOT FEAR, FOR I AM YOUR CREATOR,  
HERE TO BE BAPTIZED AND TO REDEEM MEN FROM SINS.**