

Chapter 9

The Lord Jesus baptised by John

Matthew 3 vv 13-17

Mark 1 vv 9-11

Luke 3 vv 21 and 22

One day John is preaching again, as usual near the Jordan. It is now six months since he began to preach openly. For six months already he has been preparing the way for the King of kings. Many, many people have come, and still come daily to him. For all of them he has but one message, "Repent".

Look, there comes another man. But for this man he has not got that message "Repent". Oh, why not?

The stranger steps up to John and asks him something. Oh, look now, John the Baptist shakes his head and makes an evasive gesture. He refuses to do what the stranger requests.

Who is this man and what does he ask then? ... This young man comes from the North country, from the despised Nazareth. He is - the Lord Jesus, the son of Joseph. No, He is not the son of Joseph, but the Son of God.

When the Lord Jesus is about thirty years old, He one day leaves His home. He makes first for the Jordan, towards John the Baptist. He wants to be baptised by John.

But the latter refuses, politely, but firmly. A sense of holy awe fills the heart of the forerunner, now that the heavenly King is standing by him. What? Must he baptise the Lord Jesus? No! No! Just read what answer John gives. "I have need to be baptised of thee, and comest

thou to me?" It is as though John says "I must not baptise you, but you must baptise me."

But the Lord Jesus says quietly and persuasively "Suffer it to be so now", which means "Refuse no longer, but do what I ask you."

John dares no longer resist. Together they go down into the water of Jordan and John baptises the Lord Jesus.

Now, why did the Lord Jesus have to be baptised? All other people first confessed their sins; acknowledged first their sinnership and were then baptised as a sign or token that they must become cleansed from their sins.

But the Lord Jesus had no sins. Baptism was therefore not really necessary for the Lord Jesus. And yet the Saviour was baptised? Why then? Thereby He meant to show that all the sins of His people were laid upon Him. He would take upon Himself the punishment of sin in the room of His chosen people. He would reconcile God's anger over sin for His people. He would fulfil the law of God completely. I have already told you this in Chapter 5, but I must repeat it here.

Although the Lord Jesus was not a sinner, although He was a holy, righteous man, yet He was "reckoned among the transgressors". That was a great humiliation for the Son of God. But He submitted in love for His people.

So you see, boys and girls, that is why the

THE BIBLE HISTORY TOLD TO OUR CHILDREN

- NEW TESTAMENT -

Lord Jesus let Himself be baptised.

When the Lord Jesus was baptised, however, something more happened. Just listen. - Look, there they both stand in the Jordan. John has baptised the Lord Jesus. But straightway after the baptism Jesus comes up out of the water.

When He stands again on the banks of the river, the heavens are opened. A dove wings its way downward. This dove is no ordinary dove however, no, it is the Holy Ghost, who in the SHAPE of a dove descends and lights upon the Lord Jesus.

Hark! From the opened heaven there sounds a voice - "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Who says that?

God, the Father, speaks those words. Just as once centuries before, the voice of God had echoed at Sinai, when God gave the law of the ten commandments to Israel, so now God speaks again from heaven these words.

With what amazement John must have listened. Deep reverence fills his soul. But apparently the other Jews, who were with John, also heard it.

Oh Jews, listen to those words. Not only does John say that Jesus is the Son of God, but God Himself says so too. The Jews thought that Jesus was the son of Joseph, the simple carpenter from Nazareth, but here God says that the Lord Jesus is His Son. Here the Lord Jesus is honoured by His Father. Here we can see for a moment, who the Lord Jesus really IS.

But the Jews did not listen to that voice. The Jewish people still rejected the Saviour. How terrible isn't it?

This story, however, is also in the Bible for our teaching. It is for us too a warning not to reject the Lord Jesus. What a blessing, boys and girls, if He should be your Saviour too.