

THE MINISTRY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

New Testament Lesson #9

John the Baptist had spent time in the desert until he began preaching. He wore clothes made of camel's hair and a leather belt and ate locusts and wild honey. He preached, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." His work was a fulfillment of a prophecy of Isaiah's.

People from the whole region went into the wilderness to see and listen to John. Those who were sorry about their sins confessed them and were baptized by John in the Jordan River.

When the Pharisees and Sadducees went to John, he called them a "brood of vipers," which means a "family of snakes." They thought they taught God's laws to people, but what they really taught was like poison. John warned them not to think that just because they were Jews ("We have Abraham as our father"), the things they were doing were right and pleasing to God.

He explained that he baptized with water as a sign of a person's repentance, but that One was coming who was more powerful than John, who would baptize "with the Holy Spirit and with fire." John explained that this person ("whose sandals I am not fit to carry") would gather his wheat (the good produce) into the barn and burn up the chaff (the useless byproduct).

POINTS TO CONSIDER:

- There is a parallel account in Luke 3:1-18 that gives a few more details of John's message.
- Jesus spoke of John in Matthew 11:7-15 and Luke 7:24-33.
- Isaiah's prophecy of John's mission is found in Isaiah 40:3-9.

The Ministry of John the Baptist

- I. John began preaching.
 - A. John urged people to change their ways.
 - B. He said the Pharisees and Sadducees were like snakes and taught the wrong things.
- II. John baptized those who confessed their sins.
 - A. He baptized them in the Jordan River.
 - B. He said that someday someone more powerful than he would baptize the people with the Holy Spirit and fire.

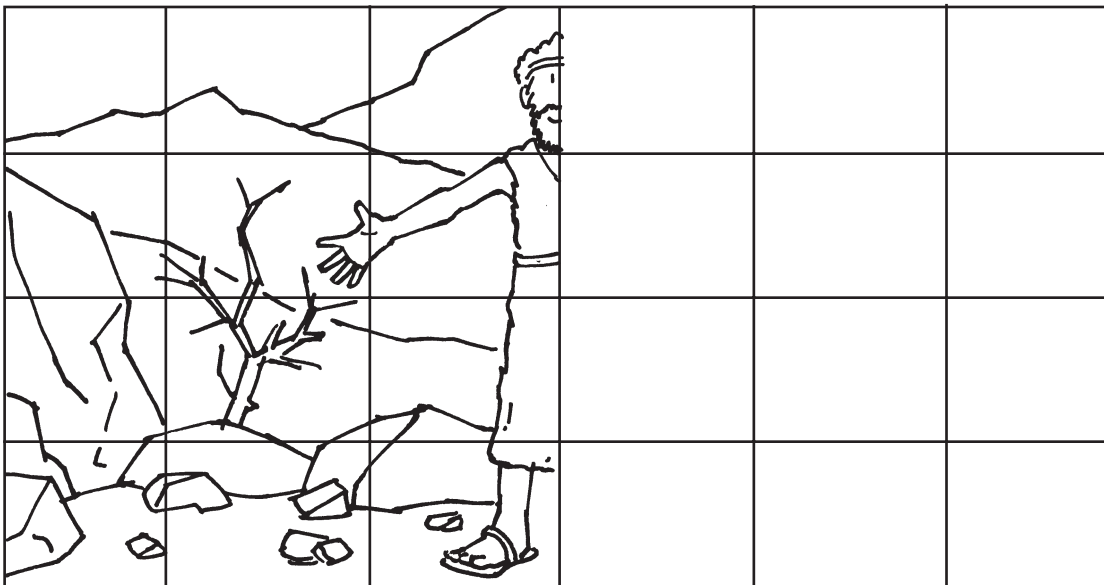
ANSWER KEY:

To prepare the people to hear Jesus' words and to baptize with water

"A brood of vipers"

John the Baptist grew up in the desert. He wore clothes of camel's hair and a leather belt. He ate locusts and wild honey.

Finish the squares the same on the other side.

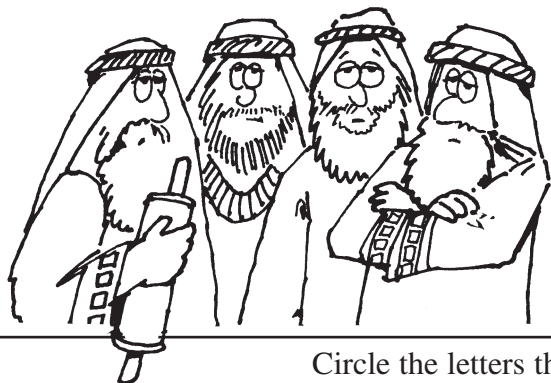


What was John's mission?

Use the code to find the answer.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
W	L	A	F	J	M	B	X	R	Q	C	G	K	S	P	D	H	N	T	V	Y	I	Z	E	U	O

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The Pharisees and Sadducees were the religious leaders. They did not teach the people what God wanted them to. John warned them about this. What did he call them?

Circle the letters that are out of order. Write them on the lines.



“ _____ ”

Name _____

John told everyone about Jesus and baptized people who were sorry about sinning.

Find 10 people in the picture for John to baptize.



Name _____