

## Story Time - Read the story to the children

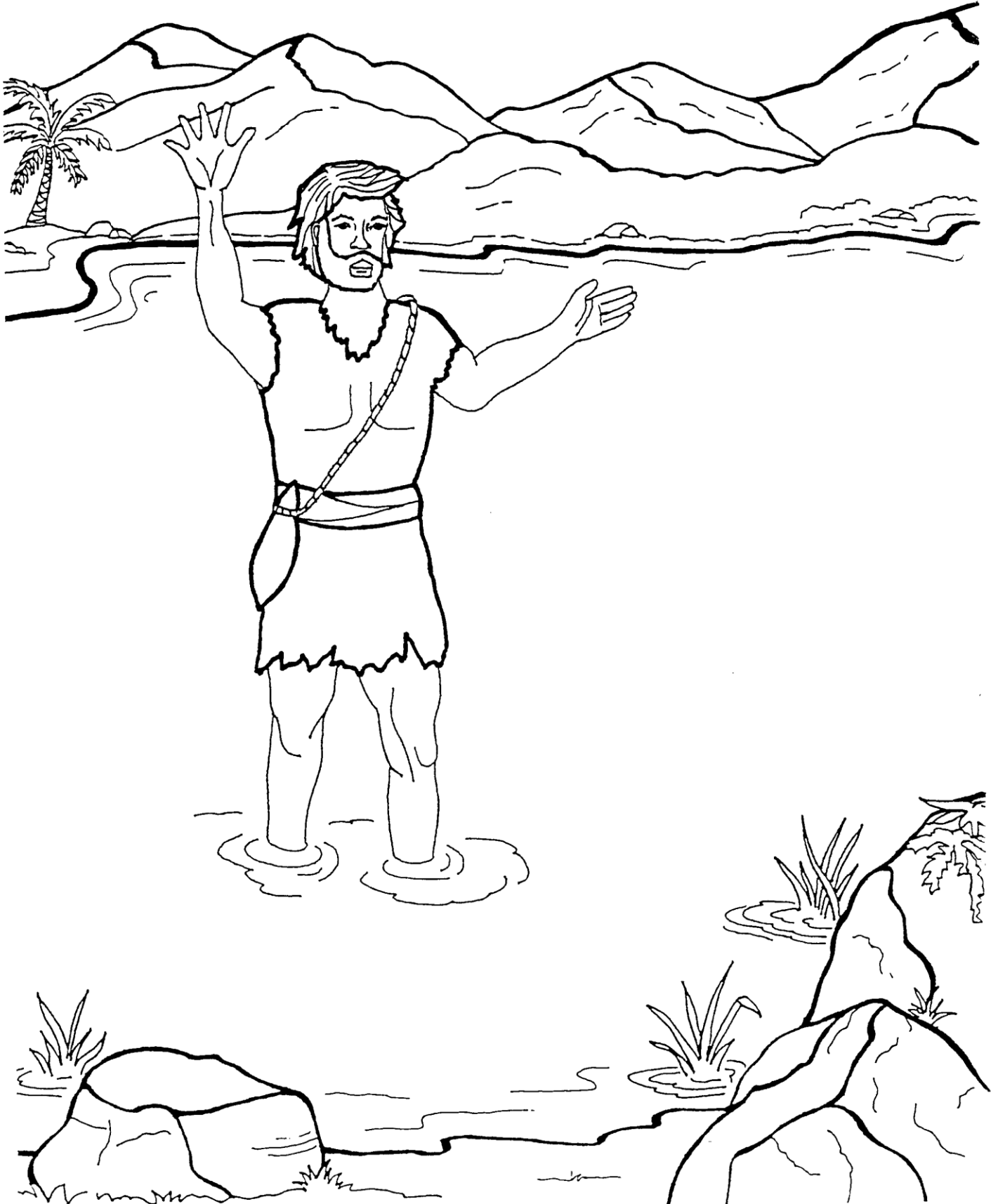
### Lesson 173: JOHN THE BAPTIST

#### LUKE 3:1-22

It was the 15th year of the rule of Tiberius Caesar. These men were under Caesar: Pontius Pilate, the governor of Judea; Herod, the ruler of Galilee; Philip, Herod's brother, the ruler of Iturea and Trachonitis; Lysanias, the ruler of Abilene. Annas and Caiaphas were the high priests. During this time, John, the son of Zechariah, was living in the desert wilderness, and he received a message from God. So he went through the whole area around the Jordan River and told the people God's message. He told them to be baptized to show that they wanted to change their lives, and then their sins would be forgiven, Just as it is written in the book of Isaiah the prophet: "There is someone shouting out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way for the Lord. Make the road straight for him. Every valley will be filled, and every mountain and hill will be made flat. Crooked roads will be made straight, and rough roads will be made smooth. Then everyone will see how God will save his people!'" Crowds of people came to be baptized by John. But he said to them, "You are all snakes! Who warned you to run from God's judgment that is coming? Change your hearts! And show by your lives that you have changed. I know what you are about to say--'but Abraham is our father!' That means nothing. I tell you that God can make children for Abraham from these rocks! The ax is now ready to cut down the trees. Every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." The people asked John, "What should we do?" He answered, "If you have two shirts, share with someone who does not have one. If you have food, share that too." Even the tax collectors came to John. They wanted to be baptized. They said to him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He told them, "Don't take more taxes from people than you have been ordered to collect." The soldiers asked him, "What about us? What should we do?" He said to them, "Don't use force or lies to make people give you money. Be happy with the pay you get." Everyone was hoping for the Messiah to come, and they wondered about John. They thought, "Maybe he is the Messiah." John's answer to this was, "I baptize you in water, but there is someone coming later who is able to do more than I can. I am not good enough to be the slave who unties his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He will come ready to clean and separate the grain. He will separate the good grain from the straw, and he will put the good part into his barn. Then he will burn the useless part with a fire that

cannot be stopped." John said many other things like this to encourage the people to change, and he told them the Good News. John criticized Herod the ruler for what he had done with Herodias, the wife of Herod's brother, as well as for all the other bad things he had done. So Herod added another bad thing to all his other wrongs: He put John in jail. When all the people were being baptized, Jesus came and was baptized too. And while he was praying, the sky opened, and the Holy Spirit came down on him in a physical form, like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven and said, "You are my Beloved Son. I am very pleased with you."

**173. JOHN THE BAPTIST**  
(LUKE 3:1-22)



“John the Baptist went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.” **LUKE 3:3**

# 173. JOHN THE BAPTIST

## LUKE 3:1-22

### MEMORY VERSE:

*“And he went into all the regions around the Jordan, preaching...”* LUKE 3:3

### **Review Questions**

#### True or False

1. John, the son of Zechariah, was living in the wilderness.
2. The Word of Moses came to John in the wilderness.
3. John went around the whole region of the Jordan River, telling the people about God's message.
4. It is written in the book of Isaiah the prophet: "There is someone shouting out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way for the Lord. Make the road straight for him.'"
5. John told them that he was the Messiah.

#### Questions

1. What did John tell the people when he knew that they were going to say that Abraham was their father?
2. What did John tell them would happen to every tree that did not produce good fruit?
3. What did he tell the people they should do with their clothes and food?
4. What did he tell the tax collectors to do?
5. What did he tell the soldiers to do?
6. What did king Herod do to John?
7. What happened when Jesus came to be baptized by John?

## **Lesson 173 Prepare The Way Game**

### **PREPARE THE WAY FOR THE LORD! Game**

Tell the children how John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus by telling others to be ready because he was coming soon. Also let them know that he wore wild camel's hair clothes, and ate wild honey and locusts! They are going to play a match game and clear the way for Jesus by getting rid of all the locusts and honey bee cards in the way. In order to clear the way, they have to turn over two cards that match. When they make a match, they will pick up the cards and keep them to get them out of the way. Before class make some honey bee and locust cards by printing the templates. Make half the cards with locusts on them and half with honey bees. Print the patterns below on good heavy card stock, or if you don't have card stock, print on regular paper and glue to construction paper (make it all the same color) so that the children can't see through the paper.

You can make this game as easy or as hard as you would like. For the younger children just use two types of cards – Honey bees and locusts. There will be a lot of the same cards but they will have a 50/50 chance of getting a match. For older children you can make the game more challenging by having them answer a question about the lesson correctly in order to keep the cards. If they get the answer wrong, they have to put them back.

### **PRAYER**

Lead the children in a prayer of salvation, allowing those who have never asked Him into their lives to come in. Be sure to include the steps of repentance, recognizing sin, asking the Lord to forgive, and turning from the ways of self to the ways of God.

