

Shalom. May the great name of our Savior Jesus Christ be blessed.

Welcome, let's study the Bible together.

*Matthew 3:5-10 (ESV)*

"Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not presume to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father," for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.'"

Look closely at verse 7: *"You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"* John the Baptist calls the Pharisees and Sadducees a "brood of vipers," a strong rebuke indicating their

hypocrisy and evil nature. Despite coming for baptism, they lacked true repentance and a heart change.

This question is critical: Who warned you to escape the judgment coming your way? They thought baptism alone was enough to avoid God's coming wrath, but John exposes their self-deception. Baptism without true repentance—turning away from sin—is meaningless.

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### Repentance Means Change of Life, Not Just Ritual

John commands: "Bear fruits worthy of repentance." This means true repentance is evidenced by actions—leaving behind sinful lifestyles:

- If you were involved in immorality, stop it.
- If pride ruled your heart, humble yourself.
- If you lived in drunkenness, turn away from it.

Simply going through the motions of baptism without a heart surrender to God is futile. This is the message John the Baptist wanted the Pharisees and Sadducees to hear.

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### The Danger of Hypocrisy

The Pharisees wanted to use baptism as a religious ritual, hoping it would grant them salvation without a true heart change. This is a trap many fall into today: thinking baptism is a ticket to heaven regardless of ongoing sin.

However, the Bible clearly teaches:

- *“Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out”* (Acts 3:19).
- *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”* (1 John 1:9).

But repentance requires a genuine turning from sin, not just lip service.

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## Examples from Scripture

The people of Nineveh repented with their whole heart, and God spared them from judgment:

*Jonah 3:10* — “When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened.”

God does not forgive empty words but genuine deeds of repentance.

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## Call to True Discipleship

If you decide to follow Jesus, be ready to take up your cross daily (Luke 9:23). This means:

- Leaving the world behind.
- Resisting sin seriously.
- Living a life fully committed to God.

Only then will you experience God's power and blessing.

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### Final Encouragement

Do not be deceived—true baptism and salvation come with a changed heart and lifestyle. Otherwise, you risk bringing judgment on yourself instead of blessing.

May the Lord bless you richly.

WHO WARNED YOU TO FLEE THE WRATH TO COME?

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