

## Baptisms : Water and Fire

For most churches water baptism is the main focus of ministry. But “Repentance unto salvation” is a first step meant to prepare people for something more, as it is not the Baptism that gets you into the Kingdom.

There is an overlap of the ministries of John and Jesus, and Jesus carried on John’s work while he was in prison, but soon left this preparatory ministry to **preach the message only he was empowered to do at that time, the Gospel of the Kingdom.**

John even said he only had water to baptize with but Jesus was going to give a HIGHER Baptism, and had a higher ministry that John himself was not qualified to walk in.

This is recorded in all four gospels. (**Matthew 3:11, Mark 1:8, Luke 3:16, John 1:33.**)

But if people cannot distinguish these TWO baptisms and the two messages (gospels) they represent then they will be unable to minister effectively in the higher, more rarefied realm, and will seemingly always be stuck in the mud in the Jordan valley.

**There is a difference, and the Bible makes note of this distinction in the ministry of Moses vs Joshua, as a parallel of the ministry of John vs Jesus.** Without understanding this people will confuse the Kingdom/Promised Land from the wilderness/preparation journey, people will confuse repentance, a work of the strength of your will over your actions and behavior, with the supernatural empowerment of Grace, a work of God due to your faith in Him when you reach the end of your own strength. Many minister biblical religion carnally and rob the cross of its power!

These two areas overlap, they are related, but they are not the same, and there is a real step up of the life of believer from the foundation of repentance and water baptism, into the next step. Jesus then told me, “Don’t

call it the *next step ... it's the Kingdom.*"

Preach salvation, but like Peter at Pentecost, minister the promised Holy Spirit on the spot to bring people quickly into this Promised Land. (Acts 2:28) You will be blessed in so DOING.

Act 2:38 And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

## Salvation, Return to the Ancient Path

Did you know the ministry of preaching "repentance unto salvation" was begun by John the Baptist before Jesus was revealed, and before he was even Crucified! Yet these people were given the assurance of Salvation. How do you understand this? What is 'salvation' exactly if this was preached before the Crucifixion even?

Consider the prophecies about John the Baptist's purpose. In Luke 1:13-17 Gabriel prophesied to John's father and explained his purpose before he was born.

Luke 1:16-17 <sup>16</sup>And many of the children of Israel shall be **turn unto the Lord** their God. <sup>17</sup>And he shall go before his face **in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers** to the children, and the disobedient to walk in the wisdom of the just; **to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him**

Then note the prophecy of Zechariah his father in then 1:76-77: <sup>76</sup>Yea and thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Most High: For thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways; <sup>77</sup>**To give knowledge of salvation unto his people In the remission of their sins, ...**

John says this about himself as well ...

**Matthew 3:11** I indeed baptize you in water unto repentance:

**Mark 1:4** John came, who baptized in the wilderness and preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins.

**Luke 3:3-6** <sup>3</sup>And he came into all the region round about the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins; <sup>4</sup>As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.' <sup>5</sup>Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall become straight, and the rough places shall become level ways, <sup>6</sup>and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."

## Make the Path straight: where's this Path?

So first notice the KNOWLEDGE of salvation was made known and it was about raising up lowly people and humbling the proud. It was about forgiveness of sins and this was a salvation revealed to ALL FLESH not just Hebrews or Levites or David's descendants. Anyone who believed it bascially. But let's just read the account in John.

### The Testimony of John the Baptist

John 1:19-27 <sup>19</sup>And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" <sup>20</sup> He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."

<sup>21</sup> And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?"

And he answered, "No."

<sup>22</sup> So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" <sup>23</sup> He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said."

So to help me understand God gave me a vision of this WAY like a PATH and it is between a person's heart and the Lord. It is how they see him basically. If this 'path' is 'straight' they see him clearly as he is: Good and Kind; but if it is broken or damaged (as it was for the girl I was praying for) it is because of a broken heart, some personal bondage, darkness in their soul, even pride. This makes them have a distorted view of God.

We came to learn that this is a very common affliction to most people, yes, even most Christians but can it can be cured by personal ministry like what we call **Inner healing** and even **Communion**.

The PATH or WAY is not a message but an avenue of communication. **Once fixed it will allow the transmission of an important message, really an experience**, to the people: the Gospel of the Kingdom.

But as with all things with the Lord this freedom comes by active faith, effort, purposeful ministry. The Kingdom of God advances not by sloth and **carelessness**—it must be taken consciously by force! The Kingdom of God advances by VIOLENCE the bible says. What violence? The violence of a faith that **WILL NOT BE DENIED** Jesus told me.

## After John's ministry what is the effect?

People who received this ministry still to this day enjoy a reunited relationship with the Father. They have not yet gone with him anywhere, they do not yet

KNOW him, *they never experienced him yet*, but they are now forgiven and no longer in danger of hellfire IF they continue. They have just been re-introduced!

Note, every scripture that mentions salvation by repentance adds this big word: IF! IF they continue.

So repentance produces salvation. It is also called simply to "TURN BACK" to God, or to 'go back' to the 'ancient ways' ... all these words are used: return, repent, turn back. It is a common theme in the Prophets especially, but they use different words.

Isaiah also spoke to stubborn, rebellious children of God who were telling the prophets to stop prophesying, and who constantly went their own way, followed their own plans, made alliances in their own will ... he finally says in 30:15:

For thus said the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, "**In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.**" But you were unwilling, ...

The gospel was preached to those in Egypt actually and it is simple. TURN BACK TO GOD! In Returning (or as it is translated in New Testament verses, 'repenting') and rest, which means to trust God, they would find salvation. **Simply put, this is salvation.**

He adds 'in quietness and in trust shall be your strength,' which gets into hearing the 'still, small voice' I am sure. (How Elijah experienced the Holy Spirit in 1 Kings 19:12.)

Jesus also gave me a vision one day saying he would explain salvation to me and told me this, "**This is Salvation, when a man TURNS away from following his own ways and TURNS BACK TO ME.**" I saw a man facing away from the Lord, going his own way

basically, and then he slowly turns his body back around to again face the Lord. Then after I found these verses.

So anyway this work did not begin with John, it was the main purpose of Jonah, it was in Isaiah, it was the theme of the most famous miracle of Elijah:

**Elijah 'Turning the Hearts Back': 1 Kings 18:36-37**

<sup>36</sup>And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening oblation, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, **O Jehovah, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.** <sup>37</sup>Hear me, O Jehovah, hear me, **that this people may know that thou, Jehovah, art God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again.**

You know how the story goes I hope. And this was the model of John the Baptist's ministry, who is considered the last of the Old Testament Prophets (Matt 11:13), and as such he had a similar message and purpose—but he was still NOT allowed to enter the Kingdom of God.

Anyway, this work of preaching repentance continues of course, and is a continuation of Elijah, all major prophets and most modern preachers alike: to peach to the people to **TURN THEIR HEARTS BACK TO THE LORD. But it does not need to end there. Peter didn't stop there! But we'll get to that!**

So of salvation, there is news—good news! There is an understanding and knowledge, there are ministries and preaching and teaching and obedience or rebellion to this message. **In short there is a Gospel of Salvation.**

We can also say John's ministry prepared people by making them "poor in spirit" simply meaning they were "repentant." (See Isaiah 61 soon). So when Jesus came he was able to preach a higher, more in-depth message to those who were prepared, who already had the Path of the Lord in their hearts made straight, and so they would accept and receive his greater message. **It was through their prior obedience to the message of repentance and water baptism, merely a ceremony, that they had become "Poor in Spirit" and so would listen to Jesus' message of the Kingdom.**

For now just understand that this message of repentance is not the core message or ministry of Jesus, it is not yet having to do with what he called the GOSPEL of the KINGDOM. Salvation is a narrow door, a first step—don't call it a second step, next call it The Kingdom.

## A SECOND BAPTISM

Now take note here: **Jesus did not baptize people in water.** Why?

Neither did Paul. Why not? Yet other people did, and it was told it is to be done, but it is a lesser goal, a lesser ministry in a way.

John 4:1-3 <sup>1</sup>When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, <sup>2</sup>(Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) <sup>3</sup>He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.

1 Corinthians 1:14-17: <sup>14</sup>I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; <sup>15</sup>Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. <sup>16</sup>And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. <sup>17</sup>For Christ

sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

Why did Jesus and Paul NOT water baptize? They had a more important job to do. Let's look closer at what John the Baptist said about Jesus to see why.

## What did John say about Jesus ...

Notice this is in ALL FOUR GOSPELS ...

**Matthew 3:11** I indeed baptize you in water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire:

**Mark 1:8** I baptized you in water; But he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit.

**Luke 3:16** John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but there cometh he that is mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire:

**John 1:26** John answered them, saying, I baptize in water: in the midst of you standeth one whom ye know not,

\* \* \*

**John 1:33** And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize in water, he said unto me, Upon whomsoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon him, the same is he that baptizeth in the Holy Spirit.



And did you ever notice that when John saw Jesus coming, what did he say? I want YOUR Baptism! But Jesus said, No!

### **The Baptism of Jesus**

**Matthew 3:13-17** <sup>13</sup>Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup> John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"

<sup>15</sup> But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. <sup>16</sup> And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; <sup>17</sup> and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

## **What Baptism did John see in his vision?**

I want YOUR baptism, he said. So what has John seen? He said he saw a vision of Jesus giving the Baptism of the Spirit and Fire ... when did Jesus do this?

**At Pentecost!**

And THIS is what John saw in a vision!

But John never got this baptism. He was never allowed to enter this promise that he saw and even prepared others to receive ... (it is just like Moses!) Now watch this ...

### **Later Jesus said in Luke 7:28-30:**

<sup>28</sup> I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

<sup>29</sup> And all the people when they heard, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of

John. <sup>30</sup>But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, being not baptized of him.

A. This shows the EFFECT of people of having the water baptism, they were PREPARED to listen to Jesus.

But also:

B. **John was NOT in the Kingdom himself**; the greatest born of women! The voice calling in the wilderness!! What was it that John never got? What did he lack? ... **simple, he never got the Fire Baptism!**

C. People in the Kingdom were on a higher level of existence than even the Prophets. Wow!

D. Repentance PREPARED the people to hear the weighty (spiritual / heavenly / shekinah) words of Jesus, but water baptism itself was not this revelation; **the baptism of repentance unto salvation did not cause the people to possess the fulfillment of the Promise.**

E. What is missing? What then is to be done NEXT to Possess the Kingdom?

**It is simply to receive the Fire Baptism!**

Show this to me in the Scriptures. Easy ...

## Moses and Joshua VS

### John the Baptizer and Jesus

Moses name means "To pull out of water," right? Baptist, also means to "put in and draw out of water" —it is very similar! This is a clue.

Paul said the people were 'baptized under Moses in the sea and in the cloud.'"(1 Cor 10:1-4) So Moses was

also a kind of Baptizer. And the people under him were also baptized by him. A second clue.

Moses purpose: bring LAW, a knowledge of SIN, separating the repentant sheep from the rebel goats. This took YEARS.

John was there to make people repent, to “Turn the Hearts back to God” by preaching judgment to sin, forgiveness for repentance. He revived the law and knowledge of punishment for sin. ... He also did this for several years.

Then note, John also called out the unrepentant in the community, separating the True from False as well. “You brood of vipers, who warned you to repent?” (Meaning no one did! That’s not why they were coming! Then why? It was trendy! They wanted to tell people they too got dunked but in reality their hearts did not repent.)

Also both handed their work over to someone named Yeshua to complete it.

## Preparation not Fulfillment

Moses brought the people through a RED WATER BAPTISM ... BUT NOT INTO THE PROMISED LAND. This had to be done by someone else who was named Yeshua, we call him Joshua.

Joshua (Yeshua) instead of Moses led the people, who were prepared, in to possess the Promised Land. He did this at Jericho / Bethany. Jesus was Baptized with the Holy Spirit in the Jordan near Bethany by John. And then led people to be able to possess the Promised Land which he called The Kingdom.

This is also what Jesus said, that John was NOT in the Kingdom, (Luke 7:28 above) even though he prepared the people to go in after him.

So “Water Baptism phase” is preparation, repentance, salvation .... But the real possession of the promise is yet to come, it is only through the Fire Baptism. In a way it is BY the fire baptism. How so?

The possession of the Promised Land is not taking over a physical land, but allowing our hearts to be taken over by the liberation of the Holy Spirit once our hearts are no longer possessed or occupied by enemy strongholds (wounds, blind spots, etc). The Fire Baptism is when we gain the Possession of Immanuel, God is now WITH us. Jesus said he was with them but would soon be IN them. This re-union of Man and God is not an object held but a state of being enjoyed. THIS is the Promise. ... He calls it a Kingdom that is WITHIN you. It is God and Man no longer separated, and now enjoying intimate fellowship, thus transforming them into Children of God in the very image of Christ. You carry it within you because now you have become his Temple. Hmmm ..

## Which Baptism did you get?

Anyway this DISTINCTION between Baptisms is also what PAUL said in Acts 19:1-7 when they met soem disciples who recevied baptism under John, and never ever heard of Jesus! Paul explained what they were missing!

<sup>4</sup>And Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus.”

<sup>5</sup>On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

<sup>6</sup>And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying.

## BEST PRACTICE: Do them at the same time

SADLY many Christians still live exactly like this, exactly like Disciples of John the Baptist. Some people simply do not know there is a fire baptism because people actually preach against this promise, saying it was revoked or expired, but really, it is because there are carnal people preaching the Bible. (1 Corinthians 2:14!) So some people receive the water baptism and only the fire baptism much later. But this was not always so. At Pentecost, when Jesus gave the Holy Spirit, as John saw in visions before, all those present were given the PROMISE of the FATHER ... **Peter combined these two baptism messages into one.**

Acts 2:37-41 <sup>37</sup>Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" <sup>38</sup>And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

<sup>39</sup>For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself."

<sup>40</sup>And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." <sup>41</sup>So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

A. Peter did BOTH baptisms at the same time after preaching, not just water. **So to do them both at the same time is this 'best practice.'**

B. In Acts 10 Cornelius the Centurion even got the Fire baptism BEFORE Water. You don't need to wait!

C. This second baptism is to receive the promised

Holy Spirit ... allowing people to Enter into the Promised Land, a Kingdom, and thus be greater than even John the Baptist and ALL OT Prophets in a way. Wow! ... **But Jesus told me, "Do not call it a second step; it is ... the Kingdom," he said.**

**D. The Holy Spirit in us is the Kingdom, HE IN US is the Promised Land actually. Well, it may be more than this. To let the Holy Spirit in our hearts FULLY we have to conquer many 'walled cities' of feat, trust, ignorance, etc. So it is a gradual conquest of the Holy Spirit in our hearts to fully occupy US.**

E. Also this ministry of Fire Baptism has not ended in any measure, but is for "you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself."

Dispensationalism is 100% untrue.

## **Note: POURED OUT ON ALL FLESH**

Acts 2:5-11 <sup>5</sup>Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven.

<sup>6</sup>And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language.

<sup>7</sup>And they were amazed and astonished, saying, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?"

<sup>8</sup>And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? <sup>9</sup>Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, <sup>10</sup>Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, <sup>11</sup>both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians--we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God."

Why mention this? Because it was not only 'Jews' but people from 'EVERY' tribe, nation, tongue who got this Holy Spirit. Joel said God would pour out his spirit on ALL FLESH, eg, not just Cohen or Levite priests, or even just ethnic Jews! But God-fearing people from every bloodline, tribe, race.

## So ... BEST PRACTICE ... Two for One

So ... A. Peach salvation as we do, Romans 10:9-10, John 3:16, ... if they will be water baptized, **lay on hands after the water ceremony to receive the Holy Spirit. There is no need to wit and explain things.**

B. In Acts 10 they got the Fire Baptism BEFORE water baptism ... Don't wait ... Don't give SATAN time to steal the seed! Just do it now!

C. No need to discuss much, **since tongues is a supernatural SIGN to get their attention**, they do not need to understand it, nor could they. If they are open for more, just pray to release the Baptism of Fire. DO NOT Wait until after a long catechism class, this is not helpful and actually counterproductive. ((See 1 Corinthians 1-2 as we discuss Power and Revelation.)

## Side note: John Dressed Like Elijah

The explanation of John vs Elijah is long and complex and does not need to be discussed except by bible teachers. Skip this section for now.

But in 2 Kings there is a record of how Elijah Dressed: 2 Kings 1:7-8 <sup>7</sup>He said to them, "What kind of man was he who came to meet you and told you these things?" <sup>8</sup>They answered him, "He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."

This is also how John dressed:

**Mark 1:6** Now John was clothed with camel's

hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey. [Also in Matt 3:4]

### **Was he Elijah or did he just come AS or IN THE SPIRIT of Elijah?**

When the Pharisees asked John, who do you say you are, **he said he was not Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet.**

They knew there was a coming Deliverer they called Messiah (Christ) but they mostly assumed he was going to be like a King, a military/political leader like David. It was confusing. John said it was not him.

When they asked if he was The Prophet, it also means the Christ, but they did not know if was the same thing. Moses said God would raise up another prophet like him and they were to listen to him or be 'cut off.' Was this the same as the Son of David? They did not assume it was the same, but John also said it was not he.

Elijah coming to restore all things is from Malachi. When they asked if he was Elijah he also said, No!

**John 1:21** And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not."

In the prophecy in Malachi 3:1 and Malachi 4:5 God said he would send his messenger first. This is confusing, since the word (actually the word Malachi), is used to refer to an angel, a human, or a demon. It's very confusing. But yes, here in 4:5 it says God will send Elijah the Prophet before the Day of the Lord and to do what?

"He will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to their fathers; otherwise I will come and strike the land with complete destruction." Or others say "a curse."

And this is what Elijah said at Mt Carmel. ... **But**



**the Day of the Lord has not yet happened, has it?**

Anyway, John still said he WAS NOT Elijah. So relax, there is no evidence of reincarnation.

Furthermore, after the transfiguration on the mount when they saw Jesus speaking to both Moses and Elijah they asked Jesus why then do they say Elijah will come first?

**Mark 9:11-13** <sup>11</sup>And they asked him, “Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?”

<sup>12</sup>And he said to them, “Elijah does come first to restore all things. And how is it written of the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be treated with contempt? <sup>13</sup>But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him.”

**Matthew 17:10-13** <sup>10</sup>And the disciples asked him, “Then why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?” <sup>11</sup>He answered, “Elijah does come, and he will restore all things. <sup>12</sup>But I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but did to him whatever they pleased. So also the Son of Man will certainly suffer at their hands.” <sup>13</sup>Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.

**Luke 1:17** Gabriel said he was only like Elijah:

And he shall go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, ...

And **Matthew 11:7-15** which is somewhat a parallel of **Luke 7:18-35**, and there is so much here!

<sup>7</sup>As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into

the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?  
<sup>8</sup>What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.

<sup>9</sup>What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup>This is he of whom it is written, "'Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.'

<sup>11</sup>Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

<sup>12</sup>From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force.

<sup>13</sup>For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, <sup>14</sup>and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come.

<sup>15</sup>He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

So **Jesus spoke with the real Elijah in the cloud**, they knew it was not John the Baptist. These must be two different people. Jesus said IF YOU CAN ACCEPT IT, he is Elijah—if you can accept it. It seems to be the ROLE he played, so we may say he 'came in the spirit of Elijah,' which what is what Gabriel actually said. But so did Elisha who took over Elijah's job and mantle, etc.! There may be more going on and when he says he will send him before the Day of the Lord, there may yet be another appearance of a Prophet terrifying the ungodly and the sinners who may be him literally, may be him figuratively and so would again be coming AS him. But there is still no there is no evidence of reincarnation going on here. People do NOT keep coming back to the earth to try-try again until they spiritually evolve. Sorry Ghandi!

So who are you? John quoted Isaiah 40:3-5, A Voice!

<sup>3</sup>A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. <sup>4</sup>Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. <sup>5</sup>And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

or in CJB:

A voice cries out:

"Clear a road through the desert for Adonai!  
Level a highway in the 'Aravah for our God!

<sup>4</sup> Let every valley be filled in,  
every mountain and hill lowered,  
the bumpy places made level  
and the crags become a plain.

<sup>5</sup> Then the glory of Adonai will be revealed;  
all humankind together will see it,  
for the mouth of Adonai has spoken."

But before we leave John for the Baptists to figure out, its worthwhile to read this passage in Matthew 3:1-12 because so much is going on:

<sup>1</sup>In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, <sup>2</sup>"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." <sup>3</sup>For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'"

<sup>4</sup>Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. <sup>5</sup> Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him,

<sup>6</sup>and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>7</sup> 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?”

<sup>8</sup> Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.

<sup>9</sup> 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.

<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> “I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>12</sup>His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

**Notes by verse:** [1] Isaiah 40:3, a voice from the wilderness [2] Repent the kingdom is ... at hand. He could not deliver it with only water baptism. [3] Isaiah 40 again [4] Dressed like Elijah did; Locust is a bean from a tree during drought. They call it the John the Baptist tree, it's not insects. [5-6] Location near Jericho/Bethany was where Joshua crossed without Moses. [7] Why warned the Pharisees? No one! That's not why they were coming. Then why? It was trendy.] [8] Prove it! [10] Axe is at the root. This is echo of Isaiah 61! John created the 'poor' (the 'poor in spirit' = repentant) for Jesus to preach to, but also the Oak Trees of Righteousness God DID plant are Displaying God's splendor here. [11] Yes, water baptism for repentance, but Jesus was greater and would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. Jesus did not do this while alive the first time. He did it after he ascended to heaven. Amazing vision from John really. [12] Hell ... is real! Real torment, real flames. Also ahead in [13] John asks for this baptism but is denied! [16] Jesus is baptized in the Holy Spirit ...