In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’”

Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey.

Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you
to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bear fruit worthy of re-pent-ance. 9 Do not presume to say to
your-selves, `We have Ab-ra-ham as our an-ces-tor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones
to raise up children to Ab-ra-ham. 10 E-ven now the ax is ly-ing at the root of the trees; ev-
ry tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 11 “I bap-
tize you with wa-ter for re-pent-ance, but one who is more pow-er-ful than I is com-ing af-ter
me; I am not worthy to carry his san-dals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 12
His win-now-ing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gath-er his
wheat in-to the gra-na-ry; but the chaff he will burn with un-quench-a - ble fire.”

The Gos-pel of the Lord. Praise to you, Lord Christ.