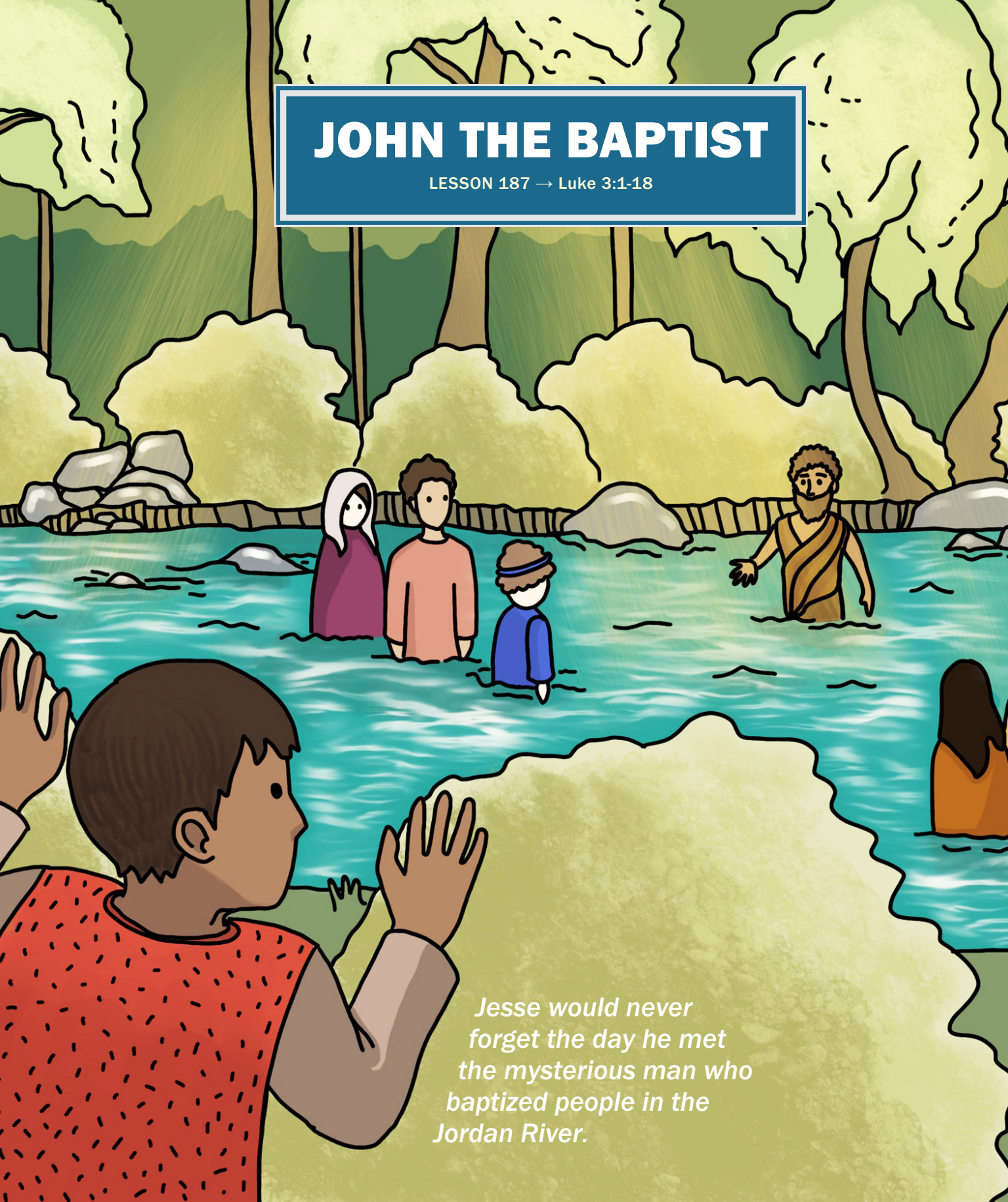


JOHN THE BAPTIST

LESSON 187 → Luke 3:1-18



Jesse would never forget the day he met the mysterious man who baptized people in the Jordan River.



JESUS IS THE LAMB OF GOD.

Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. — John 1:29

Jesse sat up straight, wide-awake in the early morning light. Was it his imagination, or had he really heard someone call for help? It was easy for a person to get lost out here in the wilderness, even though the road to Jerusalem was nearby. He and his brothers had lain down here to rest for the night. He listened intently. There it was again—an urgent voice that seemed to be coming from the river a few hundred feet away.

He quickly fastened his cloak about him and set off toward the river, leaving his three sleeping brothers behind. Arriving at the bank of the Jordan, he stared in amazement. A man was by the river shallows seemingly preaching to the group of people gathering before him. Even as Jesse watched, more people arrived. The man's voice echoed in the morning air, and he seemed very intent on his message. The people didn't appear to mind the chilly morning breeze. What was he saying? He was speaking of repentance, and of someone who would be coming. What was this all about? Jesse moved closer and began to listen carefully.

The man's words stirred Jesse, and it seemed others in the crowd felt the same way. For when the man spoke of baptism, and moved into the waters of the river, they formed a line and began joining him in the water. What a strange sight, thought Jesse, as he watched in wonder. The man was now lowering the people one by one into the water. As he brought them up they joyfully praised God and sang hymns.

Others in the crowd questioned the man. "What shall we do?" Jesse moved closer, drawn by the power in the man's words. "Repent! Repent of all your sins and be baptized!" he was pleading with them. "The Lord is at hand! Make His paths straight!"

Then Jesse remembered. This must be John the Baptist! He had heard a lot about him for he

was quite famous in Jerusalem and the cities all around. It was said that he ate locusts and wild honey; that he was a mysterious man and had lived in the desert country much of his thirty-some years. Then, out of the wilderness he came with an amazing message: "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Repent and be baptized. Make your-selves ready for His coming."

Suddenly, the crowd shifted and Jesse was aware of John's eyes looking directly at him. Jesse backed away confused—he hadn't meant to get quite so close. But John held out his hand. "Don't be afraid, my young friend. Prepare yourself now for the Lord's coming! I was sent from God to tell you this."

A half hour later he arrived back at the camp where his brothers were now cooking breakfast over a fire. "Where have you been?" they asked him. "Have you been down to the river? Gehadzi went over that way to look for you and saw the great crowd gathered around that preacher, John. Were you there? Yes, your cloak is wet . . ."

Jesse had met the forerunner of Christ, the messenger who came to teach the people of the coming Messiah. His mission was to introduce Jesus Christ to the world, and he did it with such obedience, courage, and zeal that he drew vast multitudes to the Lord. What a thrill Jesse now had in his heart.

We have this same mission today. The Lord lives in our hearts! Do we have the courage and zeal to introduce Him to the lost all around us? Let's ask the Lord to help us as we prepare the way for His second coming!

I'LL BE A MESSENGER TOO!

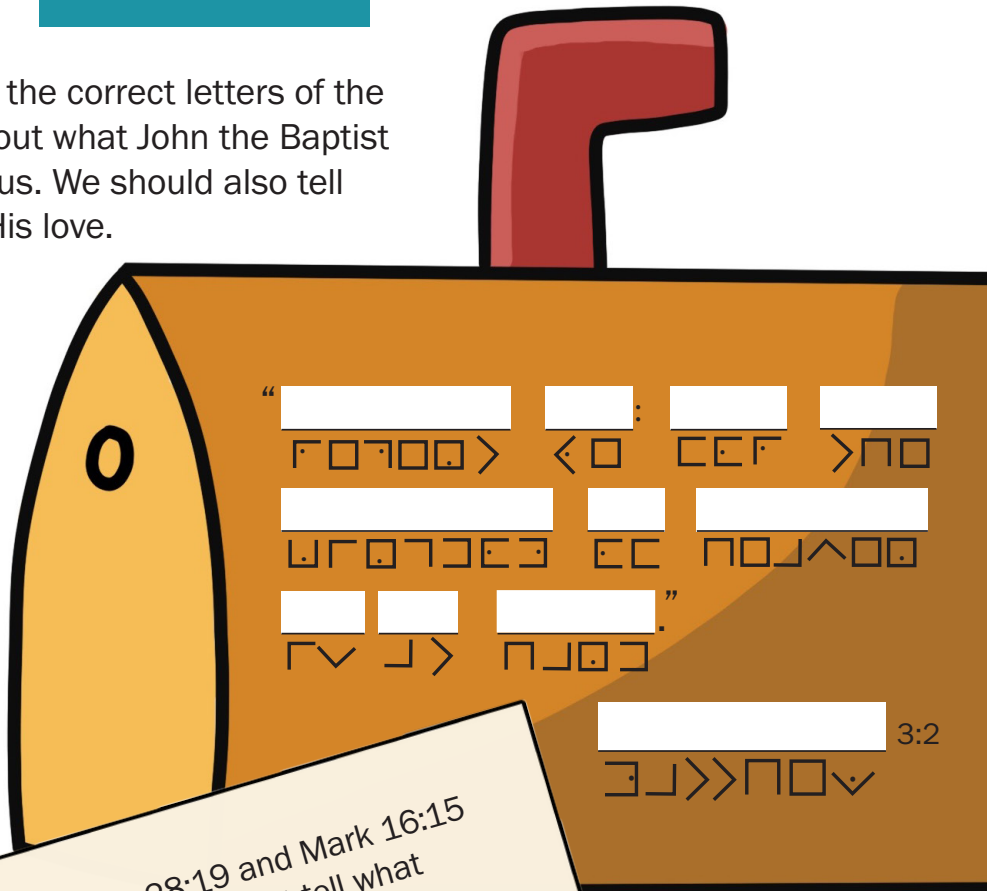
Match the symbols to the correct letters of the verse below and find out what John the Baptist told people about Jesus. We should also tell people of Jesus and His love.

A	B	C
D	E	F
G	H	I

J	K	L
M	N	O
P	Q	R

T	S	U
V		

X	W	Y
Z		



Matthew 28:19 and Mark 16:15
 are two verses that tell what
 Jesus said we should do.
 Look them up and write your
 favorite one on the lines below.
