

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS HERE

Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan by John the Baptist. John was a very holy man, and that caused a problem for King Herod's wife.

Finally, King Herod had John arrested and put in prison. When Jesus heard that John was in prison, he left Nazareth and went to Galilee. It was a place where not many Jewish people lived. Those who are not Jewish were called "Gentiles." In the Bible, there is a verse that says, "Galilee of the Gentiles--the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light."

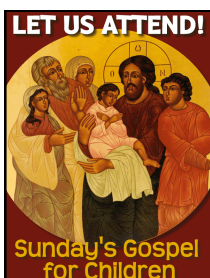
His followers knew Jesus was the light of the world. They thought, Jesus has gone to be the light to the Gentiles, just like the Bible said. The Gentiles will learn from him-- he will show them how to be close to God."

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Have you ever been in a dark room? How do you feel?
2. People usually take a flashlight with them when they go to dark places. Why?
3. When a person is confused about how to play a game, and then finally understands, they might say, "I see now how to play." They mean that their mind "sees" or understands how to play.
4. Jesus came to help us see our way to God.



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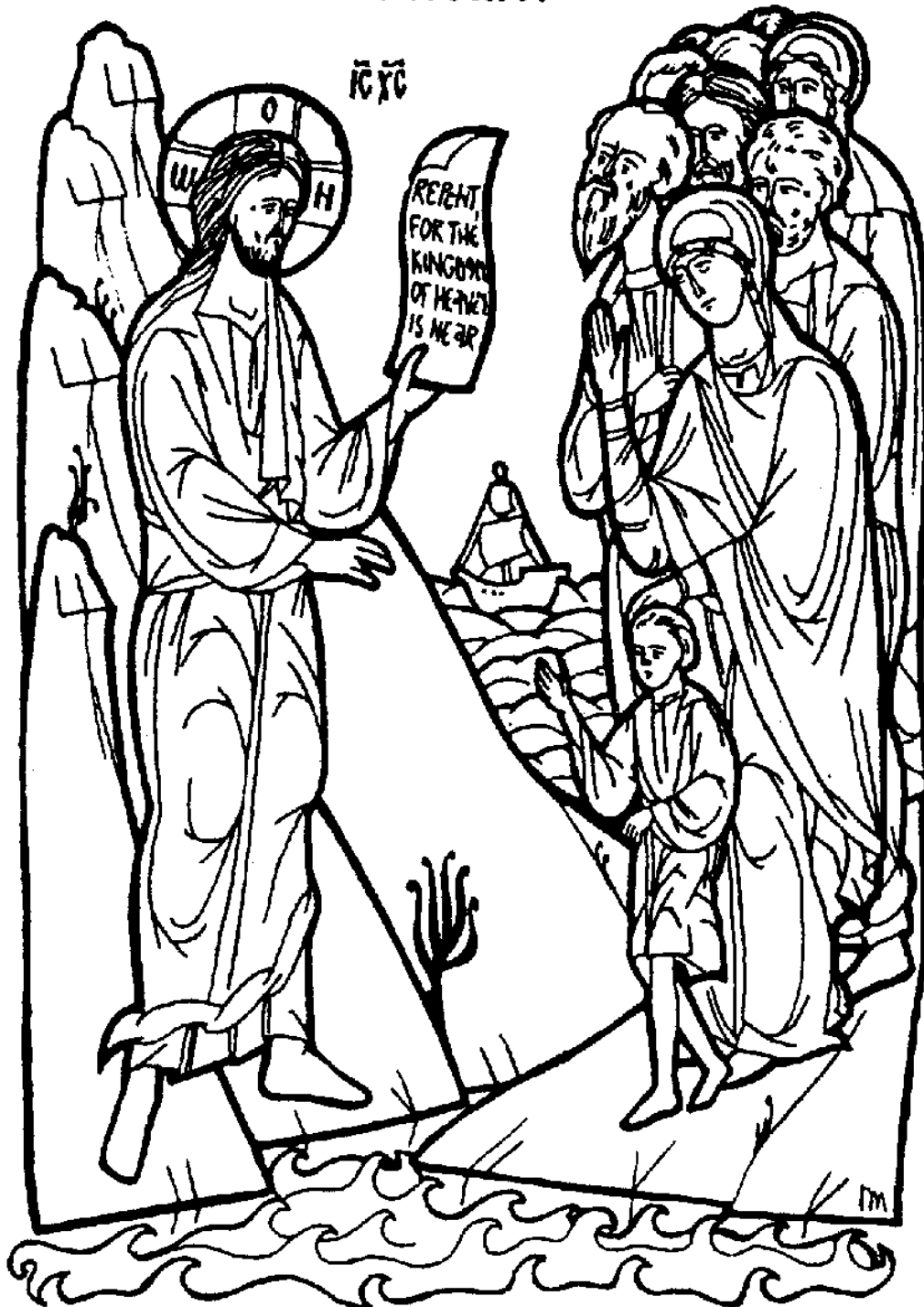


Pre-12



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JESUS PREACHING



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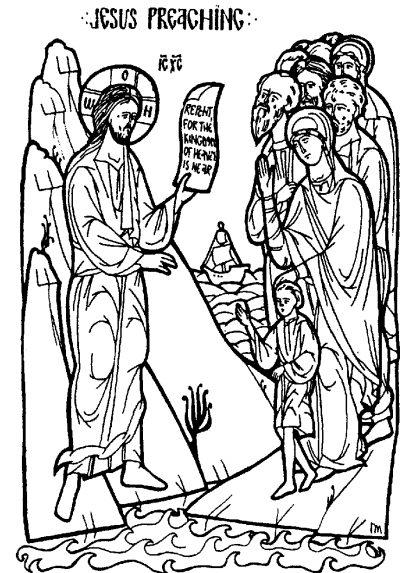
Our Lord Jesus Christ was baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. John was a very holy man. He preached, “Repent! For the Kingdom of God is near!”

He was not afraid to tell people who were sinning that they were doing wrong. One time, he told King Herod that he was breaking God’s rules. King Herod was not happy. He had John put in jail.

When Jesus heard that John had been put in jail, he left Nazareth. He went to Galilee. The Gentiles (people who are not Jewish) lived in Galilee. Jesus began to live there with the Gentiles.

Many years before, the prophet Isaiah had said that in Galilee of the Gentiles, “the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light.” This prophecy came true when Jesus, the Light of the World, went to Galilee. Then, the Gentiles could learn about Him.

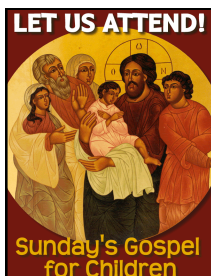
In Galilee, Jesus began to teach people about God. His preaching sounded a lot like John’s. Only, Jesus said, “Repent, for the Kingdom of God is here!”



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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. Have you ever been in a dark room? How do you feel?
2. People usually take a flashlight with them when they go to dark places. Why?
3. When a person is confused about how to play a game, and then finally understands, they might say, “I see now how to play.” Are they talking about seeing with their eyes?
4. Jesus came to help us see our way to God.
5. Jesus went to Galilee to show people the way to God.



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THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS HERE

At that time, when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled;

“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.”

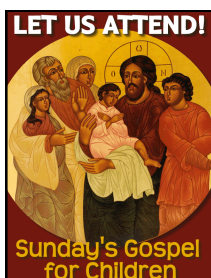
From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”



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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. How do you feel when you are in the dark?
2. How does that change when someone turns on the light?
3. When I say, “Zack was in the dark when it came to math,” what do I mean?
4. What do you think this gospel means when it says the people of Zebulun and Naphtali were sitting in darkness?
5. Who is the light that has dawned on them according to this gospel? What does that mean?
6. At one point in the liturgy we sing, “We have seen the true light.” When do we sing this? What do we mean?



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THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS HERE

Characters: Narrator, Prophet Isaiah, Jesus

Narrator: At that time, when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled;

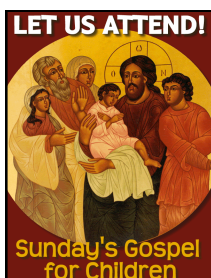
Isaiah: The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, toward the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.

Narrator: From that time Jesus began to preach, saying,

Jesus: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.



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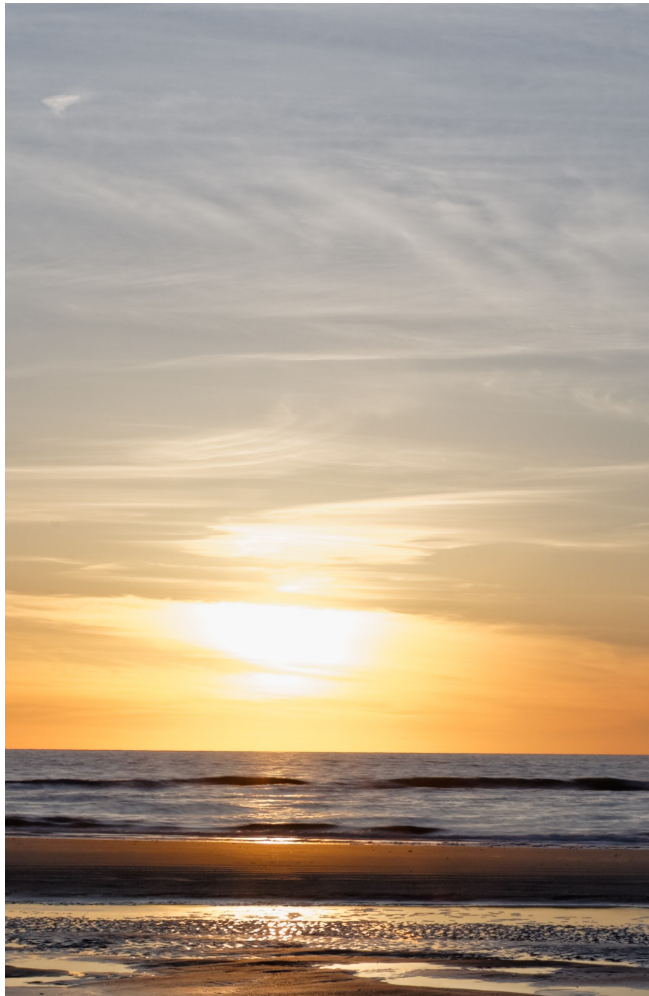
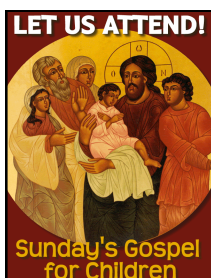


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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. How do you feel when you are in a dark room?
2. How does that change when someone turns on a light?
3. Can you think of an example of when someone might use the expression, “He was in the dark,” to talk about something other than actually sitting in the dark? What does “in the dark” mean in your example?
4. What do you think this gospel means when it claims the people of Zebulun and Naphtali were in darkness?
5. Who is the light that has dawned on them according to this gospel? What does it mean to say, “light has dawned”?
6. Can you think of places where we sing about light in our services? What are we referring to in those instances?



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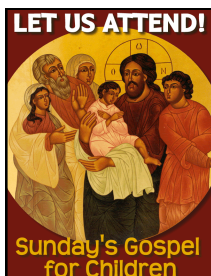
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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

1. What do people mean when they say, “He’s in the dark?”
2. What do you think this gospel means when it claims the people of Zebulun and Naphtali were sitting in darkness?
3. What do people mean when they say, “it just dawned on me . . .?”
4. What is dawning on the people in Zebulun and Naphtali according to this gospel?
5. When do we sing about light in our church services? What are we using light to refer to in these examples?
6. Why would this gospel and our hymns describe Jesus as the light that has dawned on us?
7. Do you think this is a good description of Jesus or of human reaction to Jesus? Why or why not?



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