

BAPTIZED IN THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT

ISAIAH 42:1-7. ACTS 10:34-38. MARK 1:7-11

At the time that many people kept running to the Jordan river, to hear John the Baptist preach, Israel was under the iron rule of the Roman Empire.

They were hoping for a new king like David who would fight for their freedom. They were waiting for the Messiah. Maybe they were losing hope: "where is God? Why doesn't He help us?"

Like Israel, when we are in great distress, we too ask: "where is God? Why doesn't He do something?"

The prophet had written that our ways are not God's ways. In fact, when Jesus showed up by the Jordan river, he did not stand apart from the rest of the people who were publicly repenting of their sins and being baptized.

He did not call for a revolt against the Romans. Instead he walked along with them, and he also entered the water like them, to be baptized.

Whenever we are facing great distress, Jesus comes along to reassure us of his presence, and to remind us that we are not suffering alone. He suffers what we suffer, and wants to give us the grace and strength to carry on.

The grace and strength that Jesus gives us is from the same Holy Spirit that anointed him after his baptism by John.

In Acts of the Apostles Peter preaches about it to the people gathered to hear the message: "Jesus, anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power, went about doing good, and HEALING all who were oppressed by the devil." (Acts 10:34-38)

The Word of God today makes clear what Jesus came to do: not to incite violence, but to free us from our real enemy, from the rule of the devil, and from our sins that separate us from the LOVE of our Creator and Father.

Jesus wants us also to be baptized in the Holy Spirit as he was, so we can be anointed with the power to love, experience freedom from fear, and be healed from any oppression.

WE THANK YOU FATHER, FOR ANOINTING US WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT, THAT EMPOWERS US TO LOVE YOU IN OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS.