

15

NA28 Προσδοκῶντος δὲ τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ διαλογιζομένων πάντων ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν περὶ τοῦ Ἰωάννου, μήποτε αὐτὸς εἴη ὁ χριστός.

NASB Now while the people were in a state of expectation and all were wondering in their hearts about John, as to whether he was the Christ,

KJV And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;

ESV As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ,

NRS As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah,

NET While the people were filled with anticipation and they all wondered whether perhaps John could be the Christ,

NIV The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah.

NJB A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to wonder whether John might be the Christ,

CEB The people were filled with expectation, and everyone wondered whether John might be the Christ.

NLT Everyone was expecting the Messiah to come soon, and they were eager to know whether John might be the Messiah.

MSG The interest of the people by now was building. They were all beginning to wonder, "Could this John be the Messiah?"

MGVH So while the people were filled with expectation and were all speculating in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ,

- In Luke, λαός = people in the singular refers to Jewish people.
- ὁ χριστός > Translators always have to decide whether to translate this word (> Messiah) or transliterate it (> Christ). My usual approach is to think what the original audience would have 'heard.' I understand Luke to be writing to a Greek-speaking, Hellenized Jewish community, so I suspect they heard and thought "Christ" rather than "Messiah."

- NA28 ἀπεκρίνατο λέγων πᾶσιν ὁ Ἰωάννης· ἐγὼ μὲν ὕδατι βαπτίζω ὑμᾶς· ἔρχεται δὲ ὁ ἰσχυρότερός μου, οὗ οὐκ εἰμι ἰκανὸς λῦσαι τὸν ἱμάντα τῶν ὑποδημάτων αὐτοῦ· αὐτὸς ὑμᾶς βαπτίσει ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ πυρί·
- NASB John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
- KJV John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:
- ESV John answered them all, saying, "I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
- NRS John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
- NET John answered them all, "I baptize you with water, but one more powerful than I am is coming— I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
- NIV John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
- NJB so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, who is more powerful than me, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
- CEB John replied to them all, "I baptize you with water, but the one who is more powerful than me is coming. I'm not worthy to loosen the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
- NLT John answered their questions by saying, "I baptize you with water; but someone is coming soon who is greater than I am-- so much greater that I'm not even worthy to be his slave and untie the straps of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.
- MSG But John intervened: "I'm baptizing you here in the river. The main character in this drama, to whom I'm a mere stagehand, will ignite the kingdom life, a fire, the Holy Spirit within you, changing you from the inside out.
- MGVH John answered them all, saying, "As for me, I am baptizing you with water. But one who is more powerful than me is coming, and I am not worthy to loosen the strap of his sandals. As for him, he will baptize you in Holy Spirit and fire.
- ἀπεκρίνατο λέγων... > "He answered, saying...": Cf. v.11 where a similar phrase occurs: ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ἔλεγεν > "Having answered, he was saying..."
 - ἐγὼ μὲν ὕδατι βαπτίζω ὑμᾶς... αὐτὸς ὑμᾶς βαπτίσει ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ πυρί
 - Note the emphatic pronouns here > "As for me... As for him..."
 - ὕδατι is a simple dative of means, i.e., baptizing using water > baptizing "with water." Luke uses a prepositional phrase ἐν with the dative to talk about the one who is coming who baptizes "with / in" Holy Spirit and fire. While ἐν with the dative can indicate means like the simple dative, there does seem to be some distinction being made here. Perhaps the sense is that one cannot physically baptize with the Holy Spirit as one can with water. This would also suggest that using actual fire to baptize someone is not envisioned either. (Cf. the "tongues like fire" in Acts 2.3 at Pentecost. Also cf. the next verse.)
 - Some propose that two baptisms are envisioned—one in the Holy Spirit and one with fire—but the natural way of reading the Greek is to take both Holy Spirit and fire as objects of the preposition.

NA28 οὗ τὸ πτύον ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ διακαθαῖραι τὴν ἄλωνα αὐτοῦ καὶ συναγαγεῖν τὸν σῖτον εἰς τὴν ἀποθήκην αὐτοῦ,
τὸ δὲ ἄχυρον κατακαύσει πυρὶ ἀσβέστῳ.

NASB “His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn;
but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

KJV Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner;
but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

ESV His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn,
but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

NRS His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary;
but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

NET His winnowing fork is in his hand to clean out his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his storehouse,
but the chaff he will burn up with inextinguishable fire.”

NIV His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn,
but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

NJB His winnowing-fan is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his barn;
but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.’

CEB The shovel he uses to sift the wheat from the husks is in his hands. He will clean out his threshing area and bring the wheat into his barn.
But he will burn the husks with a fire that can’t be put out.”

NLT He is ready to separate the chaff from the wheat with his winnowing fork. Then he will clean up the threshing area, gathering the wheat into his
barn but burning the chaff with never-ending fire.”

MSG He’s going to clean house-- make a clean sweep of your lives. He’ll place everything true in its proper place before God;
everything false he’ll put out with the trash to be burned.”

MGVH him whose winnowing fork is in his hand, to clean out his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his storehouse.
But as for the chaff, he will burn it up with inextinguishable fire.”

- The sentence structure is complicated. The οὗ at the beginning of this verse refers back to the αὐτὸς in the previous verse. I.e., everything starting from that αὐτὸς through to the end of this verse is one sentence, but it is nearly impossible to get this into sensible English. Note the various sentence structures in the English versions.
- Winnowing fork is probably unfamiliar to many people today. (Cf. the CEB) It is sort of like a wooden pitchfork.
- In comparison to the previous verse, here πυρὶ is a simple dative, and actual fire is intended as the means for burning chaff.

18

^{NA28} Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν καὶ ἕτερα παρακαλῶν εὐηγγελίζετο τὸν λαόν.

^{NASB} So with many other exhortations he preached the gospel to the people.

^{KJV} And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

^{ESV} So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people.

^{NRS} So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

^{NET} And in this way, with many other exhortations, John proclaimed good news to the people.

^{NIV} And with many other words John exhorted the people and proclaimed the good news to them.

^{NJB} And he proclaimed the good news to the people with many other exhortations too.

^{CEB} With many other words John appealed to them, proclaiming good news to the people.

^{NLT} John used many such warnings as he announced the Good News to the people.

^{MSG} There was a lot more of this-- words that gave strength to the people, words that put heart in them. The Message!

^{MGVH} So then, also with many other exhortations, he was proclaiming the good news to the people.

- The μὲν here indicates that this verse actually is looking ahead to verse 19 where the matching δέ occurs.
- παρακαλῶν is most often translated with “exhort.” The word usually has more positive connotations of “appeal, encourage” (cf. CEB), rather than the strict or warning (cf. NLT) sense that “exhort” has in English. Since John has been telling people what to do (3.7-14), “exhortation” is not a bad translation choice, but the encouragement aspect of it should be kept in mind.

NA28 Ὁ δὲ Ἡρώδης ὁ τετραάρχης, ἐλεγχόμενος ὑπ' αὐτοῦ περὶ Ἡρωδιάδος τῆς γυναίκος τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ αὐτοῦ καὶ περὶ πάντων ὧν ἐποίησεν πονηρῶν ὁ Ἡρώδης,

NASB But when Herod the tetrarch was **reprimanded** by him because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and because of all the wicked things which Herod had done,

KJV But Herod the tetrarch, being **reproved** by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,

ESV But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reprov'd by him for Herodias, his brother's wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done,

NRS But Herod the ruler, who had been **rebuked** by him because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and because of all the evil things that Herod had done,

NET But when John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and because of all the evil deeds that he had done,

NIV But when John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of his marriage to Herodias, his brother's wife, and all the other evil things he had done,

NJB But Herod the tetrarch, **censured** by John for his relations with his brother's wife Herodias and for all the other crimes he had committed,

CEB But Herod the ruler had been **criticized harshly** by John because of Herodias, Herod's brother's wife, and because of all the evil he had done.

NLT John also **publicly criticized** Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee, for marrying Herodias, his brother's wife, and for many other wrongs he had done.

MSG But Herod, the ruler, **stung by** John's **rebuke** in the matter of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife,

MGVH But as for Herod the tetrarch, since he kept on being rebuked by *John* because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and because of all the evil things Herod had done,

- This gets a bit complicated since the verb for this sentence doesn't appear until v20. I.e., all this information about Herod's circumstances is simply foregrounded to set up what is going to happen as a consequence of it.
- Note that this is Herod Antipas, Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. Cf. Luke 3.1 and the NET Bible notes.
- Luke is assuming that his audience is aware that Herod divorced one wife in order to marry his brother's wife and that Herodias had requested a divorce as well in order to marry Herod. To marry a brother's life while he was still alive was not allowed by Jewish law.

20

NA28 προσέθηκεν καὶ τοῦτο ἐπὶ πᾶσιν [καὶ] κατέκλεισεν τὸν Ἰωάννην ἐν φυλακῇ.

NASB Herod also added this to them all: he locked John up in prison.

KJV Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

ESV added this to them all, that he locked up John in prison.

NRS added to them all by shutting up John in prison.

NET Herod added this to them all: He locked up John in prison.

NIV Herod added this to them all: He locked John up in prison.

NJB added a further crime to all the rest by shutting John up in prison.

CEB He added this to the list of his evil deeds: he locked John up in prison.

NLT So Herod put John in prison, adding this sin to his many others.

MSG capped his long string of evil deeds with this outrage: He put John in jail.

MGVH *Herod* added even this to everything else: he locked up John in prison.

- Specifying *Herod* here is simply a way to remind the hearer of when he was introduced as the subject of the sentence at the beginning of v19.
- Omitting the [καὶ] has good early manuscript support (Ɀ⁷⁵ Ɀ* B D), but an argument could be made for including it also (Ɀ² A C... Ɀ). One can make sense of the sentence with or without it, but my sense is that omitting it is both the more difficult reading grammatically and provides a greater dramatic impact. (Cf. NASB, NET, NIV, CEB, MGVH).
- κατέκλεισεν = “locked down,” but in English we usually would say “locked up” in a context like this.
- According to Josephus, the prison was Machaerus in Perea, one of Herod the Great’s fortress retreats east of the Dead Sea.
- What happens to John in Luke? Unlike the extended narratives in Mark and Matthew, there is only a passing reference to his beheading in 9.9. Cf. my comments on next verse.

NA28 Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ βαπτισθῆναι ἅπαντα τὸν λαὸν καὶ Ἰησοῦ βαπτισθέντος καὶ προσευχομένου ἀνεῳχθῆναι τὸν οὐρανὸν

NASB Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened.

KJV Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

ESV Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened,

NRS Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened,

NET Now when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. And while he was praying, the heavens opened,

NIV When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened

NJB Now it happened that when all the people had been baptised and while Jesus after his own baptism was at prayer, heaven opened

CEB When everyone was being baptized, Jesus also was baptized. While he was praying, heaven was opened

NLT One day when the crowds were being baptized, Jesus himself was baptized. As he was praying, the heavens opened,

MSG After all the people were baptized, Jesus was baptized. As he was praying, the sky opened up,

MGVH Now it so happened—when all the people were baptized and Jesus also was baptized and while he was praying—that heaven was opened,

- The sentence structure is again complicated in vv21-22. Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ with an infinitive is a Septuagintalism uncommon otherwise in Koine Greek. Luke is using ‘biblisch’ to make the narrative sound more like Scripture. But the larger structure is that the Ἐγένετο is completed by the infinitives in v22: ἀνεῳχθῆναι, καταβῆναι and γενέσθαι > “Is so happened that... heaven opened... and spirit descended... and voice came...”
- Note the nice contrast between the aorist tense βαπτισθέντος and present tense προσευχομένου > The picture is that Jesus was baptized (simple) and (sometime later) while he was praying (imperfective) that the heaven opened.
- ἀνεῳχθῆναι = opened is passive, but some versions (NET, NJB, NLT, MSG) render it as an active. The lexicons note that the passive can be treated this way, but I suspect it is simply because of instances like this. I think we are dealing with a ‘divine passive,’ i.e., the heaven is opened by God.
- τὸν οὐρανὸν > “the heaven”: What is intended here? “The sky”? Heavenly realm in contrast to earthly? “Heaven” as a conceived specific abode of God? The word is singular here, and Luke generally uses the singular (31 times; plural 4 times), but he uses it both as a reference to the sky (e.g., 8.5) and to the heavenly places where God’s presence is visualized. Given what happens in the next verse, I think “heaven” as God’s realm is envisioned here. (However, I would have expected no article in this instance and then an article in the next instance in the next verse.)
- If John was locked in prison, who baptized Jesus? My suspicion is that this is part of Luke’s plan to minimize John’s role and separate him from Jesus. (Cf. John 3.30!) Note that the execution of John is never detailed except for a passing reference in Luke 9.9. Also note the ongoing influence of John in Acts 18.24-28 and 19.1-10 over against the community of Jesus followers.

NA28 καὶ καταβῆναι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον σωματικῶς εἶδει ὡς περιστερὰν ἐπ’ αὐτόν, καὶ φωνὴν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ γενέσθαι·
 σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα.

NASB and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven,
 “You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased.”

KJV And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said,
 Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

ESV and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven,
 “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

NRS and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven,
 “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

NET and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven,
 “You are my one dear Son; in you I take great delight.”

NIV and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven:
 “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”

NJB and the Holy Spirit descended on him in a physical form, like a dove. And a voice came from heaven,
 ‘You are my Son; today have I fathered you.’

CEB and the Holy Spirit came down on him in bodily form like a dove. And there was a voice from heaven:
 “You are my Son, whom I dearly love; in you I find happiness.”

NLT and the Holy Spirit, in bodily form, descended on him like a dove. And a voice from heaven said,
 “You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy.”

MSG and the Holy Spirit, like a dove descending, came down on him. And along with the Spirit, a voice:
 “You are my Son, chosen and marked by my love, pride of my life.”

MGVH and the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven,
 “You, you are my beloved Son; with you I am so delighted!”

- A περιστερὰν is a “dove,” but doves and pigeons are actually the same bird! “Dove” does sound better in our culture.
- ὁ υἱός μου ὁ ἀγαπητός: The adjective ἀγαπητός = “beloved” can be taken either as modifying Son (> “my beloved Son”) or as a substantive in apposition to Son (> “my Son, the beloved”).
- ἐν σοὶ εὐδόκησα = *with you I am so delighted*: There are two challenges to the translation here. First, the verb is an aorist indicative, but to say, “I was delighted,” does not make good sense in the context. It is better understood as a perfective present (“I have been delighted”) or, more likely, as a punctiliar present or as expressing a general condition (“I am delighted”). Second, English versions use a variety of words to express the idea of the verb: “delight, take delight, be well pleased, bring great joy.” I have chosen to use “I am so delighted” to provide extra force to the relationship that I think is intended. Also note that the prepositional phrase “with you” (ἐν σοὶ) is in the primary position for emphasis to match the emphasis on “you” in the preceding phrase.
- What is going on with the NJB’s “You are my Son; today have I fathered you”? It is a manuscript variant that only appears in one Greek manuscript (Bezae) and some early Church Fathers. It is a quote from Psalm 2.7, a psalm with messianic overtones, but there is no good reason to accept it as a good reading here.

Luke 3.15-22 mgvhoffman

¹⁵ So while the people were filled with anticipation,
and they all were speculating in their hearts concerning John,
whether he might be the Christ,

¹⁶ John responded, saying to them all,

“As for me, I am baptizing you with water,
but one who is more powerful than me is coming.

I am not worthy to loosen the strap of his sandals.

As for him, he will baptize you in Holy Spirit and fire,

¹⁷ him whose winnowing fork is in his hand,

to clean out his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his storehouse.

But as for the chaff, he will burn it up with inextinguishable fire.”

¹⁸ So then, also with many other exhortations, he was proclaiming the good news to the people.

¹⁹ But as for Herod the tetrarch,

since he kept on being rebuked by *John* because of Herodias, his brother’s wife,

and because of all the evil things Herod had done,

²⁰ *Herod* added even this to everything else: he locked up John in prison.

²¹ Now it so happened—

when all the people were baptized

and Jesus also was baptized and while he was praying—

that heaven was opened,

²² and the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon him,

and a voice came from heaven,

“You, you are my beloved Son; with you I am so delighted!”