



# Session 5 Weekly Reading Plan

## Matthew 3 — The Forerunner and the King

“Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand.”

### Weekly Big Idea

The arrival of Jesus inaugurates the promised Kingdom of God, calling for repentance, covenant faithfulness, and allegiance to the true King.

### Key Question

If the Kingdom is truly at hand, what must change in my life?

### Weekly Reading Plan (Week 5)

## Monday — The Voice in the Wilderness

### Read:

- Matthew 3:1–3
- Isaiah 40:1–5
- Malachi 3:1
- Malachi 4:5–6

Matthew tells us John fulfills Isaiah 40:

“A voice cries in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.”

In Isaiah’s context, this was a message of comfort and restoration after exile. God was coming back to rescue His people.

Now Matthew applies it to John preparing the way for Jesus.

This means something profound:

Jesus is identified with **“the LORD” (YHWH)** whose way is being prepared.

Malachi also foretold a messenger before the Day of the Lord.

John is that messenger.

**Reflection (Context + Prophecy):**

1. How does Isaiah 40 connect exile restoration to Jesus' arrival?
2. What does it mean that John prepares the way of "the Lord"?

## **Tuesday — Repentance and the Kingdom**

**Read:**

- Matthew 3:2–6
- Deuteronomy 30:1–6
- Joel 2:12–13

John's message is simple but explosive:

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

In Jewish thought, repentance (teshuvah) means "return."

Deuteronomy 30 promised that when Israel returned to the Lord, restoration would follow.

Joel 2 connects repentance to the coming Day of the Lord.

John is announcing:

The long-awaited Kingdom is breaking in. Return to covenant faithfulness.

**Reflection (Discipleship):**

1. Why is repentance the first word of the Kingdom?
2. What does true repentance look like in your life right now?

## Wednesday — Warning to Religious Hypocrisy

### Read:

- Matthew 3:7–10
- Isaiah 29:13
- Psalm 1
- Jeremiah 7:1–11

John confronts the Pharisees and Sadducees:

“Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.”

This is covenant language.

Israel had assumed physical descent from Abraham was enough. But John reminds them:

“God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.”

The Abrahamic Covenant promised blessing, but it was always meant to produce transformed hearts. This anticipates what we studied earlier: The New Covenant (Jeremiah 31) will write the law on hearts.

### Reflection (Heart Check):

1. What is the difference between religious identity and real repentance?
2. What fruit is your life producing?

## Thursday — The Coming One and the Spirit

### Read:

- Matthew 3:11–12
- Isaiah 11:1–5
- Isaiah 4:2–4

- Malachi 3:2–3

John says:

“He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”

Isaiah 11 describes the Spirit resting upon the Messianic King.

Malachi describes refining fire purifying Israel.

This connects first and second coming themes:

- Spirit baptism (inaugurated at first coming; Acts 2)
- Refining judgment (fully realized at His return)

The winnowing fork imagery echoes Psalm 1 — the righteous and wicked ultimately separated.

**Reflection (Kingdom Hope):**

1. How do Isaiah and Malachi shape your understanding of Jesus’ mission?
2. How does the promise of the Spirit change how we live now?

## **Friday — The Baptism of Jesus**

**Read:**

- Matthew 3:13–17
- Psalm 2:7
- Isaiah 42:1
- Genesis 22:2

When Jesus is baptized:

- The heavens open
- The Spirit descends

- The Father declares:

“This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”

This moment ties together:

- Psalm 2 (Royal Son — Davidic King)
- Isaiah 42 (Suffering Servant)
- Abraham’s beloved son language (Genesis 22)

Matthew shows us:

The King is also the Servant. The Son is also the sacrifice. First coming: humble identification with sinners. Second coming: reigning Son of Psalm 2.

**Reflection (Identity + Allegiance):**

1. Why does Jesus choose baptism?
2. What does the Father’s declaration reveal about Jesus’ mission?

## **Weekend — The Kingdom Is at Hand**

**Read Slowly:**

- Matthew 3 (entire chapter)
- Daniel 7:13–14
- Isaiah 9:6–7

Daniel 7 describes:

“One like a Son of Man... given dominion and glory and a kingdom.”

Isaiah 9 promises:

“Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end.”

John announces that this Kingdom is “at hand.”

This does not mean fully consummated. It means inaugurated.  
Breaking in. Beginning now.

We live between:

- The King's first coming
- The King's return

And discipleship means living in allegiance to His Kingdom today.

**Final Reflection:**

1. How does Matthew 3 connect to Daniel 7 and Isaiah 9?
2. What does it mean to live as a citizen of a Kingdom that has begun but is not yet fully realized?
3. What specific area of your life must come under the authority of the King?

## Prayer Focus This Week

Pray for:

- A repentant heart
- A deeper understanding of the Kingdom
- The filling of the Spirit
- Bold allegiance to Jesus as King

Prepare the way in your own heart.

Next Week in The Burn:

**Matthew 4 — The Temptation in the Wilderness: The True Son Tested and Victorious.**