

John the Baptist

TEXT: Luke 3:1-18

KEY VERSE: In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. — Matthew 3:1,2

John the Baptist came as forerunner of Christ, preparing the way before Him by calling men to repent and turn their hearts to God. No other prophet or preacher held the unique position that John had at that time in history. His mission in life was to introduce Christ to the world.

1. John was not a part of the accepted religious hierarchy of the day. By whom and under what condition was John commissioned to preach the Gospel?

2. What might have attracted the people to come to see John and hear his message?

3. In early days it was customary for kings, when on journeys, to send some men before them to command the inhabitants to clear the way. In rough countries this was a necessary precaution, for there were no public roads. Verse 4 of our text refers to this in John's message to "Prepare ye the way of the Lord. . . ." How can Christians "prepare the way"?

4. What is the meaning of John's admonition, "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance"? What is the difference between believing in Christ and obeying His Word?

5. John's message was a message of judgment for those who would not repent. How did he explain this judgment?

6. How did Isaiah describe the personage of John the Baptist, and what was the implication regarding John's importance? See Isaiah 40:3.

7. Cite an example in John's life, proving that he was not one to compromise his message. See Matthew 14:3-10.

8. In what words did John express his unworthiness?

9. What was Jesus' appraisal of John? See Matthew 11:9-11.