

John The Baptist

Matthew 3:1-4

Intro:

- A. **Matthew does not give much biographical information about John.**
 - 1. Mark begins his account with John.
 - 2. Luke gives the fullest account and begins his gospel with Zacharias and Elizabeth.

- B. **John came as a fulfillment of prophecy.**
 - 1. Isaiah had written of him.
 - 2. Isaiah 40:3-4

I. John Was A Preacher. 3:1

- A. **"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea..."**
 - 1. In the days God set.
 - 2. Baptist = βαπτιστης = one who performs the act of immersion.
 - 3. came = παραγινομαι = to come, to arrive. A day, historic in nature, has arrived.
 - 4. preaching = κηρυσσω = "to proclaim as a herald." One who proclaims a message that is not his. The message comes from another higher source. John did not make, "a sermon for the people", he proclaimed God's message.
 - 5. wilderness = ερημος = desert, desolate. Here a thinly settled country. Why not Jerusalem? God went to the country and called to the city.

- B. **"Repent ye:"**
 - 1. repent = μετανοεω = To change one's mind and purpose. This is not merely to repent of nor forsake sin. This is to change one's mind about sin. God meant for John's hearers to stop and to take stock of their lives. To reevaluate everything not just "sin" but all things that had to do with God. To have a genuine change in regard to God and to do better.

C. **"for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."**

1. kingdom = βασιλεια των ουρανων = "the kingdom of the heavens." A kingdom consists of three things, a country, a people, and a king.
2. at hand = "close", "close enough to touch."

II. John Was Prophesied. V.3

A. **"For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness."**

1. "For this is the one referred to by the prophet Isaiah."
2. crying = βοαω = "to cry aloud", "to shout."
3. John shouted the message of God.

B. **"prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight..."**

1. "Get the road ready for the Lord" - Wms
2. "Clear a straight path for Him." - NEB

III. John Was Committed. V.4

A. **The dress of John.**

1. "his raiment of camel's hair."
2. Not fine cloth but a garment made from the long shaggy hair of the camel.
3. "with a belt of leather around his waist."

B. **"and his meat was locusts and wild honey."**

1. These were flying insects of various kinds. They were 2 to 3 inches long and are in great quantity often darkening the skies. They may be dried, roasted, or pounded into a meal and used to make meal.
2. This was the food of the poor.
3. Honey was available as, wood honey. Some say it could have been, "honey dew" which is produced by certain insects in great quantity.

IV. John's Generation.

A. **We see it reflected in the Pharisees. A people are never better than their religion and a religion is no better than its leaders.**

1. Outward righteousness, inward rottenness. Luke 7:36-50
2. Blind to spiritual things. John 3:1-10
3. Emphasized ceremony. Matthew 15:1,9
4. Perverted scripture. Matthew 15:1,9
5. Justified themselves. Luke 16:14,15
6. Hindered potential believers. John 9:16,22
7. Loved display. Matthew 23:5-7
8. Covetous. Luke 16:14

B. **Jesus described them.**

1. Matthew 11:16-19
2. They would not repent. Matthew 11:20

V. What Kind Of Ministry Should John Have Pursued?

A. **We have seen the people.**

1. They were sinners.
2. They were unrepentant.

B. **The kind the people wanted.**

1. Matthew 11:7-8
2. They wanted encouragement and motivation.
3. They wanted to be pampered.

C. **What John was to his generation.**

1. He was a prophet. Matthew 11:9
2. He was put in jail.
3. He was put to death.

