

<"The voice of one crying aloud, 'In the desert prepare ye a road for the Lord: make His highway Straight.'">

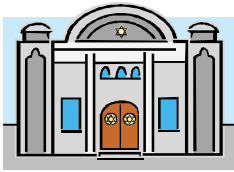
The Highwaymen

<http://www.encouragementonline.com>

February 2007

John the Baptist: Voice of Mercy Heralding CHRIST

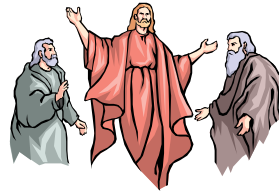
Before we begin with the work of John the Baptist, we will first consider the Time and Prophetic work of **Malachi**. The Jews had partially Returned to Jerusalem (536 BC) from captivity in Babylon, some 100 years earlier. The Jewish Temple had been rebuilt, Nehemiah had rebuilt the Wall (444 BC). But some



Priests were becoming more careless, perverting God's Word.

Some people were claiming evil was good, the people were neglecting Temple sacrifices. They began to intermarry with the nations. **But Malachi foretold the coming of John the Baptist and Elijah** (some 400 years in advance), **to turn men's hearts back to God**, and both of these Prophets did arrive in the process of time. First **John the Baptist, in the spirit of Elijah, as "the Seal of Prophecy"**, **introducing The Christ**, and then **Elijah** to

join **Moses** in Conference with **The Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration**



before Christ's Suffering, Sacrificial Death,

burial, Resurrection and Ascension! The Holy God, being Faithful to His Creatures would call His people from sin's domain to Repent and receive the Dominion of Heaven. And **The Christ**, would call men from neglected Temple worship, to **The Kingdom in the heart, The Church of all nations** that **He** Himself would Build. Mt 3:1 About this time **John the Baptist** made his appearance, preaching in the Desert of Judaea. (**Judaea= 'He (The Christ) shall be Praised'**). -(Strong)



"Repent," he said, "for the Kingdom (**Royal power, Kingship, Rule, Dominion**) of the Heavens is now close at hand." (**Remember, Jesus said, My Kingdom is not of this World.**

(repent= a change of mind toward God, and abhorrence of sin, leading to change of heart actions) (John, the forerunner of **The Christ**, came Preaching= **Heralding, Officiating as a herald with gravity and authority, that which must be listened to and obeyed**). He it is who was spoken of through the **Prophet Isaiah** when he said, <"**The voice of one crying aloud, 'In the desert prepare ye a road for the Lord: make His highway straight.'**"> **This man John wore a garment of camel's hair, and a loincloth of leather; and he lived upon locusts and wild honey."** (WNT). He lived to serve the Holy God, and introduce His Son, **JESUS!**

A VOICE IN THE DESERT WILDERNESS.

John the Baptist, the son of Zachariah and Elizabeth, was a Priest in The Order of Aaron. But we do not find him in the Temple, but **in the wilderness**, where the people would Hear the Word of a Prophet, and the Call to Return to Repentance, and Towards The Holy God. No one in the Temple could handle **the Call to Repentance** of 'the Elijah like' Prophet, named John the Baptist!

John did not appear before men to announce JESUS as the King of the Jews, no **he came announcing.....**

"The LAMB OF GOD, WHICH TAKES AWAY THE SINS OF THE WORLD." And He came in a **flesh and blood human body that He might offer Himself as a Holy Sacrifice to His Holy Father on our behalf"**



John did not come dressed in Priestly garments, to make A Name for himself.

But he came, great in the sight of The LORD, and of mean appearance in the sight of men.

Not all of The LORD'S Work is done in the House of Worship, there is yet much to be done in the field of ripe grain.

John was So occupied with The Word of The LORD, that he ate sparingly.

And So Focused on GOD, that he recognized **His Obedient Son, coming down for baptism, wanting to fulfill all Righteousness.**

A BAPTIZER, BAPTIZES A REPENTANT MULTITUDE

When the Temple priests were mulling over laws, (so much like our Courts, Attorneys and Lawyers of today) A Prophet/Priest was calling

a **multitude out to the desert to Repent and be Baptized because The King Of A Heavenly Kingdom Was Coming!**

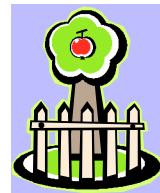


Mt 3:5 Then large numbers of people went out to him-- people from Jerusalem and from all Judaea, and from the whole of the Jordan valley-- and were **baptized by him** in the Jordan, **making full confession of their sins.**

THE BAPTIST REQUIRES WORKS OF TRUE REPENTANCE, AND CHANGE OF HEART

Let's Imagine Now, that this John the Baptist was addressing **our Church today**. Would he find in it true works of Repentance, or rebellion against the Holy King Jesus? **Would he say "Repent" from our love affair with the world, and Return to "our First Love"?** Would he accuse us of living in "Apostasy" because we were neglecting Christ's Clear and Simple Com-

mands? Have we eaten some forbidden fruit, and become alien to Christ? Have we become like Eve, needing something forbidden? Would John come to **our Church** at all? Or would he address **our Denomination** something like this: **"O vipers' brood, (cunning, malignant) who has warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore let your lives prove your change of heart;" (Matt 3:7)**



As Ministers of the Gospel, the world will want you to take up their Causes. Approve their Lifestyles. Take away the Consequences of their lifetime of bad habits. Fight their Battles, stand up 'for Their Rights'. The Very Best we can do for them is to Share with them the Work of Christ on His Cross so that none should perish in their sin!

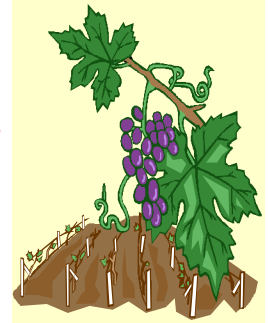
But some would claim special immunity from Obedience

Isn't it amazing how many **religious sounding excuses** some people come up with to abort **The Christ** from being Born in their hearts? The Jews claim Abraham, the Moslems also resort to him. Yet none of those claims grant immunity before The Holy GOD. **Mt 3:9 and do not imagine that you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our forefather,' for I tell you that God can raise up descendants for Abraham from these stones.**

IF THE SON OF GOD HIMSELF WALKED THE WAY OF OBEDIENCE, EVEN TO THE CROSS OF HIS CRUCIFIXION, HOW CAN ANYONE ELSE CLAIM A SPECIAL PRIVILEGE, AND IMMUNITY FROM OBEYING THE ONE TRUE GOD? IT IS TIME FOR BOTH SIDES OF ABRAHAM'S FAMILY TO OBEY THE LORD GOD, FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF THE WORD MADE FLESH FOR ALL MANKIND.

True Freedom for all Mankind, is the Freedom To Obey GOD! Matt 3:10 And already the (Holy) axe is lying (buried) at the root of the trees, so that (these things

being so) every (religious) tree which does not produce **good fruit (beautiful by reason of Purity of heart and life in Christ the True Vine)**



will quickly be hewn down and thrown into the fire."

Repentance & Water Baptism/ESCAPING THE FIREY WRATH OF THE HOLY GOD

Now out of all **'the trees of Religion'**, men, women and children are called to escape to **Safety and Salvation through Repentance and Water Baptism, unto The Christ. Of all the trees of Religion, there is only One SAVIOR from Sin. Without a personal Savior from Sin, we are totally unprepared to stand in the Presence of The**

Holy GOD. Our very best "Good Works" we cover ourselves with before **The Holy GOD**, are only filthy rags. "who has warned you **to Flee** from the coming wrath?" was John the Baptist's burning Question. Matt 3:11 **"I indeed am baptizing you in water on a profession**

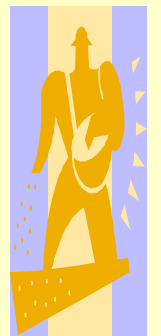
of repentance; but He who is coming after me is mightier than I: His sandals I am not worthy to carry for a moment; He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire."
The GOD/MAN has Come!

THE LORD OF THE HARVEST, SEPERATING THE WHEAT FROM THE CHAFF

IN A DAY WHEN CHAFF IS MIXING WITH THE WHEAT OF **CHRIST'S** HARVEST, PERVERTING THE CHURCH, **HE SAID HE** HIMSELF WOULD BUILD. A DAY WHEN SOME ARE BUILDING WITH WOOD, HAY AND STUBBLE, **THE VERY CHRIST** OF THE CHURCH STANDS WITH WINNOWING SHOVEL IN HAND:

Mt 3:12 His winnowing-shovel is in His hand, and He will make a thorough clearance of His threshing-floor, gathering His wheat into the storehouse, but burning up the chaff in unquenchable fire."

OH! THAT THE DENOMINATION THAT WOULD EVEN THINK OF ORDAINING THE UNHOLY ONES, WOULD FIRST CONSIDER **THE CHRIST** AND HIS WINNOWING SHOVEL, AND THE END OF THE CHAFF **HE** WILL WINNOW OUT FROM **HIS** TRUE CHURCH SEED AT HIS HARVEST!



<"The voice of one crying aloud, `In the desert prepare ye a road for the Lord: make His highway Straight.'">

From mankind's Genesis, there have been Two Building endeavors,

1. the ungodly have built **Cities & Towers** to themselves, and there own names.
2. And the Godly have built **Altars, Tabernacles, Temples and Churches** unto THE LORD and His Holy Name.

Ps 127:1 <Song of degrees for Solomon.] Except **the LORD** build the house, they labour **in vain** that build it: except **the LORD** keep the city, the watchman waketh but **in vain**. (KJV#) (now read Psalm chapter 2)

The Lord Builds His Church with the Service of Men & Women, but He is Particular about their motivation in Service. Since it is **for His Honor and Glory!**

David wanted to Built the LORD'S House, but GOD Chose Solomon to be the Builder of it!

Many a Godly Servant has been led in Building, With The Master (His Church), and have built to Last for Eternity. Their Reward, will include all the Souls Saved, and Eternally Secure in Christ in the Kingdom of Heaven.

The most Merciful outreach any human being can make is to share **the Good News about Jesus.**

LET ALL NATIONS BUILD THEIR HOPE ON CHRIST !

Ro 15:1-12 "As for us who are strong, our duty is to bear with the weaknesses of those who are not strong, and not seek our own pleasure. Let each of us endeavor to please his fellow Christian, aiming at a blessing calculated to build him up. **For even the Christ** did not seek His own pleasure. His principle was, <"The reproaches which they addressed to Thee have fallen on me."> **For all that was written of old has been written for our instruction, so that we may always have hope through the power of endurance and the encouragement which the Scriptures afford.** And may God, the giver of power of endurance and of **that encouragement**, grant you to be in full sympathy with one another **in accordance with the example**

of Christ Jesus, so that with oneness both of heart and voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Habitually therefore give one another a friendly reception, just as Christ also has received you,** and thus promote the glory of God. My meaning is that **Christ has become a servant to the people of Israel in vindication of God's truthfulness-- in showing how sure are the promises made to our forefathers-- and that the Gentiles also have glorified God in acknowledgment of His mercy.** So it is written, <"For this reason I will praise Thee among the Gentiles, and sing psalms in honour of Thy name."> And again the

Psalmist says, <"Be glad, ye Gentiles, in company with His People."> And again, <"Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles, and let all the people extol Him."> And again Isaiah says, <"There shall be the Root of Jesse and One who rises up to rule the Gentiles. **On Him shall the Gentiles build their hopes."**>

**Encouragement !**