

A DEVOTIONAL SERIES ON THE GOSPEL ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

GOD PREPARES THE WAY

Mark 1:2-3 “As it is written in Isaiah the prophet, “Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight,’ ”

If you have attended a concert by a famous singer, you are aware there is a “warm up” singer that provides a concert of their own prior to the main act. It is not a bonus, but rather serves to prepare the attendees for the star’s performance. In the sending of Jesus as Savior of the world, God through Old Testament prophets provided any number of messages to cause people to expect and prepare them for His coming. This was not like the concert warm-up act. Rather, it was God’s way of telling people His plan of salvation and giving information that would enable them to know, to recognize and follow the Savior when He came to earth.

Luke records the Angel’s announcement to Zechariah that it was God’s intent for John the Baptist to prepare the way for Jesus coming to earth. He and Elizabeth would become parents of this forerunner of Jesus. The Angel said to him, “. . . your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great before the Lord. . . he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. . . And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, and he will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.” (Luke 1:13-17)

God sent John as His messenger. His task was to prepare a “road” for the earthly ministry of Jesus. His method to do this was through preaching. The content of his message was God’s law to show the people their sins and need for forgiveness. The purpose of John’s message was to prepare the hearts of the people to recognize their need for a savior and that Jesus was sent by God to meet that need.

God continues to provide messengers to prepare the hearts of you and all sinful people for the good news of His gift of a savior who would take upon Himself the debt you and they owed God because of sin. You are privileged that God provides you with a pastor who faithfully points out to you your sins and need for your Savior Jesus. You are blessed with God's gift of a pastor who delivers the message of the gospel, the good news, that Jesus has paid your debt. Jesus has freed you from your bondage to Satan, the world and your sinful nature. Jesus has given you a new life in which you profess that He is your Lord and Savior. He has created the way for you to enter heaven through His life, death and resurrection.

Prayer: Jesus, You are the way, the truth and the life. You have promised that through You I am able to receive from your Father His forgiveness and eternal life and salvation. Send the Holy Spirit to keep me in this faith to life everlasting. Amen.

Prepare the royal highway; The King of kings is near!
Let ev'ry hill and valley A level road appear!
Then greet the King of Glory Foretold in sacred story:
Refrain: Hosanna to the Lord, For He fulfills God's Word.

God's people, see Him coming: Your own eternal king!
Palm branches strew before Him! Spread garments! Shout and sing!
God's promise will not fail you! No more shall doubt assail you! Refrain:

Then fling the gates wide open To greet your promised king!
Your king, yet ev'ry nation Its tribute too should bring.
All lands, bow down before Him! All nations, now adore Him! Refrain:

His is no earthly kingdom; It comes from heav'n above.
His rule is peace and freedom And justice, truth, and love.
So let your praise be sounding For kindness so abounding: Refrain:
(LSB 343)