

## ***John the Baptist: the King's Herald, Matthew Ch. 3***

*And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." They said then to him, "Who are you, so that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?" He said, "I am a voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as Isaiah the prophet said."*

*John 1:21-23*

### **The Short Story: John's ministry**

- "In those days", v.1-4.
  - Preaching in the wilderness of Judea, "Repent. . . \_\_\_\_\_"
  - John's attire: \_\_\_\_\_
- Baptizing at the Jordan, v.5-12.
  - A period of national repentance. \_\_\_\_\_
  - But the religion's elite were also coming, v.7-10. \_\_\_\_\_
  - The corporate sense of some impending "great" event drove all to some response.
    - Some to self-examination and repentance. \_\_\_\_\_
    - Some to covering all the angles. \_\_\_\_\_
  - "Who warned you . . ." \_\_\_\_\_
  - "Let the fruit of your works demonstrate repentance, (not self-preservation.) \_\_\_\_\_
  - For the judgment is at hand (v.10.) \_\_\_\_\_
- John's "truth," v.11-12.
  - "I only baptize with water for repentance. \_\_\_\_\_"
  - "Yet He who comes after me baptizes with the Holy Spirit and fire. \_\_\_\_\_"

- At the harvest He will separate the true from the false. \_\_\_\_\_
- The Baptism of Jesus, v.13-17.
  - John's first reaction. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Jesus' response. To humble himself in his humanity. \_\_\_\_\_
  - The Holy Spirit and the voice of God. \_\_\_\_\_

### **The Testimony of John the Baptist, John 1:19-27.**

- John obviously had gotten the attention of the religious elite of his day. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Perhaps he was God's special envoy to exalt them. \_\_\_\_\_
- Yet he wasn't interested in their favor.
  - Made obvious by his terse answers to their questions. \_\_\_\_\_
- His mission: to herald the coming king.
  - He stands "among you" now. \_\_\_\_\_
  - Whom even John didn't recognize until Jesus came to be baptized (v.31.) \_\_\_\_\_

### **Micah's second option: the redeemer rejected, Micah 4:6.**

*And he will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse.*

- The historically obvious truth. \_\_\_\_\_
- Yet what possibilities had Israel, the Jews, responded with true repentance. \_\_\_\_\_
- The same ever-present option throughout Israel's history. \_\_\_\_\_

***Oh, what joy missed, what grace averted, what blessed peace lost, as Israel, and all humanity to follow, has, by habit and force of will and pride, refused to accept the simplicity of "yes" without conditions. The tragedy of human existence is driven by the pride of "no, I'd rather try to do it myself."***