

LUKE: THE SON OF MAN, THE SAVIOR HAS  
COME, WEEK 14

TITLE: JOHN PREPARES THE WAY FOR JESUS

TEXT: LUKE 3:1-6

INTRODUCTION: (1) IN LUKE CHAPTERS 1&2, LUKE RECORDED THE BIRTH NARRATIVES OF **JOHN AND JESUS CHRIST, WHICH WE'VE TAKEN 13 SUNDAYS TO COVER.**

\* AS WE COME TO CHAPTER 3, 18 YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE THE LAST HISTORICAL EVENT RECORDED BY LUKE, THE STORY OF THE 12 YEAR OLD JESUS IN THE TEMPLE IN LUKE 2:41-51.

\*\* IN LUKE CHAPTER 3, THE PUBLIC MINISTRIES OF JOHN AND JESUS ARE ABOUT TO BEGIN.

\*\*\* FOR 30 YEARS, JESUS AND JOHN LIVED IN SECLUSION IN A SENSE.

\*\*\*\* FOR ACCORDING TO LUKE 1:80, JOHN, **“LIVED IN THE DESERTS UNTIL THE DAY OF HIS PUBLIC APPEARANCE TO ISRAEL,”** AND HIS PUBLIC APPEARANCE STARTS HERE IN LUKE 3.

(2) AND THEN JESUS ACCORDING TO LUKE 2:51, LIVED IN THE OUT OF THE WAY, OBSCURE, OFF THE BEATEN PATH VILLAGE OF NAZARETH AND BEGINS HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY AT ABOUT 30 YEARS OF AGE ACCORDING TO LUKE 3:23.

\* AND ONLY A FEW, A SELECT FEW, KNEW THE TRUE IDENTITIES OF JOHN AND JESUS, SPECIFICALLY THOSE WHOM WERE LOOKING FOR THE CONSOLATION OF ISRAEL.

\*\* AND OF THAT SMALL GROUP, PEOPLE SUCH **AS ZACHARIAS AND ELIZABETH, JOHN'S** PARENTS, SIMEON AND ANNA, WHOM SAW JESUS AT THE TEMPLE AND JOSEPH, THE LEGAL FATHER OF JESUS, MOST LIKELY HAD DIED BY THIS TIME AND GONE ON TO GLORY.

\*\*\*\* AND BEYOND THESE PEOPLE, THE ANGELS WHOM ANNOUNCED THE BIRTH OF JOHN AND JESUS HAD LONG SINCE RETURNED TO HEAVEN.

\*\*\*\* THEREFORE JUST A FEW REALLY KNEW ABOUT JOHN AND JESUS.

(3) BUT THAT WAS ABOUT TO END, 3 DECADES, 30 YEARS OF SILENCE WAS ABOUT TO END, STARTING IN LUKE CHAPTER 3.

\* AND BEYOND THAT, THE BEGINNING OF JOHN THE BAPTIZER'S PUBLIC MINISTRY IN LUKE 3 WOULD ALSO MARK THE END OF AN EVEN LONGER SILENCE, OVER 4 CENTURIES, OVER 400 YEARS OF PROPHETIC SILENCE SINCE THE TIME OF MALACHI, THE LAST PROPHET TO SPEAK TO ISRAEL ABOUT 430 B.C.

\*\* HOWEVER, GOD WAS GOING TO SPEAK TO ISRAEL AGAIN, TO BEGIN WITH, THROUGH JOHN, THEN OF COURSE ULTIMATELY BY JESUS.

\*\*\* AND AS THE CURTAIN RISES ON THE PUBLIC MINISTRIES OF JOHN AND JESUS, ISRAEL WAS SHROUDED, COVERED IN DEEP DARKNESS.

\*\*\*\* IT WAS A DARK TIME POLITICALLY AS ISRAEL WAS UNDER ROMAN RULE.

(4) IT WAS A DARK TIME SPIRITUALLY, FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE WERE MASHED, SMASHED, CRUSHED UNDER THE WEIGHTY BURDEN OF A RELIGIOUS SYSTEM THAT WAS APOSTATE, THAT WAS LEGALISTIC, THAT WAS HYPOCRITICAL, THAT WAS CONCERNED MORE ABOUT EXTERNALS AND APPEARANCES RATHER THAN THE HEART.

\* AND THAT FALSE RELIGIOUS SYSTEM WAS DOMINATED BY WICKED, SINFUL, HYPOCRITICAL, CORRUPT SPIRITUAL LEADERS.

\*\* THEREFORE THE JEWISH PEOPLE WERE IMMERSED, ENGULFED IN HYPOCRITICAL WORKS RIGHTEOUSNESS, FALSE RELIGION AND DID NOT POSSESS CONTROL OF THEIR OWN LAND AND NATION. IT WAS A BLEAK TIME FOR THE JEWISH PEOPLE.

\*\*\* HOWEVER, THE LIGHT WAS ABOUT TO SHINE. THE SHROUD OF DARKNESS WAS ABOUT TO BE TAKEN AWAY, THE S O N WOULD RISE AND SHINE.

\*\*\*\* FOR THE O.T. CLOSED IN MALACHI 3:1 AND **4:2 WITH THE PROMISE OF MESSIAH'S COMING,** AND THROUGHOUT THE 4 CENTURIES OF SPIRITUAL AND POLITICAL DARKNESS THE JEWISH PEOPLE HAD HELD ONTO THE HOPE THAT THE MESSIAH WOULD COME.

(5) BUT BEFORE THE MESSIAH WOULD COME, HIS FORERUNNER WAS TO APPEAR TO PREPARE THE WAY OF THE KING.

\* FOR ALMOST 30 YEARS EARLIER, JOHN THE **BAPTIST'S FATHER SAID THIS DIRECTED BY** THE HOLY SPIRIT IN LUKE 1:76 - **"AND YOU CHILD, WILL BE CALLED THE PROPHET OF THE MOST HIGH; FOR YOU WILL GO ON BEFORE THE LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS."**

\*\* AND APPROXIMATELY 400 YEARS BEFORE THAT, THE LORD SAYS IN MALACHI 3:1A, **"BEHOLD I AM GOING TO SEND MY MESSENGER, AND HE WILL CLEAR THE WAY BEFORE ME."**

\*\*\* THUS JOHN THE BAPTIZER, THE FIRST PROPHET IN MORE THAN 400 YEARS IN ISRAEL APPEARED ON CENTER STAGE TO INTRODUCE THE STAR, THE MAIN CHARACTER, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD, THE LORD JESUS, THE CHRIST.

\*\*\*\* AND AS THE PROPHET SENT TO PREPARE THE WAY OF THE ONE WHOM WAS PROPHET, PRIEST AND KING - **THE LORD JESUS, JOHN'S** PURPOSE AND TASK WAS TWO FOLD: NO. 1 TO PREPARE THE PEOPLE FOR JESUS MESSIAH, AND NO. 2 TO PRESENT JESUS MESSIAH TO THE PEOPLE.

(6) AND IN OUR **TEXT TODAY JOHN'S MINISTRY** STARTS, TODAY WE WILL BEGIN TO SEE THE UNVEILING OF THE ONE WHO PREPARES THE WAY OF THE LORD.

**\* BECAUSE OF THAT, I'VE TITLED OUR MESSAGE TODAY, "JOHN PREPARES THE WAY FOR JESUS."**

**\*\* AND UNDER THAT THEME WE'LL LOOK AT 3** POINTS. NO. 1 THE PEOPLE THAT ARE IN POWER AS JOHN BEGINS HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY, VV. 1&2; NO. 2 THE PREACHING OF JOHN, V. 3; AND NO. 3 THE PROPHECY THAT JOHN FULFILLS FROM THE BOOK OF ISAIAH, VV. 4-6.

**\*\*\* AND WITH THOSE HOOKS TO HANG YOUR THOUGHTS ON, LOOK AT V. 1 PLEASE WHERE WE'LL START TO SEE OUR FIRST POINT TODAY, THE PEOPLE.**

I. THE PEOPLE, (READ V. 1)

A. NOW LUKE IS A GOOD HISTORIAN, SO HE FRAMES THE CONTEXT AND TIME WHEN JOHN STARTS HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY IN V. 2, AND AS JESUS STARTS HIS MINISTRY IN V. 23.

\* SO LUKE PLACES THIS HISTORICAL ACCOUNT IN ITS PROPER CONTEXT. AND LUKE INCLUDES SEVEN PEOPLE, TWO JEWS AND FIVE GENTILES IN PROVIDING THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND **FOR THE START OF JOHN'S AND LATER, JESUS' MINISTRY.**

\*\* AND THE FIRST PERSON THAT LUKE TALKS ABOUT IS TIBERIUS CAESAR, THE EMPEROR OF ROME. LUKE STARTS AT THE TOP POLITICALLY IN THAT DAY IN V. 1 AND WORKS HIS WAY DOWN IN THE CHAIN OF COMMAND.

\*\*\* **AND WHEN JOHN'S PUBLIC MINISTRY** STARTED, TIBERIUS CAESAR WHO FOLLOWED AUGUSTUS CAESAR, WAS IN THE FIFTEENTH YEAR OF HIS REIGN, WHICH DATES ANYWHERE BETWEEN A.D. 26 TO A.D. 29.



\*\*\*\* NOW MOVING DOWN THE CHAIN OF COMMAND POLITICALLY, FROM THE SUPREME RULER TO THE HIGHEST RANKING LOCAL ROMAN AUTHORITY, THE NEXT PERSON MENTIONED WAS PONTIUS PILATE, THE GOVERNOR OF JUDEA.

1. AND PONTIUS PILATE WAS APPOINTED GOVERNOR OF JUDEA BY TIBERIUS CAESAR AND REMAINED IN OFFICE UNTIL A.D. 36 WHEN HE WAS REMOVED.

\* AND FROM GOSPEL ACCOUNTS PILATE IS PORTRAYED AS ARROGANT AND PROUD, WEAK, VACILLATING AND WAS BRUTAL AND INSENSITIVE.

\*\* NOW POLITICAL LEADERS 3 AND 4 ARE NEXT MENTIONED, TWO OF THE HEROD BROTHERS, TWO OF THE SONS OF HEROD THE GREAT.

\*\*\* AND WHEN HEROD THE GREAT DIED IN 4 B.C. HIS RULE WAS DIVIDED AMONG 3 OF HIS SONS, ARCHELAUS, ANTIPAS AND PHILIP.

\*\*\*\* ARCHELAUS WAS DEPOSED IN A.D. 6. THE HEROD IN VIEW HERE IN V. 1 CALLED HEROD WAS ANTIPAS WHO RULED GALILEE, THE HEROD REFERRED TO IN THE GOSPEL ACCOUNTS OF **JESUS' MINISTRY AND WAS THE ONE WHO WILL IMPRISON AND EXECUTE JOHN THE BAPTIST** LATER ON IN LUKE 3 AND WOULD PLAY A ROLE IN THE UNJUST TRIAL OF JESUS.

**2. THEN ANTIPAS' BROTHER PHILIP RULED THE** REGION OF ITURAEA AND TRACHONITIS NORTHEAST OF GALILEE AND WAS CONSIDERED THE BEST OF THE RULERS IN THE HERODIAN FAMILY.

\* NOW THE LAST RULER IN V. 1 WAS A MAN NAMED LYSANIAS WHO WAS THE RULER, THE GOVERNOR, THE TETRARCH OF ABILENE WHICH WAS NORTHWEST OF DAMASCUS. AND NOT A LOT IS KNOWN ABOUT HIM.

\*\* BUT THESE ARE THE 5 POLITICAL RULERS AS JOHN BEGINS HIS MINISTRY. WITH THAT BEFORE US, LOOK AT V. 2 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 2. NOW IN V. 1 WE HAVE POLITICAL RULERS AND HERE IN V. 2 WE HAVE THE TWO RELIGIOUS RULERS OF ISRAEL, THE HIGH PRIESTS.

\* AND UNDER ROMAN RULE, JEWISH HIGH PRIESTS WERE NOW APPOINTED BY THE ROMANS AS POLITICAL PAWNS, WHOM WOULD TRY TO PLEASE ROMAN RULERS, RATHER THAN THE RULER OF THE UNIVERSE, GOD ALMIGHTY.

\*\* AND AT THIS TIME CAIAPHAS OFFICIALLY HELD THE OFFICE OF HIGH PRIEST, YET MANY RECOGNIZED HIS FATHER-IN-LAW ANNAS, WHO WAS HIGH PRIEST FROM A.D. 6 TO 15, AND WAS REMOVED FROM OFFICE BY A ROMAN GOVERNOR.

\*\*\* AND IN ISRAEL HIGH PRIESTS WERE HIGH PRIESTS UNTIL DEATH AND AS FORMER PRESIDENTS ARE STILL REFERRED TO AS PRESIDENTS, ANNAS WAS STILL THE POWER BROKER IN THE RELIGIOUS REALM, AND WAS STILL CONSIDERED A HIGH PRIEST ALTHOUGH CAIAPHAS WAS OFFICIALLY HIGH PRIEST, BUT BOTH WERE CORRUPT.

\*\*\*\* AND IT MAY BE WORTH POINTING OUT THAT WHEN JESUS WAS ARRESTED, HE WAS FIRST BROUGHT TO ANNAS IN JOHN 18:13.

1. AND LUKE FURTHER RECORDS THAT JESUS WAS TRIED BEFORE CAIAPHAS, HEROD ANTIPAS AND PILATE.

\* NOW JOHN BEGINS HIS MINISTRY DURING THIS DARK PERIOD OF POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND GOD WILL BRING LIGHT THROUGH HIM AS HE PREPARES THE WAY OF THE LORD.

\*\* AND THAT IS THE TRUTH HERE IN VV. 1&2. FOR IT SAYS AT THE END OF V. 2 THAT IT WAS AT THIS TIME THAT THE WORD OF GOD CAME TO JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS, IN THE DESERT.

\*\*\* AND THE IMPLICATION OF THE WORD OF GOD **CAME TO JOHN COMMUNICATES JOHN'S CALL TO HIS MINISTRY AS A PROPHET OF GOD.**

\*\*\*\* IN THE MIDST OF DARKNESS POLITICALLY AND SPIRITUALLY IN ISRAEL, GOD HAD HIS MAN WHOM WOULD NOT BE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD, BUT WOULD BARE WITNESS TO THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD, AS JOHN 1:6-8 SAYS:

2. V. 6 – THERE CAME A MAN SENT FROM GOD, WHOSE NAME WAS JOHN.

V. 7 – HE CAME AS A WITNESS, TO TESTIFY ABOUT THE LIGHT, SO THAT ALL MIGHT BELIEVE THROUGH HIM.

V. 8 – HE WAS NOT THE LIGHT, BUT HE CAME TO TESTIFY ABOUT THE LIGHT.

\* SO JOHN CAME TO TESTIFY ABOUT THE LIGHT, THE LORD JESUS, AND HE APPEARS AT A DARK TIME IN ISRAEL, THE PEOPLE IN AUTHORITY WERE WICKED.

\*\* HOWEVER, JOHN WILL PREACH A MESSAGE OF **REPENTANCE. LOOK AT V. 3 PLEASE, OUR 2'D** POINT TODAY, THE PREACHING OF JOHN.

## II. THE PREACHING, (READ V. 3)

A. NOW BEFORE I TALK ABOUT THE PREACHING **OF JOHN, NOTICE THE LOCATION OF JOHN'S MINISTRY, "THE DISTRICT AROUND THE JORDAN" RIVER, THE JORDAN VALLEY, THE JORDAN NEIGHBORHOOD, ON BOTH BANKS OF THE JORDAN.**

\* AND THIS AREA WAS THE AREA THAT JOHN MINISTERED, NOT AT JERUSALEM, AND NOT AT THE TEMPLE.

**\*\* AND IN ESSENCE THE LOCATION OF JOHN'S**  
MINISTRY WAS A REBUKE TO THE RELIGIOUS  
ESTABLISHMENT IN ISRAEL, LOCATED  
PRIMARILY IN JERUSALEM.

\*\*\* JOHN WAS SEPARATED FROM THE SPIRITUAL  
POLLUTION COMING OUT OF JERUSALEM AT  
THIS TIME.

\*\*\*\* NOW HIS PREACHING IN PREPARING THE  
WAY OF THE LORD WAS NOT WHAT WAS HEARD  
IN JERUSALEM IN THAT DAY.

1. FOR JOHN WAS PREACHING A BAPTISM OF  
REPENTANCE FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

\* AND THIS MEANS A BAPTISM WHICH FOLLOWS  
REPENTANCE AND IS A SIGN OF REPENTANCE.

\*\* FOR YOU SEE LUKE IS INTERESTED IN  
REPENTANCE AND USES THE NOUN  
"REPENTANCE" AND THE VERB "TO REPENT"  
MORE OFTEN THAN THE OTHER THREE GOSPEL  
WRITERS PUT TOGETHER.

\*\*\* THUS LUKE RECORDS THAT JOHN CALLED ON PEOPLE TO REPENT, MEANING TO TURN AWAY FROM THEIR SINS AND THE ACCEPTANCE OF HIS BAPTISM WAS A SIGN THAT THEY HAD DONE THIS, THAT THEY HAD REPENTED.

\*\*\*\* AND THE PURPOSE WAS FOR FORGIVENESS AND THE BAPTISM ITSELF DID NOT FORGIVE THEM, FOR NO RITUAL CAN ACCOMPLISH THAT, JUST AS CHRISTIAN BAPTISM TODAY DOES NOT FORGIVE SINS, FAITH ALONE IN CHRIST ALONE IS THE ONLY MEANS OF FORGIVENESS OF SINS, SO BAPTISM DOES NOT BRING FORGIVENESS, ITS A TESTIMONY OF IT, AN ACT OF OBEDIENCE FOR CHRISTIANS THAT FOLLOWS FAITH IN THE N.T., AN OUTWARD PROFESSION OF AN INWARD POSSESSION.

**2. WE DON'T GET BAPTIZED TO BE SAVED BUT BECAUSE WE ARE SAVED.**



\* AND TO ILLUSTRATE THAT, THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH IN ACTS 8:34-38 IS BAPTIZED AFTER HE BELIEVES. THE PHILIPPIAN JAILOR AND HIS FAMILY ARE BAPTIZED AFTER THEY BELIEVE IN ACTS 16; THE 3,000 SAVED ON PENTECOST GET BAPTIZED AFTER THEY BELIEVED IN ACTS 2:41.

\*\* IN THE GREAT COMMISSION IN MATTHEW 28:19&20 IT COMMUNICATES TO MAKE DISCIPLES, THEN BAPTIZE, THEN TEACH.

\*\*\* AND MY POINT IS, CHRISTIAN BAPTISM **DOESN'T WASH AWAY SIN, NOR JOHN'S** BAPTISM. IT GIVES EVIDENCE OF REPENTANCE AND FAITH.

\*\*\*\* **AND JOHN'S** AUDIENCE WAS STOOPED IN FALSE RELIGION AND PRIDE. ISRAEL WAS RELIGIOUSLY BANKRUPT AND DESPERATELY NEEDED TO REPENT, SO THEY NEEDED TO REPENT AND TURN FROM THEIR FALSE WAY, WHICH WOULD BRING FORGIVENESS, WHICH WAS EVIDENCED BY BAPTISM.

3. AND LET ME REPEAT FOR CLARITY. TO REPENT MEANS TO CONFESS SIN AND TURN FROM IT TOWARD GOD. AND THAT KIND OF REPENTANCE BRINGS FORGIVENESS AND INNER CLEANSING.

\* AND THE ACT THAT SYMBOLIZES, THAT REPRESENTS THE CLEANSING FROM SIN IS BAPTISM. BAPTISM NEVER BROUGHT FORGIVENESS **OF SINS IN JOHN'S BAPTISM, NOR** TODAY WITH CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

\*\* SO JOHN PREACHED A MESSAGE OF REPENTANCE, FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS **EVIDENCED BY BAPTISM. THAT'S THE** PREACHING OF JOHN.

\*\*\* WHICH LEADS US TO OUR LAST POINT TODAY, THE PROPHECY ABOUT JOHN, WHICH STARTS IN V. 4. LOOK AT V. 4 PLEASE.

### III. THE PROPHECY, (READ V. 4)

A. NOW ONE OF THE MANY COMMENTATORS I LOOKED OVER THIS LAST WEEK MADE THIS **STATEMENT: "NOTHING MORE CONVINCINGLY DEMONSTRATES GOD'S CONTROL OVER HISTORY THAN FULFILLED PROPHECY."**

\* AND OH HOW TRUE THAT STATEMENT IS, FOR **GOD'S SOVEREIGN CONTROL OVER HISTORY IS** MANIFEST BY HIM ORDAINING, PREDICTING AND FULFILLING HIS PLAN IN HISTORY. HISTORY IS HIS STORY.

\*\* AND ONE SUCH PROPHECY IS FOUND IN ISAIAH 40:3-5 WHICH SAYS:

V. 3- A VOICE IS CALLING, CLEAR THE WAY FOR THE LORD IN THE WILDERNESS; MAKE SMOOTH IN THE DESERT A HIGHWAY FOR OUR GOD.

V. 4 - LET EVERY VALLEY BE LIFTED UP, AND EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL BE MADE LOW; AND LET THE ROUGH GROUND BECOME A PLAIN, AND THE RUGGED TERRAIN A BROAD VALLEY;

V. 5 - THEN THE GLORY OF THE LORD WILL BE REVEALED, AND ALL FLESH WILL SEE IT TOGETHER; FOR THE MOUTH OF THE LORD HAS SPOKEN.

**\*\*\* NOW SEVEN CENTURIES BEFORE JOHN'S** BIRTH, GOD GAVE THIS PROPHECY TO ISAIAH THE PROPHET AND JOHN PERFECTLY FULFILLS THIS PROPHECY.

\*\*\*\* FOR JOHN WAS THE VOICE CRYING OUT TO REPENT IN THE WILDERNESS, IN THE DESERT. FOR WHERE DID JOHN LIVE MOST OF HIS LIFE AND WHERE DID HE PREACH? IN THE WILDERNESS, IN THE DESERT.

1. AND IN KEEPING WITH HIS CALLING AND **ROLE AS CHRIST'S FORERUNNER, JOHN CALLED** ON PEOPLE IN HIS PREACHING TO MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, TO MAKE HIS PATH STRAIGHT.

\* AND UNDERSTAND, IN THE ANCIENT WORLD, IT WAS CUSTOMARY FOR KINGS TO RECEIVE A ROYAL WELCOME.

\*\* SO WHEN A KING WAS ABOUT TO VISIT A CITY, THE CITIZENS COULD BE REQUIRED TO PREPARE A WELL CONSTRUCTED APPROACH ROAD ALONG WHICH HE COULD ADVANCE WITH HIS POMP AND ROYALTY ON HIS WAY TO THE CITY.

\*\*\* AND TO MAKE SURE THAT PEOPLE WERE READY TO RECEIVE HIM, THE KING WOULD SEND A MESSENGER ON AHEAD TO PREPARE FOR HIS COMING. THE KING WOULD SEND A MESSENGER TO HERALD HIS COMING.

\*\*\*\* WELL ISAIAH TOOK THIS CUSTOM AND TURNED IT INTO A PROPHECY BY THE INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

\*\*\*\* FOR ONE DAY A GREAT KING WOULD COME **TO GOD'S PEOPLE, AND WHEN HE DID, HIS APPROACH WOULD BE ANNOUNCED BY A HERALD IN THE WILDERNESS.**

2. AND TO PREPARE FOR THE COMING KING, THE PROPHET ENVISIONED A MASSIVE PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAM, TO MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIT, THAT THE ROADS WERE CLEARED AND STRAIT, CLEARED OF DEBRIS.

\* HOWEVER FOR THIS ROAD TO BE STRAIT AND A SUPERHIGHWAY FOR A KING, OTHER THINGS WOULD HAVE TO BE DONE. LOOK AT V. 5 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 5. NOW TO MAKE THE KING'S HIGHWAY STRAIT WHAT WOULD HAVE TO HAPPEN?

\* WELL, EVERY RAVINE, LOW SPOT WOULD NEED TO BE FILLED IN AND MOUNTAINS AND HILLS WOULD NEED TO BE LEVELED. SO VALLEYS RAISED, MOUNTAINS LEVELED IS THE PICTURE HERE.

\*\* SO THE CROOKED WOULD BE STRAIGHT, THERE WOULD BE A SUPERHIGHWAY THAT WAS NOT FILLED WITH CURVES AND HAIRPIN TURNS, NO THE CROOKED WOULD NEED TO BE STRAIGHTENED, AND FOR THIS HIGHWAY TO BE PREPARED, THE ROUGH ROADS WOULD NEED TO BE MADE SMOOTH, BUMPS AND HOLES WOULD NEED TO BE FILLED FOR THE KINGS HIGHWAY.

\*\*\* AND JOHN WAS THE CONSTRUCTION MANAGER FOR THE KING'S **HIGHWAY, AND WAS** THE MESSENGER SENT AHEAD TO HERALD THE **NEWS OF KING JESUS' COMING!**

\*\*\*\* BELOVED, JOHN WAS THE FORERUNNER OF THE KING, THE PUBLICIST, THE ADVANCE MAN FOR THE GOSPEL, A ROADBUILDER TO JESUS CHRIST.

1. AND THE POINT WE MUST NOT MISS IS THIS: THE SUPERHIGHWAY JOHN WAS IN CHARGE TO BUILD WAS ONE OF REPENTANCE AND LED TO JESUS.

\* FOR JOHN WAS SAYING, MEND NOT YOUR ROADS, BUT YOUR HEARTS, YOUR LIVES.

\*\* AND TO PUT IT IN TERMS OF AMERICAN GEOGRAPHY, R. KENT HUGHES IN HIS COMMENTARY ON LUKE PUTS IT THIS WAY AND I QUOTE:

\*\*\* **"REPENTANCE REMOVES THE OBSTACLES, FLATTENS THE SIERRAS, AND FILLS IN THE DEATH VALLEY IN OUR LIVES, SO THAT CHRIST HAS FULL ACCESS." END QUOTE**

2. SO THE ROAD MUST BE PREPARED FOR THE KING. AND JOHN WAS THE PROPHET SENT TO DO THAT AND THE RESULT IS ALL MANKIND **WILL SEE GOD'S** SALVATION, NOT JUST JEWS. LOOK AT V. 6 PLEASE.



C. READ V. 6. NOW IN V. 6 ALL FLESH MEANS GENTILES AS WELL AS JEWS, THE WORLD. SALVATION FROM THE KING THAT COMES DOWN THIS SUPER-HIGHWAY IS SALVATION FOR ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE, NOT JUST JEWS.

\* AND THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT GOD WILL SAVE EVERYBODY, RATHER IT MEANS THERE IS NO RACE, NO NATION, NO PLACE THAT HIS SALVATION CANNOT REACH, NO BOUNDARY IT CANNOT CROSS.

**\*\* AND THAT'S WHY THE GREAT COMMISSION IS TO MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS. QUOTE PSALM 96:3 AND MARK 16:15 AND ACTS 1:8, LUKE 24:47&48.**

\*\*\* NOW WE TAKE THE GOOD NEWS, BUT ONLY GOD SOVEREIGNLY SAVES, AND THE TRULY REPENTANT WILL EMBRACE THE SALVATION OF GOD. WE MUST CALL THE WORLD TO REPENT AS JOHN DID TO THE JEWS.

IN WRAP UP AND IN APPLICATION: (1) AS WE **HAVE SEEN IN JOHN'S PREACHING, IT IS** IMPORTANT FOR US TO SEE THE CLOSE CONNECTION BETWEEN REPENTANCE AND FORGIVENESS, BECAUSE WHILE NO AMOUNT OF REPENTANCE CAN EVER MERIT FORGIVENESS IN THE SIGHT OF GOD, WITHOUT REPENTANCE NO SOUL WILL EVER BE SAVED.

\* BELOVED, REPENTANCE IS THE TELLTALE MARK OF THE SOVEREIGN GRACE OF GOD AT WORK IN OUR LIVES. SAVING REPENTANCE NEVER EXISTS EXCEPT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH FAITH.

\*\* IT IS TO SAY, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE TRUE FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST APART FROM TRUE REPENTANCE FROM SIN OR TRUE REPENTANCE FROM SIN APART FROM TRUE FAITH. THEY ARE TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN, THE SAME WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT TO CONVICT SINNERS OF THEIR SIN AND DRAW THEM TO CHRIST.

\*\*\* REPENTANCE AND FAITH GO HAND IN HAND AND THERE IS NO GENUINE SAVING FAITH THAT **DOESN'T INCLUDE REPENTANCE. REPENTANCE IS ESSENTIAL** (ILLUSTRATE TIME PERMITTING)

\*\*\*\* NOW IT MUST BE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT REPENTANCE IS NOT A HUMAN WORK THAT EARNS SALVATION. REPENTANCE IS NOT A PRE-SALVATION EFFORT BY SINNERS TO SET THEIR LIVES RIGHT THAT GOD REWARDS BY SAVING THEM - NO.

(2) IN REPENTANCE SINNERS RECOGNIZE THEIR LOST HOPELESS DIRE CONDITION, ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THEY ARE UNABLE TO SAVE THEMSELVES, AND TURN (REPENT) TURN TO JESUS CHRIST AS THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN SAVE THEM.

\* AND WE IN CALLING PEOPLE TO JESUS, IN THE GOSPEL CALL MUST CALL PEOPLE TO TURN FROM THEIR SIN TO THE SAVIOR, TO REPENT, QUOTE LUKE 13:3, ACTS 2:38A, ACTS 17:30, ACTS 20:21 AND LUKE 5:32.

\*\* AND MAY WE BE CLEAR IN OUR GOSPEL PRESENTATIONS TO CALL PEOPLE TO REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD AND FAITH TOWARD OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

\*\*\* BUT LASTLY, ONE OF THE GREAT WAYS TO BE ASSURED OF YOUR SALVATION AS A TRUE BELIEVER IS TO REMEMBER THAT TRUE CHRISTIANS ARE REPENTERS. SAVED SOULS ARE REPENTANT SOULS.

\*\*\*\* SAVING FAITH AND TRUE REPENTANCE, CONFESSION OF SIN AFTER SALVATION ARE ALWAYS FOUND TOGETHER. WE ARE CONTINUALLY CONFESSING SIN AND FORSAKING SIN. THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTS US OF SIN AND WE CONTINUALLY REPENT AND ASK FOR FORGIVENESS, NOT TO CONTINUE TO BE SAVED BECAUSE WE ARE SAVED.

\*\* WE NOW HAVE HOLY AFFECTIONS AND AS WE ARE NOT HOLY WE GRIEVE AND QUENCH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND CONFESS AND REPENT. QUOTE I JOHN 1:9.

\*\*\* AND BROTHERS AND SISTERS, IN THE SANCTIFICATION PROCESS, THE MORE WE GROW, THE MORE WE CONFESS, THE MORE WE REPENT AS WE BECOME MORE SENSITIVE TO SIN.

\*\*\*\* CHRISTIANS ARE THOSE WHO HAVE REPENTED FROM SIN AND TURNED WHOLLY TO TRUST IN THE SAVIOR FOR SALVATION. AND CHRISTIANS ARE DAILY REPENTERS AS A FRUIT **AND EVIDENCE OF THAT SALVATION. (LET'S PRAY)**