**‘John the Baptist’**

***6There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. 8He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light….19Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?”***

***20He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.”***

***21And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?”***

***He said, “I am not.”***

***“Are you the Prophet?”***

***And he answered, “No.”***

***22Then they said to him, “Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?”***

***23He said: “I am ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Make straight the way of the Lord,”’ as the prophet Isaiah said.”*** John 1:6-8, 19-23

The Apostle John doesn’t give us a whole lot of insight into the one we know as John the Baptist, or John the Baptizer. He doesn’t have to, because that information is supplied by Matthew, Mark, and Luke.[[1]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2021/08/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn1)

John is the son of the priest Zacharias and Elizabeth. They are an older couple, and until an angel of the Lord told Zacharias that Elizabeth was going to bear a son, *who he was to name John*, Elizabeth had had no children. John’s life’s work was to prepare God’s people for the Lord’s coming. His message was simple, ***‘Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand.’******[[2]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2021/08/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn2)*** Multitudes of people heard his call to repentance as he proclaimed it throughout the region around the Jordan. These came to him in the Jordan River, confessed their sins, and were baptized by him. Jesus was also baptized by John, though he had no sins to confess because he was blameless.[[3]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2021/08/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn3)

What John did, got the attention of the Jews in Jerusalem. They wanted to know who John was. His appearance was like that of the prophet Elijah. Was John Elijah? Every Jew anticipated the arrival of Elijah since the prophet Malachi had written the words, **“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord”****[[4]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2021/08/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn4)** Could Elijah have returned to earth? Yes! He could have because Elijah never died. He was taken alive up to heaven in a fiery chariot by a whirlwind.[[5]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2021/08/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn5)

We have the questions the delegation of priests and Levites from Jerusalem asked John: “Are you the Christ?” “Are you Elijah?” “Are you the Prophet?” John answered “No” to each of these questions because he was not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet. We can easily understand that John is NOT the Christ nor Elijah. But who is the Prophet being referred to here by the priests and Levites?

The answer is found in Deuteronomy 18:15-18.

***15*** [Moses is speaking here.] ***“The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, 16according to all you desired of the Lord your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.’***

***17“And the Lord said to me: ‘What they have spoken is good. 18I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.***

The One this passage refers to is Jesus. His earthly lineage is from the Tribe of Judah. Also, throughout His three and a half year ministry, He describes the words He spoke as those of His heavenly Father.

***8Then Jesus said to them, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things.***John 8:28

Now that we know who John the Baptist is NOT, who then is he? *[John]* ***said: “I am*** ***‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Make straight the way of the Lord,”’ as the prophet Isaiah said.”******[[6]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2021/08/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn6)******[[7]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2021/08/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn7)***

The One who was coming, about whom John the Baptist was a herald, was infinitely greater than any earthly dignitary. The One who was coming was God Himself. He was coming in the flesh to fulfill all of the Law, the Prophets. AND He was coming to crush the head of the serpent according to Genesis 3:14-15.[[8]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2021/08/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn8)

How, then, does anyone prepare for God’s coming? How were the people to ***“Make straight the way of the LORD”***? They were to do exactly what John directed them to do. They were to confess their sins, and repent. That is, they were to turn away from their sin and do them no more.

Jesus is coming again. His return is a lot closer than most people think it is. However, if we consider Jesus’ own words in Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21, Revelation 13, and take into account everything that is going on in the world, we must conclude that Jesus’ return is near.

How do we prepare for His second coming? The same way people prepared for His first coming. We confess our sins, repent of them, and turn to Jesus. He is the only Savior God has given to the world.

*Kathleen*

[[1]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2021/08/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftnref1) Matthew 3:1-13, Mark 1:1-9, Luke 1:8-17, 3:2-22

[[2]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2021/08/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftnref2) Matthew 3:2

[[3]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2021/08/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftnref3) Matthew 3:13-17

[[4]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2021/08/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftnref4) Malachi 4:5

[[5]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2021/08/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftnref5) 2 Kings 2:11

[[6]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2021/08/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftnref6) Isaiah 40:3

[[7]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2021/08/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftnref7) https://biblehub.com/commentaries/barnes/isaiah/40.htm “The image which would have been brought to the minds of the people at the Jordan and those who had been sent by the Jews in Jerusalem would have been “taken from the practice of Eastern monarchs, who whenever they entered on a journey or an expedition, especially through a barren and unfrequented or inhospitable country, sent harbingers or heralds before them to prepare the way. To do this, it was necessary for them to provide supplies, and make bridges, or find fording places over the streams; to level hills, and construct causeways over valleys, or fill them up; and to make a way through the forest which might lie in their intended line of march.”

[[8]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2021/08/%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftnref8) Genesis 3:14-15 14So the Lord God said to the serpent: “Because you have done this, You *are* cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. 15And I will put enmity between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”