

JOHN- A VOICE IN THE DESERT



(Luke 3: 2-18)

John the Baptist, as he is called, is unique in every way. Unlike Samson, who broke the covenant with his God due to his immoral and rebellious ways, John was courageous, and determined in following his call. His parents, Luke defined to be righteous in the sight of God, walked blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord (Luke 1:6). His father, a priest and his wife were descendants from Aaron. While Zachariah was doing his priesthood duty, an angel appeared to him bringing an answer to a prayer of long time- a son. He must be called John [God is favorable], the angel instructed him. **His name was to represent not the family, but the favor of God toward his parents.**

The angel also gave Zachariah a summary of what John was going to be and to do. He said, He will be great and distinguished in the sight of the Lord, and he must

drink no wine nor strong drink, and he will be filled with and controlled by the Holy Spirit even in and from his mother's womb. And he will turn back and cause to return many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God, and he will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn back the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient and incredulous and unpersuadable to the wisdom of the upright (Luke 1:15-17). That was quite a task for John to be and to do. A voice in the wilderness- a wilderness of sin and voided of God. YAHSHUA'S ministry needed a cultivated soil for the short time He had to minister. So John was chosen for the purpose to prepare the way for Him.

John lived very primitively in the desert. His diet was very interesting indeed. It consisted of locust, and wild honey; he wore clothes made of camel's hair. His time was spending preaching the way of repentance, preparing the way for YAHSHUA. He was the one fulfilling the prophet Isaiah's words, the voice of one crying in the wilderness: prepare the way of the Lord, make His beaten paths straight (Luke 3:4). He called the crowds who came out to be baptized by him, offspring of vipers! His messages were consistent with his determination to call all to repentance. He was the preacher many today would run away from. Honest and direct, he carried the message of repentance. His was the message many need to pay attention and follow. John did not have four walls for a church; he did not have a salary and did not depend on any one for his support. So he was not attached to anyone one and no one had monetary power over him. John was connected with God and Him alone. The truth that came out of his mouth was as a double edge sword when confronting hypocrites. There was no exception, all received the same treatment. The Spirit of the Lord was upon John; no fear or intimidation had a chance in his life, even if it cost his life. YAHSHUA said this of John when in jail, he had sent Him two of his disciples with the question, Are you He Who was to come, or shall we look for another? YAHSHUA then replied, Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the good news.... When John's messengers had left, YAHSHUA then said this of him, What did you go out to see? A man dressed up in soft garments? Behold, those who wear fine apparel and live in luxury are in the courts of palaces of kings. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and far more than a prophet. This is the one of whom it is written, Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who shall make ready Your way before You. I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John

(Luke 7:19, 24-28a).

When messengers from the Pharisees came to John asking if he was the Christ, he confessed and acknowledged I am not the Christ. John humbly said of the One, He Who, coming after me, is preferred before me, the string of whose sandal I am not worthy to unloose... **I am the voice of one crying aloud in the wilderness, Prepare the way of the Lord**, as Isaiah said (John 1:19-27). John, as the precursor of YAHSHUA, went into all the country round about the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance unto forgiveness of sin (Luke 3:3). John's ministry lasted a short time. He had come for the purpose to prepare the way for YAHSHUA and that was all. He was to step aside so that confusion would not take the minds of people. He clearly let everyone know who he was. At the end of his ministry he was put in jail and ultimately killed to satisfy the corrupt desire of a young girl. When YAHSHUA heard about John's death, He withdrew with His disciples to a solitary place, but the crowds followed Him.

John's voice ceased, he was out of the way and now YAHSHUA'S ministry was in full swing. The crowds witnessing what He had done, followed Him. The field was ready for the harvest. John's words echoed far and near that YAHSHUA was the Messiah. He baptized with water, but now they needed to be baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire (Luke 3:16b) which happened in the day of Pentecost after YAHSHUA had ascended to heaven. Now, we believers are the voice; the voice in the wilderness proclaiming salvation and the wrath to come. We are to fulfill the Lord's command: go into all the world and preach and publish openly the good news to every creature (Mark 16:15). The entire world seems a bit shorter in our days. We can preach the Gospel through the internet, through radio and television. That is not hard to do since there is no confrontation. Our small world as in family, friends and neighbor are the hardest to reach with the message of the Gospel. We need to be more like John the Baptist, filled with the Holy Spirit, with courage and determination. In fact, the Holy Spirit is the One Who fills us with what we need to tell, and with everything else we need to have. Our obedience is the key for Him to do His part through and in us. Until we part, the message of salvation should be preached, as John did. We are the voice-God's voice of love and forgiveness. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son for whosoever believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16). We are His voice of truth; You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free (John 8:32). The world is entangled in lies and in

its darkness. The believer must cry out the truth to free those in chain. YAHSHUA is the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father only through Him (John 14: 6). We are the voice of Peace: YAHSHUA said, My peace I leave with you; My peace I now give and bequeath to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid (John 14: 27).

Ours is the responsibility to warn the world. Our voices must be heard; in the midst of all the world's chaotic voices we must cry aloud to silence theirs. The urgency of the moment compels us to be determined and focused on the command: Go and tell the world the good news of salvation reasoning beyond any doubt the price YAHSHUA paid for our redemption. Cast the message of the good news of salvation into the world and one by one will be saved. Be a voice for Him today!