

The Coming of the Kingdom - 2

For hundreds of years the Jewish nation had been waiting for the coming of their _____. Now He had come. Jesus was the Messiah, and Matthew writes his book to prove this to his fellow Jews.

The word 'Messiah' means _____. In the Old Testament the prophets, priests and kings were anointed, and Jesus came as each one of these. The Jews were primarily expecting their Messiah to come as King and this is what Matthew shows. The word 'Messiah' is translated in the New Testament as 'Christ'. In Matthew 1:1 it says, 'A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ...' This simply means, 'A record of the genealogy of Jesus, the Messiah, the Anointed One, the One you are looking for...' Praise the Lord we know Him!

In our last study we looked at the Royal lineage or the genealogy of Jesus and also at His birth, which so wonderfully fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies. These were in chapters 1 and 2. Let's go on now to chapter 3.

PREPARING THE WAY FOR THE KING 3:1-12

When a King or Queen visits another country the roads are often cleared and decorated for the occasion. In ancient times too, when a King travelled anywhere, someone would go ahead and prepare the roads. In the Old Testament it prophesied that when the Messiah came someone would prepare the way – not physically, but morally and spiritually. That person was _____, and we find that prophecy in _____.

It is important that we understand who John was and the message he preached, for God is waiting to raise up men and women like him to prepare the way for the second coming of Jesus Christ.

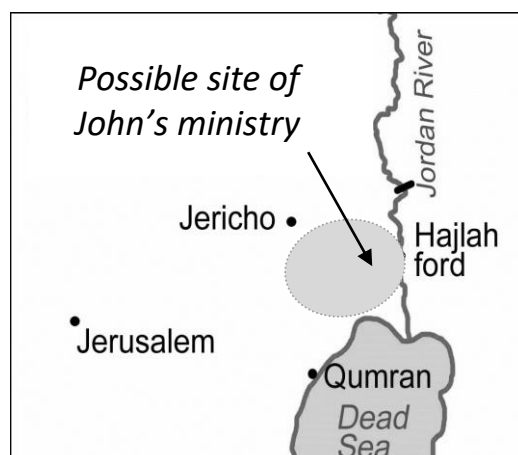
A. Who was John the Baptist?

What can we learn about John the Baptist from the following verses in Matthew?

Matthew 3:1-12

Matthew 11:11-14

Matthew 17:10-13

B. Where did he preach?

c. What was his message?



What were the main themes of John the Baptist's messages?

Matthew 3:2, 7-12

Is John's message still relevant to us today?

At the end of the Old Testament in the book of _____, it prophesies that God will send a messenger to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus. In Malachi 4:5 it says that this messenger will be the prophet _____. Jesus showed that this scripture was talking about John the Baptist. John had come in the same power and spirit as Elijah!

Prophecy often has a double fulfilment. The first fulfilment took place when Jesus came and was born in Bethlehem. The second fulfilment will take place at the time of _____ as King. Many believe that Elijah himself will come just before Jesus returns, because Malachi says Elijah will come 'before that great and dreadful day of the Lord.' Remember that Elijah never died, but was caught up to Heaven in a chariot. He will come as one of the _____ spoken of in Revelation 11:3-4.

But God also wants to raise up a people, we shall call them the 'Elijah saints', who will prepare the way for the coming of the King. They will have the same characteristics as Elijah and John the Baptist. These men lived simple lives and were not influenced by the things of the world. The most important thing in their lives was to walk with God in the power of His Spirit, and to speak and do whatever He told them to do. Will you be among them?