

## TUESDAY

## The Messenger

- Mark blends Exodus 23:20, Isaiah 40:3, Malachi 3:1 opening verses of his gospel

**Exodus 23:20** “Behold, I send an Angel before you...

- word *angel* does not describe **nature** of a being, but **position** of that being’s service as = messenger of God.
- OT Hebrew word for angel (*mal’āk*), and NT Greek word for angel (*angelos*) = translated into English as either *messenger* or *angel*.
- Both words used to refer to ordinary human messengers, as well as God’s prophets and priests
- Both words also used to refer to heavenly messengers.

**Exodus 23:20** “Behold, I send an Angel [messenger] before you to keep you in the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. [Messenger God sent before Israel to bring them to Canaan]

**Isaiah 40:3** The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.” [many ties w/ministry of John the Baptist and also focuses on preparing the **Way of the Lord**]

- In last OT book = Lord prophesies of sending John the Baptist to announce His coming

**Malachi 3:1** <sup>1</sup>“Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. [Same verse = the Lord immediately identifies Himself as the **Messenger of the covenant:**] “And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant , In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,” Says the LORD of hosts.

**Malachi 4:5** Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

OT ends on this note = NT continues narrative of Messiah

- Fast-moving narrative of Mark depicts Jesus as Messiah-Christ = synonymous terms meaning “Anointed King”
- Jesus = covenant Son of God = on journey that leads to cross / His sacrificial death as our Substitute = pay our penalty
- First half = Mark 1-8 = answers crucial question = WHO IS JESUS?
- Second half = Mark 8:31 – 16 = answers WHERE IS JESUS GOING?
- Gospel of Mark tells us all about His journey
- Depicts John/ Baptist as messenger preparing way = making straight the path of coming King— Lord Jesus Christ

**Mark 1:1–4** <sup>1</sup>The beginning of the gospel of **Jesus Christ [1<sup>st</sup> character], the Son of God [God the Father implied 2<sup>nd</sup> character]**. <sup>2</sup>As it is written in the Prophets: “Behold, I send **My messenger** before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.” <sup>3</sup>“The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.’ ” <sup>4</sup>**John [the Baptist, the messenger/preacher = third character]** came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

- Recalls ministry of Elijah = preaching repentance= turning away from sin / turning heart back to God = forgiveness
- 400 yrs of silence had passed since prophet Malachi wrote last OT prophesying Elijah would come to turn hearts of humanity around
- Now greatest of prophets had arrived= ministering in spirit/power of Elijah / baptizing people to turn their hearts to God.
- Coming from priestly family—John/Baptist = commissioned by God as last Old Covenant prophet—the “Elijah-to-come”— Jesus identified him as such (Matthew 11:7–14; 17:9–13).
- Came to herald humanity’s coming Redeemer
  - make a straight path for Messiah’s mission

**Mark 1:5** Then all [hyperbole – exaggerated/not literal] the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins.

**Mark 1:6** Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

- clothed like ancient prophet Elijah, the Tishbite
- **2 Kings 1:8** hairy man w/ girdle of leather about his loins.

**Mark 1:7** And he preached, saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose.

- Menial task performed by slave = John's humility is on vivid display
- John understands who Jesus is = Jesus' exalted position

**Mark 1:8** I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

**Titus 3:5–7** (AMP) <sup>5</sup>He saved us, not because of any works of righteousness that we had done, but because of His own pity and mercy, by [the] cleansing [bath] of the new birth (regeneration) and renewing of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup>Which He poured out [so] richly upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. <sup>7</sup>[And He did it in order] that we might be justified by His grace (by His favor, wholly undeserved), [that we might be acknowledged and counted as conformed to the divine will in purpose, thought, and action], and that we might become heirs of eternal life according to [our] hope