

Luke 3:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Analysis

John's ministry fulfills Isaiah 40:3-5: 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.' This prophecy announced the herald who would prepare for God's coming. The 'way of the Lord' requires preparation—removing obstacles, straightening paths. Spiritually, this means repentance removes sin's barriers between humanity and God. John's voice cries in the wilderness (both literal desert and spiritual wasteland), calling Israel back to God before Messiah's appearance.

Historical Context

Isaiah 40 began the 'Book of Comfort' announcing Israel's return from Babylonian exile. The imagery of preparing roads reflected ancient practice—advance crews prepared roads before a king's arrival, removing obstacles and leveling paths. John applies this to spiritual preparation—hearts must be readied for Messiah's coming through repentance. His wilderness location echoed Israel's formative wilderness period and recalled prophets who retreated to wilderness for divine encounter. The wilderness represents both judgment (exile) and renewal (preparation for redemption).

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Isaiah's prophecy of preparing the Lord's way apply to spiritual obstacles that hinder people from receiving Christ?
2. What does John's wilderness location teach about the kind of spiritual environment needed for genuine revival and preparation?

Interlinear Text

ὥς	γέγραπται	ἐν	βίβλῳ	λόγων	Ἡσαΐου	τοῦ
As	it is written	in	the book	of the words	of Esaias	G3588
G5613	G1125	G1722	G976	G3056	G2268	
προφήτου	λέγοντος,	Φωνὴ	βοῶντος	ἐν	τῇ	ἐρήμῳ·
the prophet	saying	The voice	of one crying	in	G3588	the wilderness
G4396	G3004	G5456	G994	G1722		G2048
Ἐτοιμάσατε	τὴν	ὁδὸν	κυρίου	εὐθείας	ποιεῖτε	τὰς
Prepare ye	G3588	the way	of the Lord	straight	make	G3588
G2090		G3598	G2962	G2117	G4160	
τρίβους	αὐτοῦ·					
paths	his					
G5147	G846					

Additional Cross-References

John 1:23 (Prophecy): He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

John 1:7 (Parallel theme): The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

Matthew 3:3 (Prophecy): For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Malachi 4:6 (Parallel theme): And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

Isaiah 62:10 (Parallel theme): Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway; gather out the stones; lift up a standard for the people.

Mark 1:3 (References Lord): The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.