

# The Way of the Lord: Mark 1:1-8

Sunday, January 14, 2024  
Covenant Church  
Pastor Zack Phillips

## Mark 1:1-8

<sup>1</sup> **The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.**

<sup>2</sup> **As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,**

**“See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way;**

<sup>3</sup> **the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:**

**‘Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight,’”**

<sup>4</sup> **John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup> And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup> Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup> He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. <sup>8</sup> I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”**

## I. “The Way”

### A. The Way of the Peaceable Lamb

Mark 1:2-3	Exod 23:20 (LXX) <sup>1</sup>	Mal 3:1 LXX	Isa 40:3 LXX
...“ <b>See,</b>	And <b>look,</b>	<b>Behold,</b>	
<b>I am sending</b> my messenger	<b>I am sending my angel</b>	I am sending <b>my messenger,</b>	
<b>ahead of you,</b>	<b>in front of you</b>		
who will prepare your <b>way;</b>	in order to guard you on the <b>way...</b>	and he will oversee the <b>way</b>	
		<b>before me...</b>	
<b>the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:</b>			<b>A voice of one crying out in the wilderness:</b>
<b>‘Prepare the way of the Lord,</b>			<b>“Prepare the way of the Lord;</b>
<b>make his paths straight,’”</b>			<b>make straight the paths of our God.</b>

A vision in Isaiah 40-41 of God comforting and restoring Israel, saving and communing with Israel: God will “comfort” His people (v. 1), “feeding,” “gathering,” “carrying,” and “gently leading” them (v. 11) and He will “reveal” His “glory” (v. 5a):

<sup>1</sup> The English here is the New English Translation of the Septuagint (NETS).

Get you up to a high mountain, / O Zion, herald of good tidings; / lift up your voice with strength, / O Jerusalem, herald of **good tidings**, / lift it up, do not fear; / say to the cities of Judah, / "Here is your God!" (40:9)

A vision in Isaiah of God doing this by (militarily?) crushing enemies: God will "bring princes to naught," "make the rulers of the earth as nothing" (v. 23), "trample kings underfoot," "make them like dust with his sword" (41:2-3):

do not fear, for I am with you, / do not be afraid, for I am your God; / I will strengthen you, I will help you, / I will uphold you with my victorious right hand. / Yes, all who are incensed against you / shall be ashamed and disgraced; / those who strive against you / shall be as nothing and shall perish. / You shall seek those who contend with you, / but you shall not find them; / those who war against you / shall be as nothing at all (41:10-12)

Roman "gospel" and "savior" language:

The Priene Inscription (9 BC): "Since the Providence which has ordered all things and is deeply interested in our life has set in most perfect order by giving us Augustus, whom she filled with virtue that he might benefit mankind, sending him as **a savior**, both for us and for our descendants, that he might end war and arrange all things, and since he, Caesar, by his appearance [excelled even our anticipations], surpassing all previous benefactors, and not even leaving to posterity any hope of surpassing what he has done, and since the birthday of the god Augustus was the beginning for the world of **the good tidings** that came by reason of him [may it therefore be decided that....]"<sup>2</sup>

**Mark 10:32-34 They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was walking ahead of them; they were amazed, and those who followed were afraid. He took the twelve aside again and began to tell them what was to happen to him, saying, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death; then they will hand him over to the Gentiles; they will mock him, and spit upon him, and flog him, and kill him; and after three days he will rise again." (See also Mark 11:8-10; 10:46-52)**

**Rev 13:8 (NIV) All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast—all whose names have not been written in the Lamb's book of life, the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world.**

B. God Takes What We Can Give

## II. *How Do We "Follow"?*

*Question: What is one thing that God may have said to you through this sermon?*

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<sup>2</sup> R. Alan Culpepper, *Mark*, Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2007): 42, citing Eugene Boring et al., eds., *Hellenistic Commentary to the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995): 169.