

Day 2

As it is written in Isaiah the prophet... 1.2a

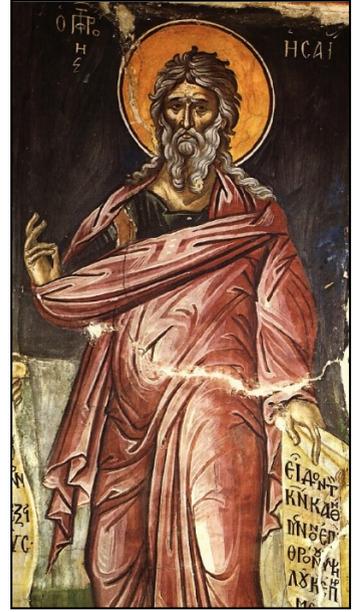
Have you ever noticed that each of the four gospels begins differently? John, the last gospel to be written, begins farthest back, with Jesus existence before creation, with all things being made through him.

Matthew begins by tracing Jesus' origins back to Abraham. Luke also traces Jesus' origins, back to the first human - Adam, but that is not how he begins. Rather, he begins with the conception of John the Baptist, Jesus' cousin, followed by the announcement to Mary that she would bear Jesus. Mark, however, ignores Jesus' origins and birth altogether. He goes straight to Jesus' baptism and the beginning of his adult ministry. Or almost.

His gospel actually begins with a quotation from the prophet Isaiah, written centuries earlier. A messenger from God would come first and prepare the way for God's anointed one (the Messiah).

In citing Isaiah, Mark is joining with the other three gospel writers in reminding us that Jesus' ministry on this earth wasn't a new idea - a hastily prepared last minute rescue plan that God suddenly thought of when he looked down and saw what a mess the world was in. No, God had always had it in mind to redeem the world through his own Son.

Secondly, it is proof that it was God who sent John, the one who would prepare the way for Jesus. John didn't simply appoint himself and say "Here I am, listen to me." Rather, he was a man sent by God to speak God's message, and to point to Jesus. He came with authority, and anyone who had read or heard the prophet Isaiah, i.e. all the Jewish people, should have heeded his voice.



? How does your life point others to Jesus?



Lord God, I thank you that you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way for Jesus. Prepare my heart, I pray, to journey with Jesus through this Lenten period, that I may heed his word and stay with him through all temptation. I ask it in his name. Amen.