

The Hymn of the Day for the Second Sunday in Advent is “On Jordan’s Bank the Baptist’s Cry” (LSB # 344)

This hymn is all about John’s the Baptist’s role in preparing the people of his time for the coming of Jesus. It finds its Scriptural basis in Isaiah 40:3 and Matthew 3:1-6. Matthew 3:1-6 is a fulfillment of Isaiah 40:3.

Isaiah 40 begins with “*comfort, comfort my people*”(Is. 40:1). In it Isaiah promises Israel relief from being exiled. From this chapter on, Isaiah points toward the work of Christ. In verse 3 he states: “*A voice cries: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”*”

God communicated his message through human speech – the means through which God works on the hearts of his people. God does not work through telepathy or inner illumination. He communicates his thoughts to humans through human words expressed by human voice. Humans learn the love of God when messengers give voice to the Gospel. God hasn’t promised to work in any other way.

When John told the people to *repent*” he addressed to all Israel, called for a radical transformation of the entire person, a fundamental turnabout. To repent meant to be converted from unbelief to faith. In Matthew repentance is compared to building a straight road.

Advent is an opportunity clear out all of the spiritual clutter and bring us into a close relationship with our Lord and Savior. That makes our place into the kingdom of heaven (the rule of God) ever more secure and brings untold comfort and joy into our daily life.

John was dressed for the location. His appearance and his stern sermon illustrated how little we need fancy clothes. The message carries itself. It will do also as we go about our day-to-day routine.

Verses 3-5 go about describing Christ’s work and our praise for what Jesus has done.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for lifting up John to the role who would prepare the people for Jesus. Use your Word to continue to make our path you straight. Amen