THE LAST OF THE PROPHETS

Luke 3:3-8 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; 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. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; And all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

I. THE CRUELTY OF THE RULERS OF JUDAEA.

Luke 3:1-2 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod , ...... his brother Philip, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

(a). The Political Rulers Of The Day.

Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod , ...... his brother Philip,

1. It was a very wicked day when Christ Gospel came into the world.
2. The opening verse tell us the NAMES of some of the RULERS and GOVERNORS when John the Baptist began his ministry.
3. There is not a name which is not connected to wickedness, they were immoral, bloody, cruel, ambitious, and vain, they oppressed the people unmercifully.
4. Tiberius, Pontius Pilate, Herod and his brother Phillip were men of whom we know that nothing but evil to came from them.
5. With these as LEADERS OF THE NATION, what must the people been like.
6. The biggest political mistake PILATE ever MADE , Matt 27:22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ?

(b). The Priesthood Of The Day.

Luke 3:2 Annas and Caiaphas (“Chiapas was the son-in-law of Annas”) being the high priests,

1. The high priest was to have a LIFETIME POSITION determined by his relationship to Aaron.
2. It was at this TIME NOTHING MORE THAN A POLITICAL TOOL of the Roman Politicians.

Matthew tell us how wicked the Priesthood had become, Matt 26:3-4 Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtily, and kill him.

II. THE CALL TO REPENT BY JOHN

Luke 3:2-3 ..... the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins: Luke 3:7-8 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

(a). The Word To John.

Luke 3:2 ..... the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. (God may use us in the LIGHT but
HE TEST us in the Dark

Jonah was called of God to PREACH TO THE AGAINST the WICKEDNESS of HIS DAY.
Jonah 1:1-2 Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

(b). The Warning From John.
Luke 3:7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you.

1. The Priesthood and the Politicians and the People of John’s day had turned into a cruel corupt soicity like in the days of Isaiah.

Isa 59:3-5 For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness. None calleth for justice, nor any pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity. They hatch cockatrice’ eggs, and weave the spider’s web: he that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper.

(b). The Wrath to Come.
Luke 3:7 who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

1. Vr. 5 “Every valley shall be filled in”, ..... difficulties and obstacles as great as mountains and valleys will go down before the KINGS MARCH and CHRIST GOSPEL.
2. Vr 6 “All mankind will see God’s salvation” .... some began to see as soon as the Gospel was first preached.
3. John speaks of Hell, Vr# 7 “the wrath to come”, and Verse #9 “the ax” of God’s Judgment and of UNFRUITFUL TREES being “thrown into the UNQUENCHABLE fire” Vr # 9

4. Job warns the consequences of God’s Wrath. Job 36:18 Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.
Revelations 6: ... rocks and mountains to fall on us... hid us from the WRATH OF THE LAMB.

III. THE CONFIRMED REDEEMER, JESUS.
Luke 3:15-17 And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not; John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

Mal 3:1-2 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the L ORD of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

(a). The Purpose Of The Redeemer.
Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

1. The oldest book of the Bible, Job had hope of a REDEEMER.
Job 19:25-27 For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

(b). The Price Paid For Redemption.

1. Peter Tells us how we are REDEEMED.
1 Peter 1:18-19 Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

2. The Song of Heaven will be the Song OF REDEMPTION.
Rev 5:9-10 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast
made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.