

#25 John the Baptist | August 12, 2018

Meet John, the Baptizer

- The word *Baptist*, referring to a group of Christians, is from the 17th century.
 - The term is from the root word βαπτω [bapto], which means to *immerse*.
 - The Greek suffix *-iste* is used to make a noun based on *those who practice* the root to which the suffix is attached. The suffix has come into the English language: *Marxist, socialist, Darwinist*, etc.
- John's Family Tree | Luke 1:5-25
 - John was the only child of Zechariah and Elizabeth, and his birth was announced to Zechariah by the angel Gabriel (vv. 11-25).
 - Zechariah was a priest from the line of Aaron, and Elizabeth was a descendant of Aaron (v. 5).
 - Both Zechariah and Elizabeth were **righteous** and **blameless** before God (v. 6).
 - Though the KJV uses the term **cousin** to describe Elizabeth's relationship to Mary, the word was widely used in the 17th century to mean "relative," which is the accurate translation of the Greek. Only in more modern English is cousin restricted to "son or daughter of my aunt or uncle."

John and His Kingdom Message | Matthew 3:1-12.

- John was a *preacher*, and his message was about the King and his Kingdom.
- His message was so popular that even though he was in the wilderness, everyone in the region was going out to hear him (v. 5).
- His message was not one of *belief*, but of *behavior*. It was summed up in one word: *repent*.
- There was one reason the believers were to repent: *the Kingdom of Heaven* was approaching (3:2).
 - His audience did not need a primer on the Kingdom. They were already believers in the coming Kingdom.
 - His audience did need preparation for the Kingdom, which required repentance from those things which were unfitting for Kingdom life.

- John's ministry was prophesied by Isaiah in Isaiah 40:3-5, which spoke of the soon-to-be-revealed **glory of the Lord**.
- The baptism of John involved immersion that was symbolic of their confession of sins (v. 6).
- The promise of the Kingdom, as preached by John, was not by grace alone, but by **fruits meet for repentance** (vv. 7-10).
- The ultimate sign of Messianic arrival would be the Baptism of the Holy Ghost (v. 11) and with judgment (v. 11-12). Thus the message of the King and His Kingdom was a fearful message, not a grace message.

John and His Baptism of Jesus | Matthew 3:13-17

- John was perplexed when Jesus came to him for Baptism (vv. 13-14).
- Jesus was baptized **to fulfill all righteousness** (v. 15).
 - This was (in my opinion) a reference to the need for Jesus to be legally anointed as a priest.
 - Could John have been the last in the legitimate line of the priesthood? Note that Zechariah was in the Holy of Holies **after the custom of the priest's office** (Lk. 1:9) because the Priesthood had become a political office, not held by the rightful heir.
 - I am convinced (though it cannot be proven) that John was passing the priesthood from the line of Levi to the *Priest after the order of Melchisedec* (Heb. 5:5-6).
- When Jesus was baptized, the clear testimony came from God that Jesus was the Promised Messiah (vv. 16-17)

When Did John Know that Jesus was the Messiah?

- John 1:32-34 tells us exactly when John knew, beyond doubt, that Jesus was the promised Messiah.
- What about his period of doubt? (Matt. 11:1-15).
 - We possibly read more into this "doubt" than the text proclaims.
 - The text gives no condemnation of John, while at the same time giving the greatest complement that any man has ever received, both complimenting his "toxic masculinity" and calling him the greatest born among women.
 - To those who claim that pre-cross faith was simply faith in advance, what is done with this passage? Before the cross, even those closest to Jesus didn't know nor understand the cross.

Things You May Not Know

- Josephus mentions John the Baptist by name – Antiquities 18:5