

The Life of John the Baptist

History

1. Old Testament prophecies
 - a. Make straight the way (Isaiah 40:3)
 - b. God's messenger (Malachi 3:1); Elijah to come before the day of the Lord (4:5-6)
2. Angelic announcement of birth to Zechariah (Luke 1:5-25)
 - a. Appointment as prophet and Nazirite
 - b. Zechariah's punishment for lack of faith
3. Birth and naming (Luke 1:57-80)
4. Ministry
 - a. Call to repentance (Matt 3, Mark 1, Luke 3, John 1)
 - b. Rebuke of the Pharisees and Sadducees (Matt 3:7-10, Luke 3:7-9)
 - c. Baptism of Jesus (Matt 3:13-17, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22)
5. Spiritual leadership passes to Jesus (John 1:35-37, 3:22-30, cf. Rom 3:21)
6. Jesus questioned by John and his disciples (Matt 9:14-15, 11:2-6; Mark 2:18-20; Luke 5:33-35; Luke 7:18-23)
7. Jesus praises John (Matt 11:7-15, Luke 7:24-30)
8. John imprisoned and killed by Herod (Matt 14:1-12, Mark 6:14-29; Luke 9:7-9)

Questions about John the Baptist

1. What did "baptism" mean to the Jews?
2 Kings 5:14
2. What did Jesus's baptism signify?
Heb 9:7, Ex 29:4, ex 29:17
3. What is the baptism of John vs baptism in name of Jesus?
Acts 18:24-19:7
4. In what way was John Elijah?
Mal 4:5, Matt 11:14, Matt 17:10-12, Luke 1:17
5. In what way does John "make ready for the Lord a people prepared"?
Luke 1:17, Luke 7:29
6. When people asked if John was the Prophet or Christ, what did they mean?
John 1:19-21, Deut 18:15, 2 Sam 7:12-16
7. What is baptism by the Holy Spirit? by fire?
Matt 3:11
8. Where does John rank among the prophets?
Matt 11:11
9. Why did John question whether Jesus was the Christ?
Matt 11:3
10. How does John act as the bridge between the Old Testament and the New? How does his life reflect the law and look forward to the kingdom of heaven?
Luke 7:28, 3:10-14, 6:29, 19:8

Did you know ...

1. In its original form (Johanan) the name John means "Jehovah is gracious."
2. John the Baptist is one of the best documented persons in Scripture. The account of his life starts with the prophetic announcement of his birth and ends with his burial. It even has external corroboration by Josephus, the Jewish Roman historian.
3. Zechariah had to draw lots to burn incense before the Lord because there were too many priests at the time to simply take turns (Luke 1:8).
4. The appearance of the angel Gabriel to Zechariah broke a 400 year silence during which God made no recorded utterance to His people.
5. Before birth John was consecrated to the Lord as a Nazirite (Num 6). Other Nazirites are Samson and Samuel.
6. John declared the deity of Jesus in at least two ways: He declared his purpose was to prepare the way for the Lord, Jehovah in the Old Testament. And in John 1:30 he declared that Jesus surpassed because he came before him. This is remarkable because Jesus was the younger in human years. This parallels the Lord's assertion in John 8:58, "Before Abraham was, I am."
7. In ancient times years were denoted not with numbers, but with the names of the current rulers. Luke considers the start of John's ministry so momentous he dates it with the names of an emperor, a governor, three kings, and two high priests (Luke 3:1-2).
8. People in the Middle East still eat locusts -- and they're kosher! (Lev 11:22)
9. Bethany, the location of John's baptisms according to the gospel of John, is not the same Bethany where Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived. Its exact location is unknown but somewhere on the east bank of the Jordan river.
10. Herod Antipas who had John beheaded is the middle of three notable Herods in Scripture.. He was the son of Herod the Great, builder of the temple and murderer of children, and the uncle of the Herod Agrippa put to death by God in Acts 12.
11. Herod liked to listen to John (Mark 6:20) and hoped to see Jesus perform a miracle (Luke 23:8) but in the end left both to die.

John the Baptist

Came fasting
Was killed by a king
Was filled with the Spirit from birth
Drew crowds out from Jerusalem
Declared God just
Was the herald of the Lord

Jesus

Came feasting
Was killed as a king
Fills with the Spirit on second birth
Brings multitudes into New Jerusalem
Declared God merciful
Is the Lord