

The Sending of John the Baptist

Luke 1:76-80

10 Feb 2023

Introduction/Context:

- The birth of John (Luke 1:57-58)
 - The naming of John (Luke 1:59-63). John means “The Lord is Gracious.”
 - The prophecy of Zecharias (Luke 1:64-80)
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John would be called “*the prophet of the Highest.*” (vs. 76).

The Highest:

- Five times in the Bible (Psalm 18:13; Luke 1:32, 35, 76; 6:35)
 - Three times in Luke 1
 - **The Son of the Highest (v.32)**
 - **The power of the Highest (v.35)**
 - **The prophet of the Highest (v.76)**
 - John would become the prophet of the “*high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy*” (Isaiah 57:15).
 - The “*Immensity of God.*” “*The heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Him.*” (2 Chronicles 2:6). His ways are higher than our ways, His thoughts are higher than our thoughts (Isaiah 55:9).
 - This Great God would choose John to be His prophet.
 - If you are saved and you serve the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Kings, you serve the Highest! (1 Tim. 1:17, 6:15; Rev. 1:8, 11, 19:6, 19:16, 15:3; Eph 1:21, Jude 25).
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JOHN THE BAPTIST WAS SENT: “*There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.*” (John 1:6)

“*...for thou shalt go...*”

I. TO PREPARE THE WAYS OF THE LORD (1:76)

- A. To Prepare the Way of the Lord (Luke 3:3-5; Isaiah 40:3-5)**
- B. To Make Ready a People Prepared for the Lord (Luke 1:17)**
- C. Before the Face of the Lord (Luke 1:76)**
- D. Importance of Preparation (Proverbs 16:1; 24:27; 30:25)**
 - There are things that only the Lord can do (like raising Lazarus from the dead).
 - There are things that we can do at the Lord’s command (like removing obstacles that may hinder a sinner from getting to the Lord).

II. TO GIVE THE KNOWLEDGE OF SALVATION (1:77-78)

- A. By the Remission of their Sins (v.77)**
 - 1. A dispensational work to bring the Jews (“his people”) to a readiness to receive their Messiah.**
 - Today, “His people” are those who already have a knowledge of salvation, “*For YE are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*” —Gal. 3:36
 - If you’re not “His people,” you are a child of the devil (Acts 13:10; Jn 8:44).

- The Jews (“His people”) had failed to live according to God’s covenant with them. Their sins prevented them from receiving their King.
 - John the Baptist helped some of them to repent so they would be prepared to meet the One who could take away their sins.
 - Sadly, few Jews repented, and the gospel went to the Gentile (Acts 28:27-28).

2. A reminder to us that repentance is an important part of our salvation (Acts 20:21; 2Corinthians 7:10; 2Timothy 2:25)

- Salvation involves turning away from our sins and our ways and turning to God’s way. That’s repentance (Acts 20:21).
- **“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation.”** (2 Cor 7:10). Worldly sorrow won’t bring you to repent and be saved. Godly sorrow occurs when you recognize that you’re a sinner who doesn’t even deserve God’s salvation. Godly sorrow will lead to repentance and salvation.
 - The Thessalonians demonstrated this (1 Thess 1:9). They turned from their way (Isa. 53:6) to God’s way (Jn 14:6).

B. Through the tender mercy of God (v.78)

1. God’s mercy leads to His grace (Hebrews 4:16)

- Mercy: God withholding the judgment you deserve.
- Grace: God giving you the blessings you don’t deserve.
- God’s chastening aims to bring us back to Him and to increase our godliness and righteousness. God wants to help us, not harm us.
 - Don’t let trials and troubles make you bitter toward God.

2. God’s mercy led Him to send His Son

a. The dayspring from on high

- 1) **Description of the morning (Job 38:12)**
- 2) **The day star (2Peter 1:19)**. (Note that Lucifer is NOT the day star in Isaiah 14:12).
- 3) **The arising Sun of righteousness (Malachi 4:2)**
 - God pictures the Second Coming of Jesus Christ as the sun coming up in the morning. **“weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.”** (Psalm 30:5).

b. Hath visited us (1 John 4:10)

- i. The knowledge of God’s salvation “visits” people when we carry the gospel to them.

III. TO GIVE LIGHT TO THOSE IN DARKNESS (1:79a)

A. To Them That Sit in Darkness (John 8:12; 12:46)

- Jesus is the Light of the world (John 8:12, 9:5).
- People who don’t have the knowledge of God’s salvation are like people sitting in the dark, in the shadow of death with no hope.
 - Jesus said, **“Whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.”**

B. To Them That Sit in the Shadow of Death (Psalm 23:4; 107:10-16)

IV. TO GUIDE INTO THE WAY OF PEACE (1:79b)

A. To Guide our Feet (Psalm 32:8; 48:14)

- You need God’s word to guide your feet.
- God wants to lead you in the right paths.
 - You can’t see which way to go. Take God’s hand and let him guide you with His eye.

B. Into the Way of Peace

1. Not Known by those who reject God (Romans 3:17)
2. Given to those who receive Christ (John 14:27)