

## The Appointed Times III John the Baptist #2

Michael Heiss—October 19, 2016

We saw in part one of John the Baptist that he:

- was to be *great before God*
- had *partial Nazarite vow*
- was filled with the Holy Spirit while in his mother's womb

*which is extremely rare and we don't know of anyone else who had that honor except perhaps Jesus and Zacharias, John's father*

- was the Elijah to come
- met the angel Gabriel while offering incense
- his prayer for a son was heard

Luke 1:23—speaking of Zacharias: “Now it came to pass *that* when the days of his service were fulfilled, he departed to his house. And after those days, Elizabeth his wife conceived, but hid herself for five months, saying, ‘The Lord has intervened for me in this, at *the* time in which He looked upon *me* to take away my reproach among men’” (vs 23-25).

We talked about how it was a reproach not to have a child if you were a woman in Israel. They had prayed for years, and now she is acknowledging that God has finally taken away her reproach. This was something that was extremely important to her.

Let us take a look at something is very, very interesting, and, frankly, inspiring. We know that the angel Gabriel went to Zacharias and then also went to Mary, the niece of Elizabeth. As soon as the angel got through talking with Mary she went to Elizabeth.

Verse 40: “And entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. Now it came to pass *that* when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with *the* Holy Spirit” (vs 40-41).

This was not normal! People weren't filled with the Holy Spirit everyday. Elizabeth was!

Verse 42: “And she cried out with a loud voice and said, ‘Blessed *are* you among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of your womb. But why is this *happening* to me, that **the mother of my Lord** should come to me?’” (vs 42-43).

- How much did Elizabeth really know?
- How much did she understand what she said?

“...the mother of **my Lord**...”

How did Elizabeth even know that Mary was pregnant? *It just happened a matter of days before, maybe!* We know because we've got the

Book! We can read! Elizabeth didn't know that!

One of the reasons is because Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. God through His Spirit could certainly communicate to Elizabeth what was happening. I don't know of any other explanation. Obviously, God communicated with Elizabeth.

She says, “...the mother of **my Lord**...” this word *Lord* is indeed the word *Lord*. Look what happens:

Verse 45: “And blessed *is* she who has believed, for there shall be a fulfillment of the things **spoken to her from the Lord**.” This is essentially the same word.

Verse 66: “And all who heard *these things* laid *them* up in their hearts, saying, ‘What then will this little child be?’ And **the hand of the Lord was with him**.”

Elizabeth was in a sense was acknowledging in some way through the Spirit that she knew that **the Lord** was inside of Mary's body. This could only have been communicated to her by God's Spirit. There is no other way that it could have been done.

Now let's see what Zacharias had to say, v 57: “Now Elizabeth's time was fulfilled that she should give birth, and she bore a son. And her neighbors and kinfolk heard that *the* Lord had magnified His mercy toward her, and they rejoiced with her. And it came to pass on the eighth day *that* they came to circumcise the little child; and they were calling him Zacharias, after the name of his father. Then his mother answered *and* said, ‘No! But he shall be named John.’ And they said to her, ‘*There* is no one among your kinfolk who is called by this name. Then they made signs to his father *as to* what he desired him to be named. And after signaling for a writing tablet, he wrote, saying, ‘John is his name.’ And they were all amazed. Then his mouth was immediately opened, and his tongue *was loosed*; and he spoke, praising God. And fear came upon all those who dwelt around them; and in the entire hill country of Judea, all these things were being talked about” (vs 57-65).

This was a very unusual event! This just didn't happen every day, and they knew something was up, there's something about this child. But did they really understand? *No, they didn't!*

Verse 66: “And all who heard *these things* laid *them* up in their hearts, saying, ‘What then will

this little child be?’ And *the* hand of *the* Lord was with him. And **Zacharias his father was filled with the Holy Spirit**, and prophesied, saying, ‘Blessed be *the* Lord, the God of Israel, because He has visited and has worked redemption for His people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David’” (vs 66-69).

Again, stop and think: How did he know the “...horn of salvation...” was coming from the house of David? He knew from prophecy that it would come from David, that’s true, but how did he know in this case, in the womb of Mary that salvation was coming? Again, he was filled with the Holy Spirit and that is the only explanation!

Verse 70: “Exactly as He spoke by *the* mouth of His Holy prophets since the world began; salvation from our enemies and from *the* hand of all those who hate us; to fulfill *the promise of mercy made* to our fathers, and to remember His Holy covenant, *the* oath that He swore to Abraham our father; to grant us *that*, being saved from *the* hand of our enemies, we might serve Him without fear, *walking* in Holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our lives. And you, little child... [referring to little John] ...shall be called *the* prophet of *the* Highest; for you shall go before *the* face of *the* Lord, to prepare His ways; to give *the* knowledge of salvation to His people by *the* remission of their sins, through *the* deep inner compassions of our God; in which *the* dayspring from on high has visited us, to shine upon those who are sitting in darkness and in *the* shadow of death, to direct our feet into *the* way of peace” (vs 70-79).

One reason Elizabeth and Zacharias could say that... Here Jesus is instructing His disciples and talking to them:

Luke 12:11: “But when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious *about* how or what you should reply in defense, or what you should say; for the Holy Spirit shall teach you in that same hour what needs to be said” (vs 11-12).

I submit to you that that’s exactly what happened here with Zacharias and Elizabeth. God’s Spirit instructed them what to say. The Spirit flowed through them, and that Spirit is very powerful.

One of the things I try to do, and I admit I don’t do it enough, is that when I read of events that take place, sometimes it’s like you’re just reading over something. I don’t stop to think that these are *real people*.

- What were they thinking?
- What emotions did they have?

Luke 1:80: “And the little child grew and was

strengthened in spirit; and he was in the wilderness until *the* day of his appearing to Israel.”

- How many years did Zacharias and Elizabeth have to enjoy John?
- At what age did John go into the wilderness?

We know that Zacharias and Elizabeth are at least in their 60s, perhaps early 70s. But we learned how that one is not considered aged until 60. So, we know that they were at least in their 60s.

When John came he actually preached until he was about 30, so when was the last time they saw their son? Obviously, a five or six year old child cannot survive on his own in the wilderness. So, I think we can safely assume that John had to be somewhere between maybe 15-20-years-old before he was out there. Again, it’s all speculation.

I stop to think sometimes: How did they feel about this little child? This young son? They never lived to see him perform/fulfill his purpose. They died knowing that he would, “...and he was in the wilderness until *the* day of his appearing to Israel.”

When do we next meet John? Mark 1:1: “The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, *the* Son of God; as it is written in the prophets: ‘**Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who shall prepare Your way before You. The voice of one crying in the wilderness**, “Prepare the way of *the* Lord, make straight His paths.”’ John came baptizing in the wilderness, and preaching *the* baptism of repentance for *the* remission of sins. And all *those* of the country of Judea went out, and those of Jerusalem, and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. Now, John was clothed with camel’s hair and *wore* a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, ‘The One Who is coming after me *is* mightier than I, of Whom I am not worthy to stoop down to loose the thong of His sandals. I have indeed baptized you with water, but He shall baptize you with *the* Holy Spirit’” (vs 1-8).

- How did John know this?
- How did he know that he was the forerunner?

Obviously, it says it was through the Spirit; God was communicating with him while he was in the wilderness. We don’t know how often, whether in vision, a dream, we don’t know. But somehow God was communicating with John, and when the time came John made his appearance.

Of course, we can always ask how did John know that now was the time? Again, God’s Spirit had to inform him.

- When did this happen?

- When did John appear?

I mentioned to you earlier that there was one section that was going to be a little technical and today is the one. We're not going to go into all the technicalities of the dates and how we know when John and Jesus were born, and so forth. We'll get a little bit of that. If you want the detail, read *The Appointed Times of Jesus the Messiah*. It's really laid for you. In the back there's a section about 8-10 pages of when Jesus was born.

But you've got to sit there and read it line-by-line, wading through it. We're not going to do that today. Let's get a feel for it, and we'll see how this really works out; how we can know that Jesus and John were both conceived in 6<sub>B.C.</sub> and born in 5<sub>B.C.</sub> We can do it relatively simply.

Luke 3:1: "Now, in the fifteenth year of the government of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee... [v 2]: In the time of the priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness."

What is our first hint? *The 15<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberius Caesar!* From history we know that Tiberius was the son of Caesar Augustus, who died in 14<sub>A.D.</sub> and he was one of the longest-lived emperors; he was 77 when he died. That was long-lived for a Roman emperor, it really was.

Tiberius began reigning in 14<sub>A.D.</sub>, but we learn that he began to co-reign with Caesar in 12<sub>A.D.</sub>, and it was customary to start the reigns of kings or emperors when they first begin to rule. So, when he first began to rule it was as a co-ruler with Caesar Augustus in 12<sub>A.D.</sub> Go 15 years to the 15<sup>th</sup> year and it is 26<sub>A.D.</sub> So, we know that John the Baptist makes his appearance in the year 26<sub>A.D.</sub>

Verse 21: "Now, it came to pass after all the people were baptized, and Jesus was baptized... [baptized by John] ...and was praying, that the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in a bodily form like a dove.... [v 23]: And Jesus Himself began to be about thirty years old..." (vs 21-23).

So here we have it in the same year of the beginning of His ministry, He's baptized and He's 30-years-old. In that same year Jesus made His first trip to Jerusalem. Let us look at that episode:

John 2:13: "Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem." This was at the beginning of His ministry, the first year of His ministry. This would be 26<sub>A.D.</sub> How do we know?

Verse 18: "As a result, the Jews answered and said to Him, 'What sign do You show to us,

seeing that You do these things?' Jesus answered and said to them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' Then the Jews said, 'This temple was forty-six years in building, and You will raise it up in three days?'" (vs 18-20). Of course, He was speaking to them about His body, not the actual temple.

But the temple was 46 years in the building. This was the 46<sup>th</sup> year. When was the temple first started? *Herod the Great*—known as the great because he was a prodigious builder of cities and edifices all over the place. He was a magnificent builder. The historian *Josephus* tells us that he began this in his 18<sup>th</sup> year—from the summer of 20<sub>B.C.</sub> to the summer of 19<sub>B.C.</sub>

What happens if you begin counting 46 years beginning in 20<sub>B.C.</sub>? Remember, there's no year zero, so you go direct from 1<sub>B.C.</sub> to 1<sub>A.D.</sub> In the 46<sup>th</sup> year it's 26<sub>A.D.</sub> Here we know that Jesus and John both started preaching in 26<sub>A.D.</sub> Remember that the Scripture in Luke told us that Jesus was about age 30 (26<sub>A.D.</sub>). Go back 30 years and you come to 5<sub>B.C.</sub> We are going to see in 5<sub>B.C.</sub> Jesus and John were born and they were conceived in 6<sub>B.C.</sub>

Luke 1:5: "There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest of *the course of Abijah*, Zacharias by name..." We know that was the 8<sup>th</sup> course. You can read in 1-Chron. 24:1-18 where the courses are laid out.

When was the time that *course of Abijah* began to officiate? All courses officiated at least twice in the year; there were 24 of them. Each course officiated once at the first part of the year and once in the second half of the year. During the Holy Day seasons, all the courses were on call. In essence you might say that five times in a year they were all on the tap ready to go if need be.

It's all laid out in *The Appointed Times of Jesus the Messiah*. In 6<sub>B.C.</sub>, because we know that Jesus was 30 in 26<sub>A.D.</sub> and go back to 5<sub>B.C.</sub>, He had to have been conceived in 6<sub>B.C.</sub> [transcriber's correction]. If you find that is Neg. Zacharias worked a special two-week shift because it coincided with Pentecost.

Remember, all the courses were on call during the week of the Holy Day season. So, those days/weeks were from May 15<sup>th</sup> to May 22<sup>nd</sup> and May 22<sup>nd</sup> to May 29<sup>th</sup>. That also covered the Day of Pentecost.

Speculation: Is it possible that it was on the Day of Pentecost that Zacharias was in the temple and Gabriel met him? Well, the Bible doesn't tell us that, but just knowing how God works and how He does things on His Holy Days, it certainly wouldn't surprise me. If I were a betting man I would bet that

it was on the Day of Pentecost. But again, we can't be 100% sure.

Verse 25—Elizabeth is saying: “The Lord has intervened for me in this, at *the* time in which He looked upon *me* to take away my reproach among men.” Shortly after that she conceived. When was that? After May 29<sup>th</sup>! So, after the next week, or two or three, Elizabeth conceived. We don't know exactly when, but somewhere in there Elizabeth became pregnant.

We know that six months later Mary became pregnant. So, if John the Baptist was conceived, say, June of 6<sub>B.C.</sub>, go forward 9 months: *March*. That means that John was born somewhere around late February, early March, or even as late as the first part of April, because we don't know specifically when Elizabeth conceived.

If Elizabeth gave birth in March or April and she was pregnant six months before Mary, six months later brings you to September/October. So, Jesus would have been born in the fall of the year. That's Holy Day season.

The Messiah is going to set foot, most likely, on the Feast of Trumpets. Is it possible that He was also born on the Feast of Trumpets? We can't be sure, but the timeframe fits, so I would say, probably, yes. But then again I'm not going to 'swear' to it or anything like that, because I don't know.

This is remarkable that here we have these times set. We have Jesus and John both conceived in 6<sub>B.C.</sub> and born in 5<sub>B.C.</sub>

In part four we're going to look into the background of the birth of Jesus and what happened with Joseph, the human father of Jesus, the husband of Mary, and the dream that he had and how that worked out, and why that dream was so important. Dreams were considered important. In fact, if you had a dream you were favored by God, and it was known. When people had dreams like that, they took them very seriously. That's why that's one way God communicated, *in dreams*. He knew the people would accept them.

We're going to see quite a bit about the marriage and why there was a year of the time of the marriage ceremony. There are two parts to the ceremony:

- betrothal (legal marriage)
- consummation of it

In between was to make sure that there was no hanky-panky going on! What happened during that year. If we want to be humorous we could say that there was hanky-panky, but it was by the Holy Spirit

of God that did it, so it really wasn't hanky-panky. This was ordained of God.

We'll see some of the fascinating things about the birth of Jesus!

#### Scriptural References:

- 1) Luke 1:23-25, 40-43, 45, 66, 57-79
- 2) Luke 12:11-12
- 3) Luke 1:80
- 4) Mark 1:1-8
- 5) Luke 3:1-2, 21-23
- 6) John 2:13, 18-20
- 7) Luke 1:5, 25

Scripture referenced, not quoted:  
2 Chronicles 24:1-18

#### Also referenced: Books:

- *The Appointed Times of Jesus the Messiah* by Fred R. Coulter
- Josephus

MH:bo  
Transcribed: 12/30/16

Copyright 2016—All rights reserved. Except for brief excerpts for review purposes, no part of this publication may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means without the written permission of the copyright owner. This includes electronic and mechanical photocopying or recording, as well as the use of information storage and retrieval systems.