



St John the Baptist

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St. John the Baptist was a great man. Our Lord Jesus Christ described St. John when He said, *“Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist.”* (Matthew 11:11). This was certainly true.

St. John the Baptist was born in a miraculous way. His parents “were righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.” However, St Elizabeth, St. John the Baptist’s mother, was barren (which means she couldn’t have any children) and both his parents were very old. They had prayed to God for a long time so that He would give them a child.

One day while Zacharias the priest, St. John the Baptist’s father, was praying in the temple, Archangel Gabriel appeared to him. The Archangel told him that he would have a son and that he should name him John. But Zacharias did not believe Archangel Gabriel so his punishment was to remain unable to speak until the child was born.

While St Elizabeth was still pregnant with St. John the Baptist St. Mary, who was pregnant with our Lord Jesus Christ, came to visit her. When St Elizabeth heard St. Mary’s greeting, St. John the Baptist leaped for joy inside of St Elizabeth. This shows how much St. John the Baptist revered our Lord Jesus Christ even before he was born.



When Herod the king gave the command to kill every child under two years old, Zacharias took the baby boy to the temple and placed him there praying and knowing that God will protect this special child who will become the prophet of Lord. The Angel of the Lord came and took St. John the Baptist away to the wilderness just as the guards of the king came and killed Zacharias while he was still inside the tabernacle, before the altar.

St. John the Baptist grew up in the wilderness. This fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah told of St. John the Baptist - "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the



**St. John the Baptist,
Baptising the Lord Jesus Christ**



Lord: make His paths straight.”

St. John the Baptist wore clothes that were not typical. He was clothed with camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist. He also did not eat typically. He ate locusts and wild honey.

One day St. John the Baptist was preaching beside the Jordan River. He baptized many people that day. The people came to him confessing their sins. While St. John was baptizing, he saw a group of Pharisees and Sadducees, people who did not believe in our Lord Jesus Christ. He called them a brood of vipers, a kind of snake. In the Holy Bible the devil is sometimes referred to as a snake. He told the Pharisees and Sadducees that they should repent and confess their sins. How courageous was St. John the Baptist was. He was not afraid to tell the Pharisees and Sadducees that they were sinners and needed to repent even though they were very powerful people that could hurt St. John the Baptist if they wanted to.

Later St. John the Baptist started talking about our Lord Jesus Christ. He told the crowd that although he could baptize with water, there would be One among them who would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire. He told the crowd that he was not worthy even to untie our Lord Jesus Christ's sandals. How humble St. John the Baptist was. Although many people came to St. John, he knew that he was just a messenger and that all the glory really belonged to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then our Lord Jesus Christ came to St. John to be baptized. St. John tried to prevent our Lord Jesus Christ from being baptized. St. John the Baptist said that he was the one who needed to be baptized by our Lord Jesus Christ, not the other way around. Our Lord Jesus Christ told St. John that this is what must be done in order to fulfill all righteousness and St. John obeyed and



baptized our Lord Jesus Christ.

When our Lord Jesus Christ came out of the water, the Heavens opened up and a dove came down and rested on Him. This dove was the Holy Spirit. Then there was a voice from Heaven saying, “This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.” This was God’s voice from Heaven. This is the day on which we celebrate Epiphany, when the Trinity (the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) appeared all at once. St. John the Baptist is the man who had the honor of baptizing our Lord Jesus Christ. Yet he was still a humble person, even though he was praised above anyone that ever lived.

After the Epiphany of the Trinity, St. John the Baptist was put in prison by king Herod because St. John told the king that it was wrong for him to marry his brother’s wife, Herodias. Again we see how courageous St. John the Baptist was. Even when the king was sinning, he stood in front of him and told him to repent!

This made King Herod angry and he wanted to kill St. John the Baptist but was afraid of the people because they all love St. John. Then on the Herod’s birthday, Herodias’ daughter danced for the king. He liked it so much that he promised her anything she wanted. The daughter asked her mother what she should ask for and the mother told her to ask for the head of St. John the Baptist on a silver platter. Because of his promise the king had St. John the Baptist beheaded and gave his head to the dancer.

When St. John the Baptist’s disciples heard what happened, they came and took the body and buried it.