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JOHN THE BAPTIST – LESSON 1

HIS ORIGIN

Let us look at the origin and birthright of John the Baptist. He was chosen by God well before he was conceived in his mother's womb. It was just like it was spoken by God of the prophet Jeremiah in Jeremiah 3:5, ***"Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee. And before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified (set apart, made holy) thee, and I ordained thee a prophet..."*** This was true of John, son of Zachariah.

God had foreordained John's purpose and mission more than seven hundred years before his birth. His mission was foretold in Isaiah 40:3 where it says, ***"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."*** It very accurately describes John's type of ministry and the wilderness location of it. (More on that later.)

What was John's pedigree? His father Zachariah was a priest who ministered on a rotating course in the temple at Jerusalem; he did not live near there and his course of two weeks only came around approximately once a year. It was during his course of service that an angel appeared to him and announced the coming birth of a son to him and his elderly barren wife Elizabeth. The angel told him that the child would go forth in the spirit of Elijah and the power of Elijah (Luke 1:17) to ***"make ready a people prepared for the Lord,"*** a "straight" path to Jesus.

As the only son of Zechariah, John would have been expected to follow his father into the Jewish priesthood for temple service. He would have received all the proper education and grooming for it. However, God's plan was different from man's plan. God put a burning passion in John's spirit to preach against sin and put forth a call of repentance. The priesthood ministered sacrifices to cover the sins of the people of the nation in general. John's message went directly to the heart of the people in a way that the established priesthood could not do.

What about John's mother? Elizabeth was of the daughters of Aaron, the first high priest and Moses' brother. (Luke 1:5.) The bloodline of Aaron was the God-ordained line of Jewish priests. This means that John's bloodline was from the priesthood on both sides. You could not get any stronger pedigree than that.

It is evident from Luke 1:41 that John had the Holy Spirit upon him from birth. As a babe in Elizabeth's womb, John leaped for joy when Mary came to visit in the early stages of pregnancy. John's pre-born spirit knew exactly who it was that was visiting.

Folks, God had a plan written in the books of heaven for each and every one of us before we were conceived. Our destiny was written. Most people never enter their pre-ordained destiny because they do not seek God. Many even deny God. Seek God always. Study His word, pray, meditate, and let Holy Spirit be your guide (ask him.) More on John coming tomorrow.