

TESTIMONY OF JOHN

By Keith Greer

John very plainly told us the purpose of his gospel-that we might believe that Jesus is the Son of God. What evidence did John the Baptist give to support the Apostle John's conclusion?

John the Baptist fulfilled prophecy. "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert a highway for our God." {Isaiah 40:3} Its fulfillment is seen in Matthew 3:3; Luke 3:3-6.

"Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming, "Says the LORD of hosts. " {Malachi 3:1} Fulfilled- Matthew 11:10-14

"Remember the Law of Moses, My servant, which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel, With the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse. {Malachi 4:4-6} Fulfilled in Luke 1:13- 17.

John's parents were Zacharias and Elizabeth. Elizabeth was a cousin of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Luke 1:36. John's birth and his name were brought about by God. Luke 1:1-21; 57-80.

What kind of preaching did John the Baptist do?

FEARLESS. "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance. " {Matthew 3:7,8}

Jesus spoke of his courage. "But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet ... Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. "{Matthew 11:9,11}

PURPOSE. John's preaching had meaning. "And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. "{Luke 3:3}

He looked forward to something else. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. "{Matthew 3:11}

His preaching was prophetic. " ...and saying, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!'" {Matthew 3:2} "At hand," means it was very near.

JOHN'S DEATH. John was put to death for the things he preached. "For John had said to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife. Therefore Herodias held it against him and wanted to kill him, but she could not;" {Mark 6:17,18}

Yet, all during his life, John knew the work which would come after his was of far greater importance than his own.

"He must increase, but I must decrease." {John 3:30}

"Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?" {John 1:19-22}

Yes, in the "bigger picture" John understood his work and life were just "secondary" for the greater work of the one who would follow him. His testimony adds to the truth of Christ's deity! ***