

THE PREACHING OF THE PROPHET JOHN Luke 3:1-20

1. **Most Churches would not have hired John to be Their Preacher...**
 - a. He Lived in the Desert... He Wore Camel Hair Clothing... He Ate Locusts for Food
 - b. He Called the People who came to be Baptized a Brood of Vipers
 2. **Would We Have Listened to the Preaching of John?**
 - a. We Judge People By the Clothes They Wear... or eat...
 - b. And We Are Easily Offended by Criticism...
 - c. so Would We Have Listened to John's Preaching?
 3. **But God Sent John to Bust the Door Down and Prepare a People for most Pivotal Point of Human History—the Arrival of the King—Jesus the Christ!**
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I. THE PIVOTAL POINT OF HISTORY (v.1–3)

A. NOTICE HOW LUKE RECORDS THIS PIVOTAL POINT IN HISTORY...

1. CORRUPT ROMAN RULERS

- a) **Tiberius Caesar...** Tiberius began his reign in A.D. 14 and was in his 15th year as Emperor when John began his ministry, about A.D. 28–29.
 - The previous Caesar began the practice of Emperor worship
 - as a political tool for power and control, that only grew worse
- b) **Pontius Pilate...** Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea. [see: Pilate Stone]
 - He was both the civil ruler and a military commander.
 - The situation had grown so bad in Judea that Rome had to remove Archelaus from civil control and move in a military commander.
 - So Judea was ruled directly by Roman authority at this time.

2. CORRUPT REGIONAL RULERS

- a) **Herod Antipas...** Herod Antipas was tetrarch of Galilee and Perea.
 - Tetrarch simply means a ruler over a fourth part.
 - Herod Antipas was the son of Herod the Great.
 - He inherited his territory at his father's death
- b) **Herod's brother Philip... was another son of the tyrant Herod the Great •**
 - Caesarea Philippi was built and named after him.
- c) **Lysanias...** ruled another part of the region...
 - For years Luke was the only reference to this mysterious name...
 - but Luke's record no longer stands alone...
 - an inscription in stone was found west of Damascus
 - The inscription states Lysanius was Governor of this region.

3. CORRUPT RELIGIOUS RULERS

- a) **Annas and Caiaphas...** Annas and Caiaphas were high priests
- Obviously only one H.P. ruled at a time...
 - however by this time HP was political position controlled by Rome
 - Under Annas it became a Dynasty—all his sons had served as HP and now his Son-in-law Caiaphas is high Priest
 - Annas is the power behind the throne—and runs the Temple like a Mob Boss—as a den of thieves rather than a house of prayer.
 - Luke is correct: both are HP in a way that has corrupted the position

B. GOD WORKS EVEN DURING THE DARKEST OF TIMES SUCH AS THESE —DO NOT BECOME DISCOURAGED!

1. **THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME—NOT TO THE RULERS OF THIS AGE—
Who Are Coming to Nothing... But a Man Named John in the Wilderness!**
2. **Last Week the Elites all flew in to Davos, Switzerland on their Private Jets...
—So Billionaires Can Tell Millionaires How the Rest of Us Must Live**
 - a) If They Had Their Way—There Would Be a ONE-WORLD Government...
and They Would Be Running It!
3. **But If God Needed Techno-Billionaires to be Masters of the Universe...**
 - a) Then the Word of God Would've Been Sent To Caesar's, to Herod's, to Globalists
and Techno-Billionaires...
 - b) But God Chose John in the Wilderness to Prepare the Way for Jesus...
 - c) Even When the World Seems to Be Run By Corrupt Rulers—God is in Control!

II. THE PROPHECY (v.4–6)

A. A PROPHET FOR THIS PIVOTAL POINT WAS PROPHESED...

1. **Propheied 400 years before by the Prophet Malachi (Malachi 3:1; 4:5-6)**
 - a) It was John who was sent in the spirit and power of Elijah
2. **Propheied 800 years before by the Prophet Isaiah (Lk 3:4-6)**
3. **The Dead Sea Scrolls were found in the caves of Qumran above Dead Sea**
 - a) The scrolls of the OT buried like a time capsule almost 3 centuries before Jesus birth
 - b) confirming the accuracy of the OT prophesies word for word

B. WHEN GOD DECLARES IT WILL HAPPEN—YOU CAN BE SURE IT WILL!

1. **But God's Ways Are Not Our Ways—His timing is not our timing...**
 - a) We Want Justice NOW... We Corruption Exposed NOW...

"We know they are lying. They know they are lying. They know that We know they are lying. We know, that They know, that we know they are lying. And still they continue to lie." —Alexander Solzhenitsyn

2. **But Jesus Didn't Come to Change Political Systems or Economic Systems
—Jesus Came to Change Hearts... to Change Lives.. to Save Souls**

III. THE PURPOSE (v.4–6)

A. TO PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD...

1. To Prepare a People... To Prepare Hearts... To Prepare the World...

B. TO PREPARE THE HUMBLE TO BE EXALTED...

1. Every Valley would be filled and lifted up
2. The Humble would be Lifted Up by the Gospel of Grace

C. TO PREPARE THE PROUD TO BE HUMBLLED...

1. Every Mountain and Hill would be brought Low
2. The World Was About to be Turned Upside Down!
3. The Meek, not the Powerful, would inherit the earth

D. TO PREPARE THE CROOKED TO BE STRAITENED...

1. Tax Collectors would become Apostles
2. Violent Zealots would become Peacemakers
3. Sons of Thunder would become Apostles of Love
4. Members of Caesar's own Household would become Children of God
5. Even an Emperor of Rome Would Eventually Become a Christian

E. TO PREPARE ROUGH WAYS TO BECOME SMOOTH

1. The Jagged edge of hopelessness, loneliness, emptiness, insecurity, guilt, shame, sin, death, depression... all shall be made smooth.
2. The way to life and peace would be made level, and easy to reach.

F. TO PREPARE ALL FLESH TO SEE GOD'S SALVATION

1. Which Was Going to Change the World...
2. By Jesus on a Cross outside the Walls of Jerusalem.
3. Jesus Blood Shed for ALL NATIONS, ALL LANGUAGES, ALL PEOPLE
4. Rich or Poor, Slave or Free, Male or Female, Young or Old

IV. THE PREACHING (v.3; v.7–20)

A. NOTICE THE POWER OF JOHN'S PREACHING...

1. He Preached BAPTISM for the Remission of Sin (v.3)
2. He Preached the WRATH OF GOD (v.7)
3. He Preached REPENTANCE (v.8)
4. He Preached against HUMAN ARROGANCE (v.8)
5. He Preached about JUDGEMENT (v.9)
6. He Preached for CHANGED LIVES (v.10–14)
7. He Preached HUMILITY (v.15–16)

8. He Preached JESUS (v.16–17)
 9. He Preached Against IMMORALITY in High Places (v.18–20)
 10. John Busted the Door Down w/ Truth —and it Left a Mark!
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V. THE PUNISHMENT (v.19–20)

A. JOHN PREACHED AGAINST THE IMMORALITY OF HEROD...

1. Thomas Sewell: “It’s amazing how much panic one honest man can spread among a multitude of hypocrites.”
2. John Called Out the Sexual Immorality of King Herod who took His Own Brother’s Wife Herodias...
3. And Because John Spoke the Truth—He Was Sent to Prison...
And it Cost Him His Life...
4. John was Beheaded for Preaching the Truth—his head was brought to Herod’s wife on a silver platter (Matthew 14:3–12)

B. THE TRUTH IS DANGEROUS...

1. Dangerous to SPEAK it—But More Importantly: Dangerous to IGNORE it...
2. “The further a society drifts from the truth, the more it will hate those who proclaim it.” —George Orwell
3. ‘The Truth Sounds Like Hate, to Those who Hate the Truth...’
So Speaking the Truth Can Be Offensive to many.

C. JESUS SAID: DO NOT FEAR THEM

1. Matthew 10:26–33
2. The Prophet John Gave His Life to Prepared the Way
for the most Pivotal Point of History —
the Arrival of Jesus the Christ, the Son of God...

CONCLUSION:

1. Revelation 2:10
2. Be Faithful Unto Death and Jesus Will Give You the Crown of Life