

The Other Miracle Birth

Luke 1:5-17; 7:18-28

A. Introduction

1. When we think of miracle births at Christmas, there is only one we think of.
2. But before Jesus' birth, another miraculous baby was born.
3. His cousin, John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ.
4. His birth reminds us that God prepares the way.
5. It shows He works through the impossible, and always keeps His promises.

B. The Countdown Begins

1. Israel was spiritually dry, with no prophet's voice for 400 years.
2. It was a dark, silent time for the nation.
3. Zechariah and Elizabeth were righteous people, but were childless.
4. This, for them, was a personal sorrow amid this national silence.
5. Their story begins with waiting & disappointment. Yet God was not done.
6. Even when God seems silent, He is preparing something new.
7. Are we preparing ourselves for what God is going to do?

C. The Prophecy of Another Miracle Birth

1. The world had been waiting for the promised Saviour for centuries.
2. The prophets had spoken of a miracle birth,
 - a. The Saviour was to be born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14).
 - b. The eternal One was to enter time at Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2).
3. There was also a prophecy of another birth to come. (Isa. 40)
4. One who was to be born to prepare for the coming of the Saviour
5. John the Baptist was not born of a virgin, but his birth was a miracle (Luke 1:5-13)
6. Zechariah and Elisabeth had no children and were getting on in years.
7. Gabriel announced about it to Zechariah while he was serving in the temple.
 - a. Zechariah was a priest during the reign of Herod.
 - b. Elisabeth was a descendent of Aaron.
8. The angel Gabriel appears with startling news.
9. "Your prayer has been heard." "Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son."
10. Zechariah had a once-in-a-lifetime moment, while burning incense in the temple.
11. God meets us while we're serving; Satan meets us when we're idle.
12. Zechariah was afraid and had trouble believing the angel's message.
13. He questioned: "*How can this be?*" - and was instantly struck mute. *How ironic!*
14. The father of "the voice in the wilderness" lost his voice because of his unbelief.
15. Amazingly, God's promises don't depend on our strength.
16. Our faith determines our joy in receiving them.
17. In her old age, Elizabeth gives birth & everyone rejoices! (Luke 1:57-80)
18. The child was named John — in obedience to God's word, not family tradition.
19. Immediately, Zechariah's tongue is loosed, and he praises God.
20. John was born as Gabriel promised and was Spirit-filled from birth.

21. The people asked themselves, "*What then will this child be?*"
22. Because they see the hand of God at work.
23. When God moves, others take notice.
24. His miracles point people to His purpose.
25. John's mission: *to prepare the people for the Lord* (1:17).

D. The Preaching of John the Baptist (3:1-22)

1. John came to prepare the way of the Lord (see Isa. 40:3-8)
2. This preparation meant preaching repentance. (Luke 3:3-9)
3. John boldly named sins and confronted evil.
4. We must face our sins, or we will not flee to Christ for forgiveness.
5. The Apostle John pointed to Christ as the sin bearer. (John 1:29)
6. John the Baptist humbled himself and exalted Christ. (Luke 3:16-20)
7. John's plain preaching cost him his freedom.
 - a. He warned his hearers of judgment to come.
 - b. He played no favourites, rebuking even Herod for immorality.
8. When we break down the message of John the Baptist's birth, we see:
 - a. God breaks His silence — after centuries, He speaks again.
 - b. God keeps His word — every prophecy finds its fulfillment.
 - c. God uses ordinary people. Zechariah and Elizabeth were faithful, not famous.
 - d. God's timing is perfect — John's birth sets the stage for Christ's coming.
9. Every miracle of God, large or small, is part of His greater plan to reveal Jesus.

E. Our Lord's Praise of John the Baptist (7:19-28)

1. After his arrest, it appears that John started to doubt himself, Jesus, & God's plan.
2. John's surprising question: "*Are you the One to come?*"
 - a. He asked this question from prison with his life in jeopardy.
 - b. Depression drives us to foolish questions and conclusions.
3. Jesus gave a faith-building answer: His miracles proved His deity (7:22).
4. Jesus affirmed that John was God's messenger (7:24-30).
 - a. Vance Havner: "When John said his worst, Jesus said His best about John."
 - b. "There is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist"
5. John continually pointed people to Jesus.
6. His words confirmed his belief Jesus was the Messiah.
7. What do your words & actions say about Jesus?

F. Conclusion

1. John's birth reminds us that nothing is too hard for God.
2. His story encourages us to trust, wait, and believe.
3. Even when the promise seems delayed. Matt 19:26.
4. John was called to prepared the way for Jesus.
5. Similarly, we are called to prepare our hearts and point others to Christ.
6. John's message still prepares the way of the Lord.
7. Hear the Call of John the Baptist: "Repent!"
8. Heed the Call of Jesus: "Come unto Me ... I Will Give You Rest"