The Biography Of John The Baptist

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Introduction

John the Baptist was a well-known figure among Jewish people for his remarkable preaching and baptism. He was sent by God for a special purpose: to guide humanity and ask people to seek forgiveness for their sins and purify their souls. He guided people regarding God's message about the final judgment. He attracted people toward baptism, so he was called John the Baptist. He was sent by God to clear His path. This research paper is about the life, the purpose of his life as a prophet, and the death of John the Baptist. The biography of John will be discussed in this paper. The mission of John and what he was sent for will be elaborated on in detail. The concept of incarnation and the relationship of John the Baptist with Elijah will be reviewed in light of the Old Testament.

Biography Of John The Baptist

"John the Baptist" is considered the forerunner and predecessor of Jesus Christ. He was a very famous Jewish preacher. He preached to the people and delivered God's messages about His final judgment. He guided the people to seek forgiveness from God, and he baptized those who were guilty to prepare them for God's acceptance. The people who repented of their wrongdoings prepared and purified themselves through baptism for the coming of God [1]. He arose as a prophet in the lower valley of the Jordan River. He is well-regarded and respected in the Christian church, as he is regarded as the precursor of Jesus Christ [2].

The main sources of information about John the Baptist, his work, and his life are the four Gospels, which include Luke, John, Matthew, and Mark [3]. The Antiquities of the Jews by the Jewish historian Josephus has some valuable information about John the Baptist. The ancient Greek book Acts of the Apostles also has some information about John. Acts of the Apostles is presented as preceding the Gospel of John.

John the Baptist had a miraculous birth; his parents were descendants of the priestly family of Aaron. They were named Zachariah and Elizabeth. They were a very old couple, and Elizabeth could not have a child because she was considered barren. Zachariah was the priest in the temple of Jerusalem. One day, Zachariah was in the temple where he saw an angel named Gabriel, who told him that he would have a baby. Elizabeth would give birth to a boy who would be named John. God had sent him for a special purpose and task, so he would be raised apart from his family to complete the task for which

he was sent. After some time, Elizabeth gave birth to John at a very old age near Jerusalem [4].

At the age of thirty, he started preaching to the people on the banks of the Jordan River valley. He told the people about God's final judgment and asked people to get forgiveness for their sins. He attracted them towards baptism and self-atonement. According to the Bible, the Prophet Jesus was also baptized by John. After the baptism of Jesus, John's ministry period ended, and Jesus's ministry began. John continued to preach in the Jordan Valley [5].

After six months of his ministry, Herod Antipas imprisoned John because of fear of his rising influence and popularity and because John opposed his marriage to the wife of his half-brother. He killed John at the request of a girl named Salome.

The Mission Of "John The Baptist."

John the Baptist began early Christian preaching. The mission of John the Baptist was to make the people aware of and ready for the Final Day of Judgment when the Lord would come. He encouraged people to be baptized, hence the name John the Baptist, to repent for the sins they had committed in their lives and ask forgiveness for their wrongdoings. His preaching told everyone that God's judgment of the world was forthcoming and that, before He came, they should confess their sins and be purified if they wanted to avoid punishment for those sins and refrain from misconduct. He educated people about living a life free of sins. His mission was for all stations and ranks of Jewish society. He encouraged the people to get forgiveness and produce suitable fruits of atonement. John was sent as the predecessor of Jesus Christ [6]. He baptized Jesus Christ, and he was the first to recognize Jesus and pronounce him as the Messiah whom the people should follow for guidance. Christians supposed that 'Elijah,' another famous prophet of his time, would come before Jesus Christ rather than John the Baptist. However, there was a need for the precursor of the Messiah, such as John the Baptist.

John and Jesus both had the same mission. Their preaching was directed toward people who came to them voluntarily. They were sent to lead and guide people who sought guidance of their own free will. Their mission was not merely to lead people to heaven; rather, it was to lead them toward righteous actions, thoughts, and a pure soul. John's mission was to make people aware that religious practices should not consist merely of actions but should align with the deeds, thoughts, and words of their daily lives. The purpose of John's preaching can be depicted by the Sanskrit Prayer, which comprises three main points: a) guiding people from an unreal, meaningless life to a real, meaningful life; b) guiding people from the darkness of sin into the light; and c) guiding people from death to life and immortality. His mission was to restrain people from sin, help them free themselves of their egos, and lead them toward the path of true self-awareness [7].

Old Testament References To John The Baptist

There are many quotes and verses that point out that John the Baptist was sent to clear the way of the Lord. There are many verses quoted in the four Gospels that use references to quotes from Isaiah and Malachi about the presence of John the Baptist as a predecessor of Christ. There are many sources that state that John the Baptist baptized Jesus Christ and that John's ministry ended with the start of Jesus Christ's ministry.

Isaiah

From Isaiah 40:3, it is evident that before God, someone was sent to make his way and clear the path for the Lord. John the Baptist was the one who guided people towards the righteous path and good deeds to clear the path for God and make arrangements for Him. People were immersed in sinful lives before Jesus Christ and were living negligently, so God sent the messenger before coming Himself to have the people baptized. That messenger was John the Baptist.

Malachi

Malachi 3:1 provides a clear illustration of a person who will come before God to prepare His way and make the people ready for God. In Malachi 3:1, it is narrated that God is going to send a messenger, i.e., John the Baptist, and after that, the God everyone was waiting for will come.

The Gospel Accounts Of John The Baptist

In the Gospel of Matthew 3:3, there is a reference to Isaiah 40:3 about the role of the messenger sent before God, saying that he would have to clear God's path. There, the verse is linked with John the Baptist, as Jesus Christ came just after John's ministry [8].

In the Gospel of Mark 1:1-3, a reference from the book of the prophet Isaiah is used to refer to John the Baptist. It stated that God said He would send a messenger before coming Himself. He will prepare the path, clear the way for the Lord, and make the people ready for the Lord to come.

In the Gospel of Matthew 11:10, a reference from Isaiah is used to say that the Lord is coming for the people and that, before that, He will send His messenger to guide the people, prepare His way, and make the people spiritually pure and free from sin.

In the Gospel of John 1:23, John himself said that he was the one who was sent by God to make the path for God clear and straight. He was sent to complete this special task as a Prophet for the Jewish people.

Was John The Baptist The Second Coming Of The Old Testament Prophet Elijah?

John the Baptist could not be the reincarnated second coming of the Old Testament Prophet Elijah. From what we learn from the Old Testament, it is not possible for a person to reincarnate in any other person. There are many verses that support the concept that after death, there comes a final day of judgment, which will govern the decision of whether to be heaven-bound or not. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, death is the end of a person's earthly life and of the time in which one can accept or reject the grace of Christ. After death, people receive the consequences of their deeds, either by entering the eternal blessings of heaven or by facing eternal punishment in hell. Hebrews 9:27 narrates the same concept that after death, there comes a judgment day for every person. The concept of reincarnation rejects the above-stated verses and instead suggests an ongoing cycle of life, death, reincarnation, and death [9]. Even though Elijah did not die according to the Old Testament, the theological possibility would therefore be something other than reincarnation.

The Death Of John The Baptist

After the end of John the Baptist's ministry period, he was imprisoned by Herod Antipas (a Herodian ruler) for six months because Herod had married Herodias. Herodias was also the wife of Philip, Herod Antipas's brother, and John opposed the marriage and called it a sinful act. Herod became an enemy of John and wanted to kill him, but he was afraid of the large number of people who believed that John was their prophet. Because of John's preaching, he had many followers who supported him, which made Herod Antipas reluctant to kill him. Instead, he kept him in captivity near the Dead Sea. One day, Herodias's daughter Salome danced before a public gathering, which impressed Herod Antipas. He made a public oath to give the girl anything she wished as a reward for her dance performance. She asked her mother what she should get from Herod Antipas. Her mother immediately asked her to request the head of John the Baptist because John had opposed her marriage to Herod Antipas. Salome did what her mother asked for, and as Herod Antipas was bound by the public oath, he beheaded John and gave his head on a platter to the girl. In this way, Herod Antipas gained a public excuse to kill John without fearing John's followers. He murdered John, using the public oath as an excuse for the assassination [10].

Conclusions

The research paper is on John the Baptist, who was sent by God as the Prophet of the Jewish people. He was the son of Jewish priest Zachariah and Elizabeth, who was the cousin of Saint Mary. His mission was to help people purify themselves and repent of their sins by asking for forgiveness and confessing the sins they had committed throughout their lives. He preached about the final day of judgment and prepared the Jewish people for the arrival of God. He baptized sinful people and thus

became known as John the Baptist. He was the one who recognized Jesus as the Messiah and baptized him. His ministry period ended right before the start of Jesus Christ's ministry period [11]. The sources of information about John the Baptist are the four Gospels (Mark, Matthew, John, and Luke). There are many references in these books as well as in the Old Testament, including Isaiah and Malachi, about John the Baptist and the purpose for which God sent him. John the Baptist was sent by God with a mission to clear and prepare His path. Six months after the end of his ministry, he was imprisoned by the Herodian ruler Herod Antipas. John opposed the marriage of Herod Antipas and became his enemy. He beheaded John after some time.

End Notes

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