

# You Shall Call His Name Jesus – Part 2

- God's plan for John the Baptist. | Luke 1:5-24
  - In perhaps a less read section of Scripture that we tend to gloss over when reading about the birth of Jesus, we have some very interesting acts of the Holy Spirit that has taken place in God's plan for John the Baptist.
  - Elizabeth and Zechariah
    - Mary has a relative named Elizabeth (likely a relation from her mother's side) who is pregnant with John the Baptist.
    - **Elizabeth's pregnancy with John was also an act of God as was the birth of Christ.**
      - The angel Gabriel visited Zechariah and foretold of John's birth.
        - Luke 1:13
          - "But the angel said to him, "do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John."
    - Elizabeth and Zechariah were righteous before God but were without child and were beyond child bearing years.
      - Luke 1:5-7
        - "In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. **And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and status of the Lord. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.**"
  - John the Baptists purpose
    - As the angel Gabriel spoke to Mary, he also spoke with Zechariah because his and Elizabeth's child John was to serve a great purpose.
    - **John the Baptist had a very import duty to fulfill, He was to pave the way for Jesus Christ to tell others that the Savior was coming.**
      - Luke 1:12-17
      - Luke 1:76-77
    - **And just as how the birth of Jesus was a miracle, so was the birth of John. It was of God's divine will.**
  - Mary and Elizabeth | Luke 1:39-45
    - **Read Luke 1:39-45**
    - When Elizabeth heard Mary's voice the unborn child (John) leaped for joy.
      - How interesting! When Elizabeth heard the voice of Mary the unborn child jumped for joy recognizing that Jesus Christ the Son of God was also there.
      - This was of course an act of the Holy Spirit.
    - Elizabeth understood who Jesus was.
      - Elizabeth made it very clear that she knew what child Mary was carrying.
      - That child was her Lord and Savior.
      - Elizabeth also fully believed the words of the angel Gabriel and believed in the truth that he spoke to her.
    - Mary praises God
      - Luke 1:46-55
  - Zechariah (father of John the Baptist) prophesies about Christ
    - After the birth of John his father Zechariah made a prophecy about Christ.

- Zechariah (because of his doubt regarding his child before) was made mute by God but when the child was born, he believed, and God restored his speech.
  - The first speech that he made was a proclamation regarding Jesus and the purpose of his son John. | Luke 1:68-79
    - **Read Luke 1:68-79**
    - He praised God and recognized that Jesus will be the redemption of his people and bring salvation.
    - He speaks to the divine calling and purpose of his son John that he is to go before Jesus to prepare the way.
  - **What is something of significance that stands out to you from reading of God's use and plan with John the Baptist, his parents and Elizabeth?**
- The birth of Jesus | Luke 2:1-7
  - **Read Luke 2:1-7**
  - **It was God's divine will, for Jesus to be born in Bethlehem.**
    - It was not by accident that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus at that exact point in time.
      - Caesar Augustus was just doing what was expected, every 14 years a census was taken for Rome.
    - Because of this decree it required that Mary and Joseph leave the town of Nazareth and make the trip to Bethlehem, which was Joseph and Mary's hometown as they were both descendants of David.
    - This trip was not easy, there was 70-80 miles separating Nazareth and Bethlehem.
      - This trip was long and hard for anyone, but especially Mary who was nearly ready to give birth.
    - **This was no accident but instead the divine providence of God.**
      - It was God's will that Jesus was to be born in Bethlehem and made it known years before as it was told through Micah.
      - Micah 5:2
        - "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days."
        - Ephratha – means fruitful
      - Matthew alluded to this passage also:
        - Matthew 2:4-6
          - "...They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,..."
  - Mary gives birth to Jesus and was laid in a manger
    - Now this is one of those truths from Scripture that we all know by heart, that Jesus was born in a stable and laid in a manger because there was no room for them at the inn.
    - There was no room in the inn
      - There was no room because there were a significant number of people also returning to Bethlehem just as they were for the census.
      - Their trip was 70 miles on foot, not exactly what you would want to hear when you arrived.
      - **We may see this as inconvenient, but this too was God will.**
    - Jesus was laid in a manger
      - **Jesus was born between 6-4 B.C, not in a hospital or a comfortable room, but in a place where animals were kept.**

- Since there was no room for them, they had to find somewhere else to stay.
- But Scripture never tells us exactly where they stayed, it only states that He was laid in a manger (feeding trough).
- **This is of course where we get the idea that He was born in a stable, as the manger (feeding trough) would obviously be somewhere that animals were kept.**
- Our nativity sets say that Christ was born in a stable with the classic image of the wooden stable and animals.
- **Ancient tradition and many scholars however say that Jesus was born in a cave,** which would have been used as shelter for the animals.
  - The manger or trough might have been made of stone. Today you can see ancient stone troughs as you make your way through the Holy Land.
- **What do you think?**
- **Jesus Christ came from “the least of these” as an example to the world.**
  - Human reasoning would state that Jesus should come (as would be proper) for an earthly king.
    - If you were waiting for the Christ, the Messiah who was to be king. You would be looking for someone to come into the world and live like an earthly king.
    - But this is not at all how Jesus chose to come into the world.
  - **Jesus came from the least of cities, least of parents, born in the least of places and lived as the least of society.**
    - **At first it may seem odd that Jesus was born in such a lowly place.**
      - Born in a stable and laid in a feeding trough for animals isn’t appropriate for anyone in today’s society.
    - **But when you look at the life of Christ, we find that it was entirely appropriate.**
    - Bethlehem was considered small among all the clans of Judah
      - Micah 5:2
        - **“But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.”**
    - Nazareth His hometown where he grew up, was not respected.
      - John 1:45-46
        - **“Philip found Nathanael and said to him, We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, Come and see.”**
  - Mary and Joseph were poor.
    - After Jesus was born Mary and Joseph went to the temple to perform her purification. They gave the offering of the poor.
      - Luke 2:22-24
      - Leviticus 12:8
        - **“And if she cannot afford a lamb, then she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering. And the priest shall make atonement for her, and she shall be clean.”**

- Even though he was the Son of God he lived a life of servitude and he was homeless throughout the time of His ministry.
  - Luke 9:58
    - “And Jesus said to him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.”
- **So why then should it surprise us that Jesus was then born in the lowliest of place, in a manger where animals were feed.**
- **Jesus didn’t come into the world in pompous and grandeur, nor did He live His earthly life that way.**
  - **Jesus shows us that the status of ones’ heart was far more important than their status in the world.**
    - That the praise of men is worthless in comparison to the praise of God.
  - **He showed us how to live a holy life in obedience to God.**
    - That to live by God’s commands as obedient children and to show His love to others.
    - To put others before we and to despise selfishness.
  - **Jesus lowered himself so that we might become rich.**
    - 2 Corinthians 8:9
      - “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.”
    - **Jesus became poor when he became God incarnate, born as Jesus Christ of the virgin Mary.**
      - He traded the throne for a weak human body that would suffer and die as a common criminal.
      - He took our sins to the cross, the ultimate poverty that has stricken all of humanity.
    - Then those who truly believed in Him would receive eternal life and receive all the wonders and riches of Heaven.
- **What do you think about how Jesus came into the world and lived His life as the lowest of society?**
- **Why would have been the perception if he had come as an earthly king?**
- **What else does this say about Him, what does His example mean for us?**