

BIBLE CHALLENGE

1. His purpose was to announce the coming of God's messiah.
 - a. Jesus
 - b. Paul
 - c. James
 - d. John the Baptist
2. Who were John's parents?
 - a. Adam and Eve
 - b. Zechariah and Elizabeth
 - c. Joseph and Mary
 - d. Martha and Lazarus
3. What kind of clothes was John known to wear?
 - a. Camel's hair
 - b. Sheep skin
 - c. Buffalo hair
 - d. Armani suits
4. John the Baptist was Jesus' cousin.
 - a. True
 - b. False
5. Jesus baptized John, then commissioned him to baptize others.
 - a. True
 - b. False
6. In what river did John baptize people?
 - a. Euphrates
 - b. Nile
 - c. Jordan
 - d. All of the above
7. John was killed for accusing Herod of what?
 - a. Taking bribes
 - b. Murder
 - c. Adultery
 - d. All of the above

JOHN THE BAPTIST

John's parents, Elizabeth and Zechariah, were elderly and childless. The angel Gabriel announced to Zechariah that Elizabeth was to have a son and they should name him John. He will prepare the way of the Lord, God's messiah. Zechariah did not believe and was made unable to speak. After John was born Zechariah sang the praises of God.

John's mother Elizabeth was related to Mary, Jesus' mother. John was about six months older than Jesus. Elizabeth and Zechariah were from priestly families which meant that John was raised following all the Jewish traditions.

When John was grown, he lived in the Judean hills, a wilderness area which was hot and nearly waterless east of the Jordan River. He wore camel hair and leather. Today we might call him eccentric. He was called by God to tell people to repent. The kingdom of God is coming soon. God was sending a man who was greater than he.

Crowds went out to hear John's message. They repented and were baptized by him in the Jordan River. Jesus also went to John to be baptized. John at first refused, and said it should be Jesus to baptize John. But Jesus insisted. When Jesus came up out of the water "suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.'" (Matthew 3:16-17)

John's reputation grew and people began to ask if he might be the messiah. But John insisted that another was coming who was greater than he.

John ran into trouble when he publicly condemned Herod Antipas, Rome's appointed ruler in Israel, when he had an affair with, and ultimately married, his brother's wife Herodias. John was imprisoned and subsequently beheaded.

Jesus called John the greatest prophet and grieved his death.

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Answers: 1 d; 2 b; 3 a; 4 a; 5 b; 6 c; 7 c