

Luke 3:21-38 – Jesus' Baptism And Family Tree

There are some days in our lives we cannot forget. Finishing school; getting married; the birth of children, and so on. Those who lived through independence will never forget that day. Here in Luke 3:21, we learn about a far greater day, never to be forgotten: the Son of God began his public ministry. The morning star (John the Baptist) declined; the rising Sun, the Lord Jesus Christ, came to shine forth his glory.

1. Jesus' baptism (v21-22)

Jesus was around thirty. John had prepared the people, and now Jesus came. First he was baptised. Baptism symbolises a new beginning. At creation, at the flood, at Israel's coming out of Egypt, there was each time much water. Why was Jesus baptised? It was not because he was a sinner. It was because he was now the head of God's people. He had come to save them from their sins. He came as their representative. He came in a humble, low way in order to stand with them and lift them up by himself. Where Jesus has gone, we should all follow – the first obedience of a Christian is to be baptised. But this baptism was like no other; the heavens were opened. From the throne-room of God, the Holy Spirit was sent forth to fill Jesus, so that he should be the man overflowing with the Spirit. The Father spoke to testify to the Son (see also Matthew 17:5, John 12:27-28). The whole Trinity – Father, Son, Spirit – are always working together to show us their glory and to bring salvation. Have you believed the Father's testimony? Have you trusted in Jesus?

2. Jesus' family tree (v23-38)

Perhaps you think these lists of names have nothing to teach us. You would be very wrong! Firstly, these lists remind us that life is short. As we have all been born, so we shall all die. None of those who lived before Jesus is alive here today; they all finished their years and left this world. So shall we; the time is fixed, and we do not know how near it is. The question is: are we ready? Are we at peace with knowing that we shall die? Are we safe in Christ for that day?

Thus “genealogy” (family tree) shows us that the purpose and goal of history was the coming of Christ. The line ends with him. God caused careful records to be kept, right from Adam, so that we should know that Jesus is the promised one. He has not appeared from nowhere! It was all planned. Luke records 77 generations; in the Bible, the number seven is used to represent completeness and perfection. Do you understand that Jesus is the Lord, and that the universe belongs to him? Have you submitted your life to him?

Jesus came at the right time. Many generations had passed. There had been good and bad times. But now the time was ready. God's time is not like ours; he is far wiser and more patient. He does not forget his promises, but does all things perfectly. As yet we do not see all the nations disciplined as Jesus said; but we will, and we should work with patience and faith for it. Jesus fulfilled all the promises; son of Adam, son of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, son of David, the true King of Israel. We have no excuses!

This family tree has great sinners in it; people who committed prostitution, incest, murder, adultery, rebellion; but Jesus is gracious to sinners. He humbled himself to show mercy to people like us: even to die for us. You can be part of his story – are you?