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## Matthew 11

### John's Inquiry
*(Luke 7:18-23)*

**1And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.**

God will always prepare those who love Him to carry out what ever mission He has for us. As with Jesus's disciples, God is preparing each of you each of us to carry out the specific mission God has for us. If you don't have a clear mission in your own life, I suggest you seek God earnestly.

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John the Baptist had been prepared since his birth to carry out a specific mission that God had prepared for him even before his birth. John the Baptist's mission to prepare the way of the Lord. John carried out everything the Lord asked of him, to the point of being imprisoned and killed for his commitment to God and outspoken confrontation against the King and his adultery.

**Q.** Do doubts ever enter our minds over our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ?

Living in trust, faith and belief alone without any what some would call physical evidence of our Belief may cause us to ask questions about the basis of our Belief. We are not alone, but the spiritual evidence is overwhelming as to the foundation of our Belief. When doubts come in, just be still and talk to God.

John was faced with those doubts due to his imprisonment and hearing of the things happening in the world outside of his cell. John was hearing about the one whom He knew to be the Lamb of God, meaning the ultimate sacrifice for mankind. But being in prison and not seeing what he was being told caused him to question what he had already knew to be true.

> **2Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,**

Jesus had told many of those he healed to keep it quiet. That direction was ignored for the simple reason that a blind person received his sight was going to be reported. If not by the person healed at the least by all those that knew him and saw what had happened. Additionally, many who were healed were told to go to the Priests and provide whatever the law required of them.

> **3And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?**

> ***John 1: 29The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away***

> ***the sin of the world. 30This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. 31And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. 32And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. 33And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. 34And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. (emphasis mine)***

The prophecies of the coming Messiah in the Old Covenant are abundant. John the Baptist is not only a prophet but the second cousin of Jesus the Messiah. John declares that "**I knew Him not**", enlightens us to the fact that they were not raised together. Jesus lived about 90 miles away from His mother Mary's cousin, Elizabeth, John's mother. Today a 90 mile drive is nothing. In those days 90 miles depending on conditions could take 3 days or more to travel.

John went in the wilderness at a young age, so the idea that John said, "**I knew Him not**" would be a reasonable statement. We know that John as an unborn Baby recognized Jesus from the womb. So, most commentators understood this to mean that they were not closely acquainted physically but were well acquainted through the Holy Spirit.

**4Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:**

Hearing and seeing are two main factors in presenting firsthand evidence. In our Judicial system that is called direct evidence such as an eyewitness account and is hard to dispute in a trial. So, Jesus is telling John's disciples to go to him and tell him this eyewitness account that they have seen and heard that is irrefutable. By doing so, it should convince John that he was indeed right when he described Jesus as the "Lamb of God, who has come to take away the sins of man."

What was the evidence that they were to report to John on?

**5The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.**

The entire chapter of Isaiah 35 is being fulfilled by Jesus and John will know of this promise.

This can be read as a prophecy of a physical nature but more appropriately it is read as a Spiritual nature. In other words, as we read this prophecy and God uses terms like: "the desert shall rejoice; the Spiritual meaning is that the desert is the lost soul. The lost soul "shall rejoice and will blossom as the rose". As the chapter proceeds you will see the physical nature of the human

being, being healed by God, whether in hearing, sight or lameness. With Christ all things will be made whole, that is the prophecy that John would know about and now his disciples have seen and heard these very things take place.

So, let's read this prophecy from Isaiah.

***Isaiah 35:1The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.***

***2It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God.***

***3Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.***

***4Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you.***

***5Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.***

***6Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.***

***7And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.***

***8And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. (wayfaring means "traveler") addition mine***

***9No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there:***

***10And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.***

**6And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.**

This term "***offended in me***" from Strong's Concordance means:

***"Pronunciation:*** *skan-dal-id'-zo*
***Phonetic Spelling:*** *(skan-dal-id'-zo)*
***KJV:*** *(make to) offend*
***NASB:*** *fall away, causes to stumble, stumble, causes, cause to stumble, makes stumble, took offense"*

So, in context Jesus is saying that blessed is the person who does not fall away or take offense at what and who Jesus is. In other words, to recognize that Jesus is the Messiah spoken of by the Prophets and that John can rest in that.

> ***Hebrews 10:39 But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.***

Whether John was in danger of drawing back away from what he had earlier known, we don't know, but Jesus is giving John reassurance that He, Jesus is the One Israel, and the world was waiting for.

**Jesus Testifies about John**

*(Luke 1:5-25; Luke 7:24-35; Luke 16:14-17)*

**7And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?**

The Jordan River had a lot of reeds along its banks. They grew tall and slender and were affected by the winds that blew. When the wind blew the reeds would lean and bend to the will of the wind. Jesus is pointing out that John was not like that. He was stout in his constitution and in his message of repentance. He did not bow to the winds of opinion to find favor with people; John was committed to the Truth of God's Word. He did not shy away from calling out King Herod for his sin of adultery. It eventually cost John his life.

***Ephesians 4:14 so that no longer may we be infants, being tossed by waves and being carried around by every wind of teaching in the cunning of men in craftiness to the scheming of deceit.***

**8But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft *clothing* are in kings' houses. 9But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.**

John was anything but well dressed. In fact, he dressed like Elijah.

***2 Kings 1:8 And they answered him, He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite.***

**10For this is *he*, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.**

> ***Malachi 3:1 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.***

**11Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.**

There is amazing difference between all the God's Prophets and John the Baptist. They all prophesied of the coming Messiah, John prophesied that the Messiah had arrived. John got to see the very face of God that the previous prophets only spoke of.

Of all the women since Eve, God is saying that Elizebeth, John's mother bore the greatest man to ever live on earth. Even as great as John the Baptist was on earth, the least of the Believers in Heaven is greater than John. Consider all those who had gone before John, Samuel, Moses, Abraham, Issac and Jacob, Elijah, Elisha and yet the Creator of the Universe gave John the Baptist; **"not risen a greater than he".**

John was at the bridge of the two Covenants; still being under the Law but seeing on the other side, the coming of the New

Covenant of Grace and Mercy but not able to walk in it in its fulness. John would die before Jesus; putting John in Paradise with all his ancestors that believed in God.

> **12And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.**

Reading this verse, one would think that it is speaking in the negative sense of violence; what other type of violence could there be?

The negative violence at the time came predominately from the Romans through kings like Herod. But there was a different positive violence that was happening as well.

Strong's Concordance reveals the meaning in this way:

*"biastḗs – positive assertiveness; used of the believer living in faith ("God's in-worked persuasions") guiding and empowering them to act forcefully – i.e. "fired up" by God to act by His revelation. It is used only in Mt 11:12. See 971 (biazō)."*

Several examples of this type of positive violence would be the men tearing the roof off a house to lower down the paralytic. Another was the woman who pushed her way through the crowd to touch the hem of Jesus cloak. These are violent acts with a positive motive; forceful, unwilling to surrender or stop.

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**13For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.**

This was the point when the world went from having God given prophets to the preaching of the Gospel. There are many who claim to be prophets today and I remain very skeptical. There is nothing more God needed to declare to us, I think He has said all He intends to say. Prophets of today are so vague that almost anything can be declared as coming true. God also warned us of false prophets and teachers in these times. So be very careful of what you accept as a Word from the Lord as in prophecy.

**14And if ye will receive *it*, this is Elias, which was for to come.**

It was prophesied that Elias, (Elijah) would come back before the Messiah would come.

> ***Isaiah 40:3 The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.***

> ***Malachi 3:1 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.***

**15He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.**

> ***1 Corinthians 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.***
>
> ***Mark 13:22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect.***

There were many people such as the religious leaders during Jesus time that refused to hear the truth. The same exist today but things seem to be changing. We are seeing the beginnings of the renaissance that Jesus said would come during the end times.

> **16But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, 17And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.**

This description by Jesus in vs 17 and 18 is still talking about John and He the Messiah. This generation is speaking of those alive at that time while John was preaching repentance. Jesus came with Salvation, Merch and Grace, and a good part of the people listened to neither of them.

This generation was even like the generations of today who have heard the truth repeatedly. Their preference is to idolize sports athletes, actors even some politicians, all the while seeking power, money and fame. This generation would rather spend time

watching pro sports than spending time in God's Word. The world has "piped" unto them and they have not "danced", instead of listening to the Truth. How little have people changed in all these centuries?

> **18For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. 19The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.**

One of Satan's many tools is discordance. Discordance means:

- A state of disagreement, strife, or lack of consonance between people, ideas, or sounds.
- **Synonyms**: Discord, conflict, dissonance, friction, disagreement, and disharmony.

We can see Satan using this tool today worldwide. If we look at the US, do you see any "discordance"? A term has been created called TDS Trump Derangement Syndrome. It is basically the essence of Discordance; disagree with everything and anything a certain person does or says.

We see discordance in many mainline churches with God's Word. Promoting the very thing that God has called sin. That doesn't even consider those religions that claim to be Christian yet deny the Son of God as the Messiah. Islam calls Jesus a good man a

prophet who serves Alah. Mormonism calls Jesus the brother of Satan.

**Woe to the Unrepentant**
***(Luke 10:13-16)***

**20Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:**

God tell us He is slow to anger forgiving sins over thousands of years. Yet, He will not let the acquit the guilty. The guilty refers to those who reject His Son and the forgiveness of their sins.

***Exodus 34: 6 And YHWH passed before his face and proclaimed, "YHWH, YHWH God, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in loving devotion and truth,7 keeping loving devotion to the thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and he will surely not acquit the guilty, visiting iniquity of fathers upon sons and upon sons of sons, upon a third and upon a fourth."***
**Berean Literal Bible.**

**21Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.**

To refresh our memory, perhaps a couple of questions why would Jesus single out Tyer and Sidon?

King Ahab was king of the northern tribes and sinned greatly. He then married Jezebel which compounded the sins of the Norther tribes. Jezebel acted more like a co-regent that the first lady of the kingdom. She brought on 400 Baal worshipers as official priests to the kingdom. She sought and killed the prophets of God except Elijah. Tyer, according to God was the very seat on the earth of Satan.

Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal in the Northern Kingdom to a test as to who's God was real and had real power. 1 Kings 18

So, God is saying that what the towns in Israel that had seen the power of the Living God the Son, Jesus perform miracles should have fallen to their knees and repented, but they did not.

> **1 Kings 18:21 21And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD *be* God, follow him: but if Baal, *then* follow him. And the people answered him not a word.**
>
> ***1 Kings 38Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. 39And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God. 40And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.***

So, the people of Israel repented by seeing what the God of Israel did at Mt. Carmel. God is pointing out that the people in Judah and Israel that had seen the miracles had not repented, unlike in vs 21:

> ***21****Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida!*
>
> **23And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. 24But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.**

Jesus even invokes the name of Sodom, perhaps the one of the evilest towns in Abraham's time. A town which God burned with fire and brimstone for their sins of homosexuality.

> **Rest for the Weary**
> ***(Luke 10:21-24)***
>
> **25At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.**

If you are born again, there was an event in your life that happened that opened your eyes to the Truth of God. Some people have that happen at a young age, others like me and Sandy as a mature adults. It's around the moment you finally realize that Jesus actually died on the cross for you. Once you

can take that fact in, everything changes in how you think about your life and those around you. Until that moment we were just one of those who were worldly wise and prudent. After that we were just babes taking it all in from God's Word.

I envy those of you who knew Jesus from a young age, you have served Him your whole life. I wasted many years serving myself instead of Him. I was wise and prudent in the world, and I needed to be as a baby, searching for the Truth in God's World not in the world.

> **26Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. 27All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*.**

There are two terms in the Greek that denote "know" and "Knoweth".

Ginosko, meaning a personal relationship. This "knoweth the Son", in the Greek is the word Epigniosko. The following explanation is from Strong's Concordance Word Helps.

***"1921** epiginőskō (from 1909 /epí, "on, fitting" which intensifies 1097 /ginőskō, "know through personal relationship") – properly, apt, experiential knowing, through direct relationship.* "This knowing *builds on* (*epi*, "*upon*") the verbal idea and hence is defined by the individual context.

When Jesus said

> 27***All things are delivered unto me of my Father:***

Jesus later clarified this statement:

> ***Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.***

Jesus continued in Matthew 11:27

> ***and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.***

This relationship within the Triune God Head is like no other. We have tried many ways to describe it using similar ideas such as the human being, being 3 parts contained in one shell, Body, Soul and Spirit. That lacks the immensity of the Power of God, the Creator of the Universe and the Caretaker of all things. Jesus and God the Father and the Holy Spirit are of such a unique make up that no earthy description can touch the immensity of it all.

We “knoweth” (Genosko) Jesus as our Lord and Savior and adopted Brother but only the Father “Knoweth” (Epigenosko) Jesus His Son the Creator of All Things.

> **28Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.**

***John 6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.***

***John 6:37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.***

***Romans 8:30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.***

***Hebrews 7:25 Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.***

***Revelation 22:17And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.***

The offer of Salvation is real and the Gift of that Salvation is free to anyone who comes to Christ. Today is a good day to come to Jesus, because we don't know if we have a tomorrow here on earth. Once the heart stops so does the offer of Salvation.

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