Mat 109

Are You the expected One?

CHAD & JESSICA SD

Jeff’s friend Bobby Landel needs prayer

Mat 11:1 When Jesus had finished giving instructions to His twelve disciples, He departed from there to teach and preach in their cities.

[Mat 11:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/mat/11/2/s_940002) Now when John, while imprisoned, heard of the works of Christ, he sent *word* by his disciples

/[Mat 11:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/mat/11/3/s_940003) and said to Him, “**Are You the Expected One**, or shall we look for someone else?”\

[Mat 11:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/mat/11/4/s_940004) Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and report to John what you hear and see:

[Mat 11:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/mat/11/5/s_940005) *the* BLIND RECEIVE 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.

After verse one we get a sense that the ministry for the Apostles was kicked off and was up and running for a period of weeks or months with both TLJC and his Apostle busy going throughout villages and cities to spread the word and heal the sick.

Remember the early part of the ministry it was an intense focus on the lost nation of Israel…in fact the lessons from the sermon on the mount right up until Matthew chapter ten we just covered had a strong emphasis on the Jews.

These 12 men were now embarking on journeys as evangelist and healers to their people.

Most historians believe they went out in pairs or small groups and spent periods of many days and weeks apart from TLJC.

This would prepare them for their own ministries later on when Jesus had ascended back to heaven.

There are also some scholars who believe Peter’s house was the rendezvous point at the beginning stages of the ministry when TLJC was first training them.

Later they had developed small groups and house churches that would hold the traveling ministry & sustain them with supplies, finances and places to rest.

So now a period of weeks or months went by and a message gets to TLJC.

A message comes from John the Baptist who was now imprisoned by the tetrarch (TET-ROC) Herod Antipas the son of King Herod the Great.

This was the Governor over the Jews in Judea, he was set in place by Roman authority much like his father, he was a traitor and weak leader.

Jesus knew of John imprisonment, we covered this briefly a few months back;

/Mat 4:12 Now when **Jesus heard that John had been taken into custody**, He withdrew into Galilee;

Jesus did not panic nor did He run to the aid of John (Baptist).\

TLJC took the appropriate steps and moved in a different direction so He could continue on with the mission.

On the surface this would appear cold and selfish but again God’s ways are not man’s ways and until we fully understand that principle we will fall for the secular viewpoints and lies about scripture.

John the Baptist had completed a very difficult mission in that he not only fulfilled prophecy but he stood his ground while many Jews ridiculed and humiliated his evangelist ministry.

He was now at the end of his mission.

John the Baptist claimed he believed in Jesus and we know that by these type of statements;

/Jhn 1:34 “I myself **have seen**, and **have testified** that this is the Son of God.”

We see no doubt at this point yet now during incarceration and facing certain death he has questions.\

First and foremost John the Baptist was human…meaning he had weakness, he had emotions and sometimes doubt or worry will get the best of even a strong Bel from time to time.

John the Baptist was probably in prison for about 6 to 8 months before he was executed - possibly a year?

His faith may have been shaken it is not uncommon…no visit or sign of his friend the Messiah. Sometimes the strongest Bels come to need a strengthen of their own faith from time to time.

Turn to Judges chapter 6 so we can note something important here.

/John was a leader with people still communicating and following him so he needed to reassure them as well. His own doubt may have come from a place of weakness or despair given his circumstance.\

You never get the sense John the Baptist was crying out every day….. *oh Lord where are you… please rescue me.*

/God never intends for the Bel to remain an emotionless, pillar of strength constantly. He does want us to reach maturity so we can get through the tragedies and challenges with minimal emotional distractions.\ REPEAT

ELABORATE

Your emotions can not think and God understands when they get the best of us from time to time. He also designed emotions for us to have feelings this includes good, bad and indifferent.

So do not live in denial of your emotions just understand how to have them respond during the proper settings.

/When emotions react, they easily get out of control and they will assume a position of authority in your decision-making skills, which always leads us into problems.\

In the book of Judges, we can see a popular young man named Gideon.

Many people teach the story of Gideon and his warriors and how God kept trimming down the troops before battle which made Gideon a little uneasy.

I’ll take a different approach because I just want you to get a taste of something which pertains to what John the Baptist might have been going through while in prison.

Gideon was an interesting young man, possibly a young man freshly out of his teens as some scholars point out.

God called upon him while working in the fields.

The Midianites and the Amalekites had a nasty habit of riding through villages and cities and raping and pillaging everything in sight and actually God allowed this to happen to the nation of Israel because they had been worshipping false gods under the idolatry system of BAAL.

/Jdg 6:11 Then the angel of the LORD came and sat under the oak that was in Ophrah, which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite as his son Gideon was beating out wheat in the wine press in order to save *it* from the Midianites. 12 The angel of the LORD appeared to him and said to him, “**The LORD is with you, O valiant warrior**.”\

This falls under a theophany which means an appearance of TLJC in OT.

He immediately addresses Gideon with honor and respect as a valiant warrior and yet this young man has done nothing to prove himself yet…because God looks at the heart.

God knows who will be positive or negative in eternity past.

Gideon would actually start to object because he knew he was nothing but a farm boy…not a valiant warrior.

He argues that…we are the poorest of the families in the tribe of Manasseh and I am the youngest yet the TLJC insist it will be Gideon who leads the military.

Sometimes we don’t feel ready when God calls us…I can relate to this!

But He will find a way to use you or wake you up to your calling eventually…and there are those who still reject the plan of God and that is where we get winners and losers inside the plan of God.

/Jdg 6:16 But the LORD said to him, “Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat Midian as one man.”17 So Gideon said to Him, “If now I have found favor in Your sight, **then show me a sign** that it is You who speak with me.\

Gideon has been in a difficult environment for a period of time…for about 7 years the enemies surrounded the nation of Israel, all the people…even his own family members worship BAAL at this point.

TLJC understands this is a young man who is confused and afraid like most of the people in that region.

Now Gideon is humble enough to know his own weakness and strengths and also filled with grace and humility so he sets up a dinner with the Lord.

Meaning Gideon was at least willing to listen and had an open heart for the possibility that God could use him.

/Jdg 6:20 The angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened bread and lay them on this rock, and pour out the broth.” And he did so. 21 Then the angel of the LORD put out the end of the staff that was in his hand and touched the meat and the unleavened bread; and **fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the unleavened bread**. Then the angel of the LORD vanished from his sight.\

Some interesting analogies about the rock and meat as well as unleavened bread but we don’t want to get sidetracked.

This would not be the last time Gideon would need reassurance and actually test God to make sure he was on the right path.

Jump down to verse 36 now.

At this point Gideon had obeyed God and destroyed the alter of BAAL which caused many of the Jews to be upset with him.

Gideon had gathered the help from outside forces and had even been willing to narrow his troops down to 300 men…and he was well aware they were facing over 130,000 trained warriors.

Take all that into account as we read this now.

Jug 6:36 Then Gideon said to God, “If You will deliver Israel through me, as You have spoken,

[/Jdg 6:37](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/jdg/6/37/s_217037) behold, I will put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor. **If there is dew on the fleece only, and it is dry on all the ground, then I will know that You will deliver Israel through me**, as You have spoken.”\

[Jdg 6:38](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/jdg/6/38/s_217038) And it was so. When he arose early the next morning and squeezed the fleece, he drained the dew from the fleece, a bowl full of water.

Gideon had the Lord with Him and proving He was with him over and over again and yet read verse 39;

**/**[Jdg 6:39](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/jdg/6/39/s_217039) Then Gideon said to God, “Do not let Your anger burn against me that I may speak once more; **please let me make a test once more** with the fleece, let it now be dry only on the fleece, and let there be dew on all the ground.”\

[Jdg 6:40](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/jdg/6/40/s_217040) God did so that night; for it was dry only on the fleece, and dew was on all the ground.

Gideon went on to a huge victory.

That is not the reason for our lesson today…we need to focus on what Gideon did during moments of doubt and we need to note what type of Bel Gideon was because this accounts for a lot!

/Gideon was a Bel that lived in humility knowing his own limitations but never put limitations on the Lord. When he was called, he hesitated to think it through, but never quit. Gideon followed through with God’s instructions and respected the word of the Lord.\

This is much different then the Bel who plays games with God and constantly tests God to prove Himself in their lives. REPEAT

This is a dangerous game for Bels to play because God will not be toyed with like that….some Bels flip through the Bible and stop at a random passage and point it out as the direction they should go in for many of life’s important decisions…that is foolishness my friends.

Or they try and twist a scripture to fit a decision they want to make in their lives…don’t do this Royal Family, that is not the actions of a mature Bel.

Turn to Matthew chapter 14.

/The mature Bel will ask for guidance through prayer but at the same time apply common sense principles to their lives. They will not look for magical responses from God at every turn.\

ELABORATE

(EXAMPLE- new husband or wife walks in church the day after you pray for marriage.)

Often times when God answers a prayer or wants to guide us the event or circumstance will become apparent only when we are calm in mind and spirit, walking in our new nature consistently and not expecting a miracle at every turn. REPEAT!!!

/God will work with the Bel who is steeped in His word, filled with the Holy Spirit, humble enough to know limitations (themselves & life in general) and not seeking miraculous answers around every corner.\

Look at this familiar story from the NT where Peter was called to walk out on the sea in the midst of a storm.

Mat 14:28 Peter said to Him, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.”

[/Mat 14:29](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/mat/14/29/s_943029) And He said, “Come!” And **Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water** and came toward Jesus.\

Peter took steps on top of the water.

He didn’t immediately sink…it wasn’t until Peter looked around and the storm winds kicked up that he began to doubt.

[/Mat 14:30](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/mat/14/30/s_943030) But **seeing the wind, he became frightened**, and beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!”\

[Mat 14:31](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb/mat/14/31/s_943031) Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and said to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?”

Peter had walked and talked with TLJC for many months at this point…. possibly a year or longer. He had been out preforming healings and evangelizing yet under pressure Peter failed.

There are some important principles as we close that the Apostle Peter and that young judge Gideon have in common with John the Baptist.

/Gideon, Peter & John the Baptist all had reached a level of spiritual maturity though they were still in different growth stages they were positive Bels moving forward in God’s plan. They did not reject their calling on their lives. All 3 had a personal relationship with the Lord.\

REPEAT

This is key in understanding how to handle a situation of doubt or times of seeking guidance under adverse circumstances.

You will get very little relief or answers when you have refused to grow in God’s plan and rejected an intimate relationship with TLJC.

/Our human frailties were factored into God’s plan in eternity past, He is not surprised or angered by our weakness. He does want us to learn to grow and stand up strong with His power & word as our weapons to battle doubt, fear or negative emotions when they rise to overtake us.\

Just like any good parent wants to see their child grow and problem solve and stand strong. It’s no different.

Bels who refuse to grow in God’s grace and knowledge usually end up wondering why they struggle with depression or anger or the same problems their Unbel friends deal with.

God works best when we work with Him…human volition…..free will counts for something in the plan of God.

If you’re a Bel whose been away from God simply come back;

/Jer 3:22 Return, O faithless sons,
**I will heal your faithlessness**.”
“Behold, **we come to You**;
For You are the LORD our God. \

God will see you thru the doubt and fear…God can see you thru the challenges and attacks, we have to have faith which comes from a relationship, you have faith in those whom you trust.

/Heb 11:6 and **without faith it is impossible to please *Him****,* for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* **He is a rewarder of those who seek Him**.\ ELABORATE SEEK!!!!!

For the Unbel;

/Jhn 5:40 and **you are unwilling to come to Me** so that you may have life.\

ALTER CALL!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

/John the Baptist wanted assurance that Jesus was the Messiah he had believed in and though John had proven to be a positive Bel he was being held by cosmic forces in a grim place. This situation was designed by Satan to destroy and discourage a great man of God and yet that curse was turned into a blessing for all of eternity…John the Baptist will be a celebrity in the heavens forever!\

We all have fleeting moments or days of doubt, pain and anger yet when we maintain our relationship with Christ we are able to rise above it and it may well be a part of the cross you are called to bear which brings rewards and blessings forever. Part of John the Baptist cross was to finish his mission in chains…and enter eternity with rank & authority.