



IX. JOHN THE BAPTIST (Luke 16:16)

A. The Man

1. He entered the world through a miraculous birth (Luke 1:5-25).
2. He was filled with the Holy Ghost from the womb (Luke 1:15).
3. He did not drink wine or strong drink (Luke 1:15).
4. He came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:16-17).
 - a. His life answered Malachi's prophecy (Malachi 4:5-6).
 - b. He was like Elijah in appearance (Matthew 3:4 with 2 Kings 1:8).
 - c. He apparently was like Elijah in the ministry of baptism (John 1:25).
 - d. However, John denied being Elijah (John 1:21).
 - e. Yet, Christ taught John the Baptist's identity as Elijah was dependent upon the response of the Jews (Matthew 11:13-15).
 - f. Christ later taught that Elijah had come and that the people "have done unto him whatsoever they listed" (Matthew 17:10-13; Mark 9:11-13).
5. He was the prophet of the Highest (Matthew 11:9; Luke 1:76).
6. Among those born of women, there was none greater (Matthew 11:11).
7. He was less than the least in the kingdom of God/heaven (Matthew 11:11; Luke 7:28).
8. He marked the division between the law and the kingdom (Matthew 11:13; Luke 16:16).

B. The Mission

1. He came as a voice crying in the wilderness (Isaiah 40:3-5; Matthew 3:3; John 1:23).
2. He came as a messenger to prepare the way of the Lord (Malachi 3:1; Mark 1:1-2; Luke 1:17, 76). As such, John is known as the forerunner of Jesus Christ.
3. He came as a witness of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:6-9, 15, 29-34; John 3:25-30; John 5:31-33).

C. The Message

1. The subject of his preaching
 - a. He preached the gospel of the kingdom (Matthew 4:23; Matthew 9:35; Matthew 24:13-14). We will discuss the nature and identity of the gospel of the kingdom in detail at a later point.
 - b. He preached the nearness of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 3:1-2). It would appear based upon other passages that this is the same as the kingdom of God (Mark 1:14-15 compared with Matthew 4:12, 17) and the kingdom of the God of heaven (Daniel 2:44), and is a literal, earthly kingdom (Matthew 19:28). Note: We hope to spend some time on the differences and likenesses of the kingdom of God and of heaven.



2. The expectation of his preaching
 - a. Repentance
 - (1) “Repent ye:” (Matthew 3:2; see Mark 1:15)
 - (2) “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:” (Matthew 3:8; see Luke 3:8)
 - (3) “I...baptize you with water unto repentance:” (Matthew 3:11)
 - b. Baptism
 - (1) His baptism was called John’s baptism (Acts 19:1-5).
 - (2) It was a water baptism (Matthew 3:11; Luke 3:16; John 1:26, 33).
 - (3) It was a baptism preceded by a turning from sin (Luke 3:7-14); in other words, the baptism was not the repentance itself, but an outward expression that the person had already repented.
 - (4) It was a baptism marked by confession of sins (Matthew 3:6; Mark 1:5).
 - (5) It was a baptism that offered remission of sins (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3; see also Acts 2:38).
 - a) Twelve scriptural references to *remission, remit, remitted* (Matthew 26:28; Mark 1:4; Luke 1:77; Luke 3:3; Luke 24:47; John 20:23; Acts 2:38; Acts 10:43; Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:22; Hebrews 10:18)
 - b) Meaning of remission
 - i) Literally means *to send back*
 - ii) To refrain from exacting payment
 - iii) To refrain from inflicting punishment
 - iv) To put off; to postpone
 - c) A biblical understand of remission
 - i) It was given by the Law’s sacrifices (Hebrews 9:22).
 - ii) It provided a covering of Old Testament sins (Romans 3:25 with Hebrews 9:15).
 - iii) These sins would be blotted out in the future (Acts 3:19; Romans 11:26-27; Jeremiah 50:20).
 - d) This led to a knowledge of salvation (Luke 1:77)
 - (6) Note: The baptism of repentance for the remission of sins was not an act which brought salvation.
 - a) It was given to Israel as preparation for the coming of the King and His kingdom.
 - b) Israel had rebelled against the Lord and was not ready for the coming kingdom.
 - c) John preached a way for them to prepare for the kingdom.
 - i) They were to repent and be baptized.
 - ii) Then God would refrain from exacting payment for their sins. This would lead them to a knowledge of salvation through faith in the Messiah (Mark 1:14-15).
 3. The forward look of his preaching—the coming of Christ
 - a. He would come after John (Luke 3:15-18; Mark 1:1-3).
 - b. He would baptize with the Holy Ghost (Luke 3:16; Acts 1:4-7).
 - c. He was the Lamb of God who would take away sin (John 1:29-36).