

Matthew 11:1-19

The Messengers from John the Baptist

- ◆ When Jesus finished giving these instructions to his twelve disciples, he left that place and went off to teach and preach in the towns near there. When John the Baptist heard in prison about the things that Christ was doing, he sent some of his disciples to him. “Tell us,” they asked Jesus, “are you the one John said was going to come, or should we expect someone else?” Jesus answered, “Go back and tell John what you are hearing and seeing: the blind can see, the lame can walk, those who suffer from dreaded skin diseases are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead are brought back to life, and the Good News is preached to the poor. How happy are those who have no doubts about me!” While John's disciples were leaving, Jesus spoke about him to the crowds: “When you went out to John in the desert, what did you expect to see? A blade of grass bending in the wind? What did you go out to see? A man dressed up in fancy clothes? People who dress like that live in palaces! Tell me, what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes indeed, but you saw much more than a prophet. For John is the one of whom the scripture says: ‘God said, I will send my messenger ahead of you to open the way for you.’ I assure you that John the Baptist is greater than anyone who has ever lived. But the one who is least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than John. From the time John preached his message until this very day the Kingdom of heaven has suffered violent attacks, and violent men try to seize it. Until the time of John all the prophets and the Law of Moses spoke about the Kingdom; and if you are willing to believe their message, John is Elijah, whose coming was predicted. Listen, then, if you have ears! “Now, to what can I compare the people of this day? They are like children sitting in the marketplace. One group shouts to the other, ‘We played wedding music for you, but you wouldn't dance! We sang funeral songs, but you wouldn't cry!’ When John came, he fasted and drank no wine, and everyone said, ‘He has a demon in him!’ When the Son of Man came, he ate and drank, and everyone said, ‘Look at this man! He is a glutton and wine drinker, a friend of tax collectors and other outcasts!’ God's wisdom, however, is shown to be true by its results.”
- ◆ After Jesus gave instructions to his disciples, he went to preach and heal. He is a great steward, he leads by example. We should practice such kind of stewardship, leading from the front.
- ◆ John sends his disciples to Jesus to ask for confirmation if he was the one promised. The answer was yes and the acts of Christ were proof. Christ is the one and he is coming again soon. Let's repent and follow Christ while there is time or perish.
- ◆ Jesus then spoke about John the baptist. John was prophet, though he is great on earth he is least in heaven. Jesus then asked the people what they expected to see when they went out to see John in the desert. Expectations are a cause of disappointment and missing out; they expected to see fancy and they were disappointed, this resulted in them not getting the message they were supposed to receive. What do we expect to hear or see when it comes to the things of heaven? The things of heaven come in unexpected ways, hence, we ought to listen carefully and have faith.

- ◆ When John came in sack clothes, fasting and not drinking the people said he was demon possessed, when Christ came drinking and feasting with tax collector he was considered a glutton. We have set standards/expectations for what the kingdom of heaven should be like and these standards/expectations let us down. However, God's wisdom is shown by its true results. Hence, let's unlearn to some expectations and focus on the results

These verses are powerful and must be read again for more clarity, I'm failing to comprehend and articulate them enough. I see the weakness of human nature, we have certain expectations when it comes to the kingdom of heaven but those expectations are not necessarily true. We expect messenger of God to be flashy, to act a certain way and live a certain life. If they divert from such ways just like John did, we deem it as demon possessed, we don't give due respect and other alike. We ignore the message and then lose out on the light, we should learn to judge the prophecy and not the prophet. We don't expect the kingdom of heaven to be associated with drinking and feasting with tax collectors or the corrupt as Jesus did, it will be considered unholy behaviour. The intentions and the results of these associations are for goodness. We despise those who have tattoos or wear in certain ways despite their good deeds, what they do should be of more importance than their appearance. Let's see beyond appearance and focus on words and/or actions. In the end love conquers it all.