



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 3:1-2). 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).



X. THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM

A. A Short Introduction

1. An understanding of the word *gospel*
 - a. One should never assume that the word *gospel* means death, burial, and resurrection. The Bible paints a different picture.
 - (1) “He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor” (Luke 4:18) = “the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek” (Isaiah 61:1).
 - (2) “How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” (Romans 10:15) = “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good” (Isaiah 52:7) = “Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!” (Nahum 1:15).
 - b. Understanding that the word *gospel* means good or glad tidings unlocks other biblical statements.
 - (1) The gospel preached to Abraham (Galatians 3:8)
 - (2) The gospel preached in the wilderness
 - (3) Neither of these gospels had anything to do with the gospel identified as the gospel of the grace of God involving the death, burial, and resurrection.
2. This gospel began to be preached with John (Luke 16:16). Note: Consider the distinction as it relates to the death, burial, and resurrection (Matthew 16:21; Mark 8:31).
3. This gospel was not preached in all the world during the first coming of Christ (Matthew 24:14; compare with Colossians 1:6, 23).

B. The Preachers of the Kingdom Gospel

1. John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1-2)
2. Jesus (Matthew 4:17; Luke 4:40-44; Luke 8:1; see Romans 15:8)
3. The twelve (Luke 9:1-2)
4. The seventy (Luke 10:1, 9)

C. The Nature of the Kingdom

1. The kingdom gospel calls for God’s will to be accomplished on earth as it is in heaven (Matthew 6:9-13).
2. The kingdom gospel testified of an earthly rule of Jesus Christ (Matthew 20:20-23; Luke 21:27-32).
3. The kingdom gospel promised the exaltation of the apostles (Matthew 19:27-28; Luke 22:28-30).
4. The kingdom gospel warns that faithless Jews will be excluded (Matthew 8:10-12; Luke 13:28-29).



D. The Message of the Kingdom

1. At least initially, this gospel was only to be preached to Israel (Matthew 10:5-8; Matthew 15:24; Romans 15:8).
2. The message emphasized that the kingdom was at hand (Matthew 3:2; Matthew 4:17; Matthew 10:7).
3. It included a message concerning the baptism of repentance (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:4; Acts 2:38; Acts 13:23-25; Acts 19:4-5).
 - a. A baptism that was preceded by repentance (Matthew 3:7-11)
 - b. A baptism that was accompanied by confession (Matthew 3:6; Mark 1:5)
 - c. A baptism that was followed by remission (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3)
 - d. This baptism led to faith in Christ (Matthew 3:11; Acts 19:3-5).
 - e. This baptism was modified or changed when God turned to the Gentiles (Acts 10:44-48; Acts 16:30-33). Though the two baptisms share some similarities, John's baptism is not the baptism experienced by a new believer today.
4. It was confirmed with sign gifts (Matthew 9:35; Matthew 10:8; Luke 9:11; Mark 16:15-20).
 - a. Confirming the spoken word (Mark 16:17-20; Hebrews 2:3-4)
 - b. Prominently given to the Jews (1 Corinthians 1:22; cp. Exodus 4:1-9; Numbers 14:11; Deuteronomy 26:8; Acts 7:36); Consider the following testimonies:
 - (1) Christ (Acts 2:22)
 - (2) Apostles (Acts 2:43; Acts 4:30; Acts 5:12; Acts 14:3)
 - (3) Paul (Romans 15:18-19; 2 Corinthians 12:12)
 - (4) Satan (2 Thessalonians 2:8-9)
 - (5) This does not mean that God never dealt with Gentiles through signs (Acts 28:1-10), but only that this was His stated purpose and general practice. Certainly, some Gentiles had the spoken word confirmed by way of signs.
 - c. To the lost (1 Corinthians 14:22); this shows another purpose of the signs—to convince the lost that the spoken word of salvation was from God.

E. The Coming of the Kingdom

1. Not yet come (John 18:36; Acts 1:6-7)
2. To be preached before the end (Matthew 24:14)
3. The result of God's final victory (Revelation 11:15; Daniel 2:44)

F. The Acceptance of the Son

1. By those who have God's word abiding in them (John 5:38)
2. By all who knew the Father (John 6:37, 45; John 8:42)
3. By those who were His sheep (John 10:24-30)
4. Given by the Father to the Son (John 17:6)