



The Quarry Gospel Church

BIBLE STUDY - 18.11.20

BIBLE STUDY - JOHN THE BAPTIST

Background:

- The birth of John the Baptist foretold - *Luke 1:5-25*
- He will be the fulfilment of prophecy and the forerunner of the Messiah
- He will make ready a people prepared for the Lord - *Luke 1:14-17*
- In the New Testament his birth is recorded immediately prior to the birth of Jesus - he is an integral part of the Incarnation (see also *John 1:6-15*)

1. JOHN'S SIGNIFICANCE

Matt. 11:11 "Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

a) The greatness of John

Matthew 11:11 tells us He was greater than all the prophets before Him (Jesus' words) Jesus says Elijah has come "in the form of John the Baptist".

John fulfilled Malachi's prophecy in a 'spiritual' sense. (*Malachi 4:5-6*)

b) The inferiority of John

John forms the link between the Old and New Testaments.

His ministry marks the end of the era of the prophets and law of the Old Testament and the era of a new age. He declared what He could only see with the eyes of faith (He didn't live to see the crucifixion and resurrection)

See also *Hebrews 11:39-40*

John's significance lies in him being the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy:

Malachi 4:5-6 and *Isaiah 40:3*

2. JOHN THE MAN

a) John was from a priestly family - *Luke 1:5-6*

b) John was a cousin of Jesus - as such there was a close bond between John and Jesus
- *Luke 1:44* - *Matthew 14:12-13*

c) John had a unique wardrobe! - camel hair tunic and leather belt:

- i) it associated him with Elijah
- ii) it set him apart from others.

d) John had a strange diet - locusts, honey and no alcohol:

- i) like Samson he was a Nazarite - no fermented drink and uncut hair
- ii) it provided a life of discipline, self-control and self-denial
- iii) in the day, it was actually a very healthy diet

e) John's character:

- i) he was a man of strong convictions and great courage
- ii) he was a man of great humility - *John 1:19-28; John 1:35; John 3:30*
- iii) he was a man with feet of clay, suffering doubt and seeking reassurance
- *Luke 7:18*

f) John's death - Herodias pressured Herod to arrest John. Herod respected John as a holy man (although himself showed no repentance) and through the plans of his wife and daughter, was forced to have John beheaded.

3. JOHN'S MESSAGE

John simply preached a message: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (*Matt.3:2*)

a) A prophetic message

b) A Messianic message

c) A preparatory message (*Luke 1:17*)

d) A negative message - one of warning

e) A partial message - the Messiah was still yet to appear

f) A call to repentance - Biblical repentance: genuine sorrow as a result of a changed mind

4. TRUTHS LEARNT FROM THE LIFE OF JOHN - for application in our own lives

a) God's timing in our lives is perfect

b) God has a specific calling and purpose for our lives

c) God gives us the power to keep our heart and minds set on Christ, even in difficult 'desert' days

d) Humility and obedience to God matters more than what others think of us (*Matt.3:11*)

e) Our mission in this life is to point others to Christ (*John 3:30*)

f) No matter what battles we face in this world we have freedom in Christ to stand up and be counted. He alone is our hope and our deliverer.