

Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

Jesus and John the Baptist

¹ After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee.

Q1. **After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples:** What do you think happened between the time “After Jesus had finished instructing” and Jesus “went on from there to teach and preach”?

Matthew 10:1 [NIV-1984]

He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.

Matthew 10:5 [NIV-1984]

These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans.

Mark 6:7 [NIV-1984]

Then Jesus went around teaching from village to village. Calling the Twelve to him, he sent them out two by two and gave them authority over evil spirits.

Luke 10:1 [NIV-1984]

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.

 The Gospel writers Matthew and Mark were focused on the Twelve Disciples; whereas, Doctor Luke included the contingent of disciples, including the core Twelve, who Jesus tasked with this initial itinerant missionary work.

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 In Chapter 14 we will study the passages that reveal the specific reasons for John the Baptist's imprisonment by Herod Antipas, the ruler of Galilee. Suffice it to say for now that John confronted Herod's sinful adulterous behavior and was imprisoned and then executed for his boldness.

²When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples
³to ask him, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?"

Q2. **John heard [and] sent his disciples to ask him:** Why did John send some of his disciples to Jesus to ask if He was the Messiah?

John 3:25-30 [NIV-1984]

²⁵ . . . some of John's disciples . . . ²⁶ . . . came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan — the one you testified about — well, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him."

²⁷ To this John replied, "A man can receive only what is given him from heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him.' ²⁹ The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. ³⁰ He must become greater; I must become less.

 We can only speculate on the motives behind John the Baptist's request to his disciples to seek Jesus and ask, "*Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?*"

As recorded in [Matthew 3:10](#), we read John's warning to the Pharisees and Sadducees, "*Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.* [[Isaiah 10:33-34](#); [Jeremiah 46:22](#)]" As "*the voice of one crying in the wilderness*" and herald to the coming Christ, John provided this warning before Jesus was revealed at His baptism.

Remember, John was now confined in a Roman prison for speaking truth against the adulterous Roman ruler Herod and his wife Herodius.

So, what prompted John's instruction to seek the truth from Jesus? We can only speculate:

† Perhaps, John expected Jewish teaching to be fulfilled in that the Christ would come as a military 'superman' and overthrow the Roman occupiers, which included his nemesis Herod the ruler of Galilee. When that happened, he – John – would be freed from prison. This would begin to fulfill John's retelling of the centuries-old prophecies about the coming Christ, including that of [Matthew 3:10](#) (↑) in which he refers to the coming Christ as "*the axe*".

† Perhaps, in keeping with John's statement in [John 3:30](#) (↑) "*I must become less*", he wanted his disciples to join the followers of Jesus so that they could continue their ministry – not for John, but for the Christ!

† Perhaps, John just wanted reassurance that his cousin Jesus was indeed the Christ, and that his work, persecution, and imprisonment was not in vain.

While we do not know John the Baptist's true motivation, God wants us to know that he sought clarity from the Christ through his (John's) disciples, and Jesus then indirectly testified and assured them – and us – of His divinity. In the following verses, Jesus will reveal more about His mission; and He will also praise the greatness and devotion of His cousin John, which we can hope to hear Him say about us when we join Him in Paradise!

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⁴ Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵ The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.

Q3. Since John was the son of the devout Jewish priest Zechariah and his equally devoted wife Elizabeth (see [Luke 1:5-80](#)), can we logically assume that John drew a parallel between Jesus's Words and the Isaiah passages?

Yes? Maybe? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Proverbs 22:6 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

Train a child how to live the right way. Then even when he is old, he will still live that way.

Isaiah 35:5–6^a [New Living Translation (NLT)]

⁵ And when he comes, he will open the eyes of the blind and unplug the ears of the deaf. ^{6a} The lame will leap like a deer, and those who cannot speak will sing for joy!

Isaiah 61:1–2 [New Living Translation (NLT)]

¹ The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon me, for the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort the brokenhearted and to proclaim that captives will be released and prisoners will be freed [Greek adds 'and the blind will see']. ² He has sent me to tell those who mourn that the time of the Lord's favor has come, and with it, the day of God's anger against their enemies.

Q4. Can we assume that these verses from Isaiah, chapters 35 & 61 refer to the coming Messiah?

Yes? Maybe? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Q5. Why didn't Jesus just say it plainly, "I am the Messiah, the Son of God"?

Thoughts?



"Jesus was cautious about publicly declaring himself as the Messiah because the title carried heavy political and military expectations. Many first-century Jews expected the Messiah to be an earthly king who would overthrow Roman rule. By keeping his identity quiet — a concept scholars call the 'Messianic Secret' — Jesus avoided sparking violent political uprisings or being made an earthly king.

"In the Gospels, Jesus reframes the Messianic role around spiritual redemption and suffering rather than immediate political liberation, which required careful revelation:

- † Preventing Misunderstandings: He knew that directly claiming the title would lead people to misunderstand his divine, spiritual mission as merely an earthly, military one.
- † Avoiding Puppet Status: When crowds attempted to force him into the role of an earthly king, Jesus actively withdrew from them to avoid becoming a 'puppet Messiah'.
- † Prioritizing the 'Son of Man': Jesus preferred to refer to himself as the 'Son of Man' rather than the 'Messiah'.

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to prevent premature conflict with the Roman and religious authorities before the appointed time of his crucifixion.

† Redefining the Role: He used miracles and teachings to re-educate his disciples, waiting until his followers understood that he was a 'suffering servant' rather than a conquering warlord." [©2026 Google. Summary provided by Google AI. Keywords: "Bible why was Jesus circumspect about being the Messiah?" Accessed: 07-10-2026.]

Matthew 16:13-17 [NIV-1984]

¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

¹⁴ They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

¹⁵ "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

¹⁷ Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.

Romans 10:17 [NIV-1984]

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

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⁶ Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."

Q6. Blessed is the [person] who does not fall away on account of me: Why would a person "fall away"?

Q7. Blessed is the [person] who does not fall away on account of me: Why is a person "blessed"?

 **Definition:** blessed ('blɛs ɪd; esp. for 3,7 blɛst) adj.

1. consecrated; sacred; sanctified.
2. worthy of adoration, reverence, or worship: *the Blessed Trinity*.
3. favored; fortunate: *blessed with common sense*.
4. blissfully happy.
5. beatified.
6. bringing happiness and thankfulness: *the blessed assurance of a steady income*.
7. (used as an intensifier): *every blessed cent*.

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Romans 10:8-10 [NIV-1984]

⁸ But what does it say? 'The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart', that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: ⁹ That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord', and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."

⁷ As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind?

Q8. *A reed swayed by the wind*: Why did people journey the 60-70 miles to see John the Baptist?
(See the [StudySheet/Lesson #3: Matthew 3:1-17](#))



Reeds swaying in the wind.

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<https://michaelstephenwills.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/ithaca-casspark-earllyspring-2024-6573.jpg>, accessed: 07-18-2026.

✍ *A reed swayed by the wind*: The imagery is subtle. “A reed” (or a bulrush/cattail) swaying in the wind – it bends down as if bowing before the Lord – over-and-over-and-over. The reed endlessly sways; an endless grovelling that is as exciting to watch as grass growing, or paint drying; boring. When the Jewish religious leaders bow, and pray, and tithe, are they performing before people, or actually honoring the Lord? Are they like “*reeds swaying in the wind*”?

You may have watched videos of orthodox Jews, who – even today – continuously bob their heads as they bow before the Western Wall (Wailing Wall) of the Temple in Jerusalem (<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/CYSyNsBBKuA>, accessed: 07-18-2026). Are they like “*reeds swaying in the wind*”? God wants authentic, not performative or showy.

Today, we might use the phrase “show me the money” meaning show me actions, not words, not symbolic

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rituals. Show me servant actions done in the Name of the Lord Christ Jesus: listening to someone who's hurting or lonely, or helping someone create a household budget, or driving someone to their dialysis appointment, or sharing a portion of your dinner with your neighbor, or providing an extra sack of groceries to the family down the street, or paying for the person's order behind you in the coffee drive-thru line, or carrying small value gift cards to give to panhandlers, or supporting missions that help people, or contributing to a fund that drills water wells in a destitute country/region (e.g., 'Water to Thrive' or 'Water Wells for Africa'), and so on. In [Matthew 6:3](#) or [Matthew 25:40, 45](#), Jesus does not say that you as a Believer must announce your servant-action as being done in the Name of Christ Jesus, but that we should just do it! The recipient of your generosity may be led to ask you, "Why are you helping me?" and that will give you a perfect opportunity to begin a real conversation, a Christ-led conversation, with questions-and-answers, but probably not a one-sided lecture in which you give the recipient the complete Gospel, plus Paul's teachings, in one sitting.

Saturate your servant actions in prayer. Follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit, but remember that faith is displayed when we take that first step in faith. The Apostle Paul did not wait for God, he planned and plowed-ahead and, when the Holy Spirit stopped him, he obeyed: "Paul and his companions . . . [were] . . . kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to." [[Acts 16:6-10](#) (ICB)]

Isaiah 58:5 [New Living Translation (NLT)]

You humble yourselves by going through the motions of penance, bowing your heads like reeds bending in the wind. . . . Do you really think this will please the Lord?

1 Kings 14:15 [New American Standard Bible (NASB)]

"For the Lord will strike Israel, just as a reed sways in the water; and He will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the Euphrates River, because they have made their Asherim [NASB footnote: wooden symbols of a female deity (Asherah)], provoking the Lord to anger.

⁸ If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces.

Q9. *If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes?* How was John the Baptist dressed? (Was he dressed in the latest ornate robes of his time? Did he smell good? Was his hair well-coiffed? See [Matthew 3:4-5](#))

Q10. *Those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces:* ① What do you imagine by the phrases "fine clothes" and "kings' palaces"? ② Is Jesus referencing "fine clothes" only, or perhaps a lifestyle of overindulgence?

① "Fine clothes" and "kings' palaces" imagined?

② "Clothing" only, or overindulgence?

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⁹ Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

Q11. **Then what did you go out to see?** Thinking back to our study of chapter 3 ([StudySheet/Lesson #3: Matthew 3:1-17](#)), what motivated the people (commoners and religious leaders) to seek John the Baptist?

Commoners?

Religious leaders?

Q12. **A prophet?** In these three verses, Jesus asks, “*what did you go out to see?*” and, finally, in this 9th verse, Jesus answers His question, stating, “A prophet”. How was John the Baptist a “prophet”?



Definition: prophet (prŏf'it) n.

- 1.a. A person who speaks by divine inspiration or as the interpreter through whom the will of a god is expressed.
- 1.b. One of the highest-ranking leaders of the Mormon church, considered by the faithful to be divinely inspired, and responsible for establishing and revising doctrine.
2. A person gifted with profound moral insight and exceptional powers of expression.
3. A predictor; *a soothsayer*.
4. The chief spokesperson of a movement or cause.
- 5.a. Prophets (*used with a sing. or pl. verb*): The second of the three divisions of the Hebrew Scriptures, comprising the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve. Used with *the*.
- 5.b. Prophet: One of the prophets mentioned in the Bible, especially one believed to be the author of one of these books. Used with *the*.
6. Prophet Islam Muhammad. Used with *the*.

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Q13. **More than a prophet:** How John the Baptist “more than a prophet”?

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 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written: " 'I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'

Q14. I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you: Did John the Baptist fulfill this prophecy from Malachi?

Yes? Maybe? No? (Thoughts?)

Malachi 3:1 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

“Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts.

Isaiah 40:3 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

A voice cries: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Q15. I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you: Was John the Baptist a ‘herald’? If yes, of who?

Yes? Maybe? No? (Thoughts?)

If yes, of who?

 **Definition:** herald (hě'rəld) n.

1. A person who carries or proclaims important news; a messenger.
2. One that gives a sign or indication of something to come; a harbinger: The crocus is a herald of spring.
3. An official whose specialty is heraldry.
- 4.a. An official formerly charged with making royal proclamations and bearing messages of state between sovereigns.

4.b. An official who formerly made proclamations and conveyed challenges at a tournament.

tr.v. her·ald·ed, her·ald·ing, her·alds

1. To proclaim, especially with enthusiasm; announce or acclaim: cheers that heralded the team's arrival.

2. To be a sign of; foreshadow: The discovery heralds a new era in drug treatment.

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Q16. I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you: How did John the Baptist “prepare [the] way”?

Q17. *Prepare your way before you:* How do you “*prepare [the] way*” for nonbelievers to believe?

¹¹I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

Q18. *Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist:*

① Is Jesus just stroking John’s ego to make him feel better? ② Why didn’t Jesus include Himself by saying something like excluding me “*there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist*”?

① Is Jesus just stroking John’s ego?

② Why didn’t Jesus include Himself?



This commentator liked the analysis written by the scholars at GotQuestionsMinistries:

“Christ now adds that not only is John the greatest of the prophets, he is the greatest of every person ever born on earth. This statement, as with all Scripture, should be considered carefully in context. John served as the one man chosen by God to prepare the way for the Messiah. There is no more privileged position on earth than to point others to Jesus as the Messiah, and God gave John that mission first and above all. Also, John had a better understanding of who Messiah was than any of the prophets who came before. [© Copyright 2002-2026 Got Questions Ministries. All rights reserved. <https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/11/Matthew-11-11.html>, accessed: 07-19-2026.]

Q19. *Yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he:* Why would Jesus declare that you or I will be greater in Heaven than Jesus’s herald John the Baptist?



“Jesus is quick to add, however, that even the least person in the kingdom of heaven is “greater” than John the Baptist. Heaven’s kingdom will be filled with those declared righteous before God by His grace and because of their faith in Jesus. In Christ, their sins will be forgiven and God will give them credit for the righteous life that Jesus lived. Anyone forgiven for all sin and is declared righteous before God through faith in Christ will be better — ‘greater’ — than John the Baptist standing only in his own righteousness.

“John was the last of the prophets to point forward to the kingdom of heaven. This gave him greater status and knowledge than any who came before. Yet he is not greater in either status or knowledge, than those who will stand

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in the kingdom itself.” [Ibid.]

Q20. *Yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he*: How would you respond to a Believer who says, “Me? ‘*Greater than John the Baptist*’? How can that be? I consider so many people more devout, more Biblical, more compassionate, more charitable, more empathetic — than I. My Pastor. My mother. Billy Graham. C. S. Lewis. How can I be considered their equals? I’ll be lucky to have a sleeping bag at the edge of Heaven.” Thoughts?

Genesis 1:27 [NIV-1984]

So, God created [humans] in his own image, in the image of God he created [them]; male and female he created them.

Galatians 3:26-28 [NIV-1984]

²⁶ You are all [people] of God through faith in Christ Jesus, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

James 2:1-4 [NIV-1984]

² My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism. ² Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. ³ If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," ⁴ have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

Romans 3:22-24 [NIV-1984]

²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

 See also [Romans 2:11](#); [Acts 10:34-35](#); and [Proverbs 22:2](#).

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 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.

 Perhaps, other translations/versions may help to clarify this text.

Matthew 11:12 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force.

Matthew 11:12 [New Living Translation (NLT)]

And from the time John the Baptist began preaching until now, the Kingdom of Heaven has been forcefully advancing, and violent people are attacking it.

Matthew 11:12 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

Since the time John the Baptist came until now, the kingdom of heaven has been going forward in strength. People using force have been trying to take the kingdom.

Q21. *From the days of John the Baptist until now:* ① Where is John the Baptist currently located?
(Hint: see [Matthew 11:2](#)) ② Does this location infer a peaceful or harsh experience?

① Where is John located?

② Peaceful or harsh treatment?

Q22. *From the days of John the Baptist until now:* Please circle the most logical time span that describes the duration of elapsed time “*From the days of John the Baptist until now*”?

Please circle the most logical time span: Millennia or Centuries or Decades or Years or Months?

Q23. **The kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing:** How has the “Kingdom . . . been forcefully advancing”?

Luke 16:16 [Good News Translation (GNT) ® (Today's English Version, Second Edition) © 1992 American Bible Society. All rights reserved.]

“The Law of Moses and the writings of the prophets were in effect up to the time of John the Baptist; since then, the Good News about the Kingdom of God is being told, and everyone forces their way in.

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Matthew 3:5 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

Many people [arguably, multitudes] went to hear John preach. They came from Jerusalem and all Judea and all the area around the Jordan River.

Q24. **Forceful men lay hold of it:** To help explain this verse, can we identify any “*forceful men*” either “*attacking [the Kingdom]*” or “*trying to take the Kingdom*” by force? How?
(Hints [Matthew 14:3](#); [John 6:15](#))

Q25. **Forceful men lay hold of it:** What kind of Messiah have the Jews been expecting?
Military Messiah? A merciful Savior? Other? Thoughts?

John 6:14-15 [New American Standard Bible (NASB)]

⁴ Therefore when the people saw the sign [a confirming miracle] which He had performed, they said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.”

¹⁵ So Jesus, aware that they intended to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself, alone.

¹³ For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John.

Q26. **For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John:** This is a stunning statement. ① If prophecy is someone foretelling (or predicting) a future event, what did “*all the Prophets and the Law*” do? ② And then “*John*”, what did John the Baptist do? ③ What is the difference?

① T H E Y P R P H S D

② J O H N T E T I F D

③ Off the top of your head what is the difference between ① and ②?

①
②

Q27. For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John: Generally, what did the “prophets” foretell?

 See [Matthew 3](#).

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Q28. For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John: Generally, what did “John” preach?

2 Corinthians 5:17 [NIV-1984]

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

John 3:5-7 [New Living Translation (NLT)]

⁵ Jesus replied, “I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. ⁶ Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. ⁷ So don’t be surprised when I say, ‘You must be born again.’

Hebrews 8:13 [NIV-1984]

By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 [NIV-1984]

[Jeremiah is an Old Testament prophet.]

³¹ “The time is coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. ³² It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord. ³³ “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ³⁴ No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the Lord. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

Luke 22:19-20 [NIV-1984]

¹⁹ And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁰ In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

 We separate the Bible into the Old and New Testaments. The dictionary/thesaurus defines *testament* as ‘testimony’, a ‘statement of belief’, or ‘proof’. *Covenant* is defined as a ‘promise’ or a ‘contract’. In the mind of this commentator, I look at this verse [Matthew 11:13](#) as the Lord Jesus’s pronouncement of the demarcation between the Old and New Testaments. The “*prophets and the Law*” foretold of the coming Messiah; whereas John the Baptist testified to the now-present Messiah — “He is here!”.

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Day 5

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

¹⁴ And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come.

Q29. *If you are willing to accept it:* Why did Jesus question if they would accept His statement? (Hint: Is Jesus going to make a pronouncement that is widely accepted? Or challenging?)

Q30. *He is the Elijah who was to come:* Why did Jesus call John the Baptist “Elijah”?

2 Kings 2:11 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

[The relationship between Elijah and his student Elisha was like a father/son. [2 Kings 2:1-18](#) describes the event in which Elijah was taken-up by a Heavenly chariot pulled by fiery horses leaving Elisha standing, rooted on the path, shouting “My father! My father!”.]

Elijah and Elisha were still walking and talking. Then a chariot and horses of fire appeared. The chariot and horses of fire separated Elijah from Elisha. Then Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.

Malachi 4:5 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

⁵ “But I will send Elijah the prophet to you. He will come before that great and terrible day of the Lord's judging.

Matthew 17:10-13 [NIV-1984]

[While [Matthew 17:1-9](#) describes Jesus's Transfiguration in which Elijah and Moses appeared before the disciples Peter, James and John and talked with Jesus, this conversation (↓) is Jesus's follow-up teaching.]

¹⁰ The disciples asked him, “Why then do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?”

¹¹ Jesus replied, “To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things. ¹² But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.”

¹³ Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.

Q31. *He is the Elijah who was to come:* ① Based on Old Testament prophecy, did the Jews expect a resurrected Elijah to appear? ② Did Christ Jesus clarify that expectation? (Hint: see Luke 1:17^a)

① What did the Jews expect? Yes? Maybe? No? (Thoughts?)

② Did Christ Jesus clarify? Yes? Maybe? No? (Thoughts?)

Luke 1:17 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]

and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.”

Lesson 20: Matthew 11:1-19

¹⁵ He who has ears, let him hear.

Q32. Jesus uses Old Testament prophecies from Malachi [Māl-ə-kī] to declare John the Baptist as the Messiah's herald [or "messenger" ([Malachi 3:1](#))] and also as the prophet of God "*Elijah who was to come*" ([Malachi 4:5](#)). If you were a knowledgeable Jew of Jesus's time, what is Jesus implying about Himself?

"I AM THE M S H "

Additional thoughts?

 For your convenience, this is the passage (↓) we're studying in which Jesus praises His cousin John the Baptist, identifies him as prophecy-fulfilled, and then alludes to Himself as the Messiah.

Matthew 11:10-15 [NIV-1984]

¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you." ¹¹ I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

¹² From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it. ¹³ For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John. ¹⁴ And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who was to come. ¹⁵ He who has ears, let him hear.

Q33. ***He who has ears, let him hear:*** ① Does Jesus want everyone in His audience to take His words to heart? ② Does Jesus expect that all who hear Him will understand?

① Take His words to heart? Yes? Maybe? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

② All who hear Him will understand? Yes? Maybe? No? (Why did you circle that answer?)

 Jesus also uses these words in Matthew 13:9 and Matthew 13:43. Jesus is saying "Pay attention!" "Use your mind and understand the Truth of My words!" "You all have ears, so really listen to what I am saying!"

Matthew 13:9 [NIV-1984]

He who has ears, let him hear.

Matthew 13:43 [NIV-1984]

Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

Lesson 20: Matthew 11:1-19

¹⁶ "To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others: ¹⁷ " 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge [a mournful funeral hymn] and you did not mourn.'

Q34. ***To what can I compare this generation . . . like children:*** Do you think Jesus meant for this comparison to be flattering (or an accusation)? (Hint: adults compared to children playing)

Flattering? Accusation? (Why did you circle that answer?)

Q35. ***Children . . . We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge and you did not mourn:*** When children play, do they always agree to play the same game? (Hint: Might the children's play – or game – include a wedding, with music? Y/N Or a funeral? Y/N Do they follow one leader? Y/N Do they sometimes want to be by themselves? Y/N Do they stay committed to the game? Y/N Do they wander off? Y/N)

Yes? Maybe? No? (Thoughts?)

Q36. ***Children . . . We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge and you did not mourn:*** Whether the child is complaining about other children who have stopped playing, or children complaining about adults who are no longer watching their play, the complaint is spoken, the complaint accuses, the complaint shows crabbiness, impatience, and immaturity. In this example, is Jesus describing typical human nature?

Yes? Maybe? No? (Thoughts?)

Q37. ***To what can I compare this generation . . . like children:*** Does Jesus's description apply to adults in the present-day?

Yes? Maybe? No? (Thoughts?)

Can you think of any present-day examples of adults behaving like children?

Lesson 20: Matthew 11:1-19

Day 6

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

¹⁸For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.'

¹⁹The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners." '

But wisdom is proved right by her actions."

Q38. The Son of Man came eating and drinking: Who is the "Son of Man"?

Psalm 80:17 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

But let your hand be on the man of your right hand, the son of man whom you have made strong for yourself!

 A search of the English Standard Version (ESV) Bible using the keywords "son of man" finds that the phrase occurs 356 times. Then, looking at the Old Testament Book of Ezekiel by itself, we find 93 references to "son of man". Generally, these references in the Book of Ezekiel referred to the prophet Ezekiel as the "son of man", meaning he was born of a mother and father. However, the Bible is full of parallels, and many Ezekiel references apply to the Messiah as well. As examples, I have included three verses from the Book of Ezekiel, and one specific reference from the Book of Daniel.

Ezekiel 2:3 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

And he [God] said to me, "Son of man, I send you to the people of Israel, to nations of rebels, who have rebelled against me. They and their fathers have transgressed against me to this very day.

Ezekiel 3:4 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

And he said to me, "Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak with my words to them.

Ezekiel 3:17 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

"Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me.

Daniel 7:13-14 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

¹³"I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. ¹⁴And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

Lesson 20: Matthew 11:1-19

Q39. *But wisdom is proved right by her actions:* To what or to whom does “wisdom” refer?

 T L D
 G A L G T

1 Corinthians 1:18-21, 25, 29 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

[The Wisdom of God. An excerpt from the Apostle Paul’s 1st Letter to the Corinthians.]

¹⁸ For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹ For it is written, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart. [Isaiah 29:14]”

²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe. . . .

²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. . . .

²⁹ so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

John 12:49 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

[Jesus revealed:]

For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment — what to say and what to speak.

John 14:10 [New Living Translation (NLT)]

[Once again, Jesus said:]

Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me.

Q40. John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon':

The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard: In the phrase “they say” to whom is Jesus referring by “they”?

Q41. John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon':

The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard: What is the hypocrisy between the observations about John compared to Jesus?

Lesson 20: Matthew 11:1-19

- Q42. ***But wisdom is proved right by her actions:*** ① Jesus’s use of the “*wisdom [of God]*” indirectly references two people; can you name them? ② Did the two people just named speak on their own using their own wisdom, insights, and opinions? ③ “Wisdom’s actions prove her right” [rephrased for – hopefully – clarity]: generally, what “*actions*” have the two people performed? ④ What events prove the “rightness” (or the truth) of their “*actions*”?

① “Wisdom”: J S AND J N

② Using their own wisdom? Yes? Maybe? No? (Thoughts?)

③ What “actions”?

④ What events? C R C F X N
AND R S R R C N

Luke 1:14-15, 41, 66, 80 [New Living Translation (NLT)]

[Luke 1:14 begins with an angel telling Zechariah about the future birth of his son and the man his son will become – John the Baptist.

Note: [Luke 1:67-79](#) quotes Zechariah’s blessing upon his son John the Baptist. Zechariah’s blessing is prescient, especially verses 76-79.]

¹⁴ You will have great joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵ for he will be great in the eyes of the Lord. He must never touch wine or other alcoholic drinks. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even before his birth. . . .

⁴¹ At the sound of Mary’s greeting, Elizabeth’s child leaped within her [Elizabeth’s unborn baby – John – was filled with the Holy Spirit and recognized the voice of the Messiah’s mother], and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. . . .

⁶⁶ Everyone who heard about it reflected on these events and asked, “What will this child [John the Baptist] turn out to be?” For the hand of the Lord was surely upon him in a special way. . . .

⁸⁰ John grew up and became strong in spirit. And he lived in the wilderness until he began his public ministry to Israel.

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