

Matthew 11
Part 1 (1-15)
Reactions to Jesus' teaching in Galilee

- I. John sends his disciples to inquire of Jesus. (1-6)
- A. After Jesus finished His commanding of the apostles He sends them out. (1)
1. They had been told where to go with the good news. (cf 10:5, 6)
 2. This is a command. (cf 28:19, 20; Acts 1:2; 10:42) It is our command as much as it was theirs. (28:20)
- B. Jesus also departed to spread the good news at this time.
1. "In their cities" probably means the places they had already taught, i. e., the areas around Galilee.
 2. Jesus was using the apostles to spread the word, but would not be idle Himself. (cf Mk 1:38)
- C. John has a question he wants answered. (2, 3)
1. John is imprisoned due to his faithful teaching.
 - a. We are not told why John was placed in prison for three more chapters. (cf 14:1-5)
 - b. We learned that John was cast into prison back in chapter 4:12.
 2. The question is asked by the two disciples.
 - a. The question "art thou he that should come" is answered in all four accounts. (cf 21:5; Mk 11:9; Lk 19:38; Jn 12:13)
 - b. The question was asked due to the knowledge of the prophecies about the coming Messiah. (cf Isa 9:1-7)
 - c. John already knew the answer to this question. (cf Jn 1:29)

Note: John and Jesus were related and, therefore, would have known each other during their formative years. However, John may not have known Jesus' true identity until the baptism mentioned here.
- D. Jesus answers John's question. (4-6)
1. "Shew" means to declare or to make known.
 2. They were to declare to John the things which they "do hear and see". Things they can verify.
 - a. "The blind receive their sight". (cf Ps 146:8; Matt 9:30; Lk 4:18)
 - b. "The lame walk". (cf Isa 35:6; Matt 15:30, 31; 21:14)

Note: It is not specifically said that Jesus had healed the lame at this point. (cf 4:23; 10:1)
 - c. "The lepers are cleansed". (cf Matt 8:1-4; 10:8; Lk 4:27)
 - d. "The deaf hear". (cf Isa 35:5; Mk 7:37; 9:25)
 - e. "The dead are raised up". (cf Lk 7:14, 15; Jn 11:43, 44)
 - f. "The poor have the gospel preached to them". (cf Isa 66:2; Matt 5:3)
 3. "Offended" means a stumbling block. (cf Isa 8:14, 15; Matt 13:55-58; Rom 9:32, 33; 1 Pet 2:8)

Note: The word "offend" here, in the original language, is the word we get our word "scandalize" from.
- II. Jesus gives a divine evaluation of John. (7-15)
- A. John's true character is confirmed. (7, 8)

1. John was not interested in popularity. His preaching was in the wilderness. (cf 3:1, 5; Mk 1:3-5)
 2. He was not interested in being politically correct. (cf 14:1-3)
 - a. “A reed shaken in the wind” means one who is easily changed or inconsistent.
 - b. John was not like that and any follower of Jesus must not be as a “reed”. (cf Eph 4:14; Jas 1:6)
- B. “Soft raiment” was not suitable clothing for the wilderness.
1. John’s clothes were anything but soft. (cf 3:4)
 2. The word “soft” indicates more than just texture of the cloth.
 - a. The same word is used in 1 Cor 6:9 and is translated “effeminate.”
 - b. Jesus is showing these people that John was no sissy. He was a man to be admired.
- C. John was a mighty prophet and more. (9-11)
1. John was a prophet and the Jews could not mistake this fact. (cf 14:5; 21: 24-26; Lk 1:76)
 2. He was more than a prophet because his coming had been prophesied. (cf Isa 40:3; Mal 4:5, 6; Matt 3:3)
 - a. He was filled with the Holy Ghost from the womb. (cf Lk 1:15)
 - b. Unlike any other human.
 - c. Jeremiah is the only one to come close to what is said of John the Baptizer. (cf Jer 1:5)
 3. Jesus says John is the greatest man ever born of human parents. (cf Lk 7:28)
 - a. As great as John was, all that are in the kingdom are greater. (cf Heb 11:40; 1 Pet 1:10)
 - b. John was more than “a man’s man”, he was God’s man!
 - c. This verse shows John was not in the kingdom (church) otherwise he would be the same as all others in the kingdom. (16:18)
- D. The spiritual kingdom is compared to a physical kingdom. (12-15)
1. “From the days of John “could not be a very long time.
 - a. He was only a few months older than Jesus. (cf Lk 1:36-42)
 - b. The common age for a Jewish man to be classified as a man was thirty years old. (cf Num 4:3; 1 Chron 23:3; Lk 3:23)
 2. Since the time of John, some had wanted to use force to establish the kingdom.
 - a. The people rushed out to hear John thinking he was the coming Messiah. (cf Jn 1:19)
 - b. They would have taken Jesus by force to make Him their king. (cf Jn 6:15)
 3. “Until John” shows an obvious changing from the old to the new. (cf 5:17, 18; Lk 24:44) Used here as a preposition of time.
 - a. “Elias” (Elijah) was to come. (cf Mal 4:5, 6)
 - b. This was fulfilled in the person of John the Baptizer. (cf 17:10-13; Lk 1:17; Jn 1: 21-23)
 4. Jesus is saying listen and learn from the information you have received. (15)
 - a. The idea of “having ears” was a way of drawing attention to something taught. (cf 13:9, 43; Lk 8:8)
 - b. John used it graphically in the early chapters of Revelation. (cf Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22)

5. Many of those who heard Jesus say these things may have rejected John.
 - a. John was the chief witness sent by God to lead them to the promised Messiah.
 - b. If this teaching was properly heard, it must have touched the hearts of those who rejected him.
 - c. It also exalted John to the proper position in their eyes.

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