

**Message #38****Matthew 11:2-19**

There is something that one sees when one goes through this book of Matthew—it didn't matter what Jesus Christ did or said—most in Israel would not believe Him or respond favorably to Him. In this passage of Scripture, Jesus makes a stinging point to Israel and to us:

**IT DOESN'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE IF IT IS THE GREATEST PROPHET PRESENTING GOD'S WORD OR JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF PRESENTING GOD'S WORD; MOST OF THE PEOPLE WILL NOT ACCEPT IT BUT WILL REJECT IT.**

**PART #1** – John sends his disciples to make sure Jesus is the Messiah. **11:2-3**

John was in prison and the reason he is in prison is because he has been preaching the truth of God and confronting sin—specifically Herod's sin (Matt. 14:3-4). We may recall that when Jesus heard John was in prison, He departed to Galilee (Matt. 4:12).

Now John knew who Jesus was when he baptized Him. He knew about His miracles. But as he sat in prison, his mind must have worked something like this:

**(Fact #1)** - I am the Jewish forerunner of the Messiah who is Jesus Christ.

**(Fact #2)** - The Messiah is supposed to establish His Jewish kingdom on earth.

**(Fact #3)** - If Jesus is the Messiah, why hasn't He established His kingdom and why isn't He getting me out of prison?

John is obviously struggling a bit. But notice what he does—he sends his disciple directly to Jesus Christ to ask Him to His face. The title “the Expected One” is a Messianic title—Psalm 118:26.

**PART #2** – Jesus responds to John's disciples as the Messiah. **11:4-6**

This is an interesting response because Jesus does not respond directly with a “yes” or “no.” What He does do is point them to a specific O.T. prophecy which is kingdom related, which He fulfills. Now one O.T. prophetic book that John was familiar with was Isaiah. In fact, he himself was a fulfillment of Isaiah 40:3/Matt. 3:3. Jesus tells John's disciples to report to John two things:

**(Response #1)** - Tell John what I am telling you—“what you hear” and “what I am doing”—“what you see.” **11:5**

Specifically the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the Gospel is being preached to the poor. Now immediately when John would hear this he would think of Isaiah 35:5-6. He would realize that Jesus was fulfilling these verses but he would also realize that verse 6 ends with these words—“for the waters will break forth in the wilderness and streams in the Arabah.” In other words, Jesus had fulfilled part of the Messianic prophecies at this first coming, but not all of them.

**(Response #2)** - Tell John he is blessed by not being offended at what I am presently doing.

**11:6**

Christ's ministry was not establishing the kingdom; it was offering it and the one who would be blessed would be the one who patiently waited for Him to establish His kingdom.

**PART #3** – Jesus responds to the crowds about John. **11:7-14**

Jesus did not want the crowd to think that John was just an ordinary man. So there are four critical facts that Jesus brings out about John:

**(Fact #1)** - John was a true prophet, not a religious politician. **11:7-9**

He was a man who came to preach the truth, not to impress people who wear nice clothes.

**(Fact #2)** - John was a fulfillment of Biblical prophecy. **11:10**

**(Fact #3)** - John was the greatest man on earth. **11:11**

But as great a man as John was, he was not one who lived in the kingdom. He presented the kingdom. Jesus said the one who is truly blessed is the one who will be in the kingdom because that one will actually have total righteousness.

**(Fact #4)** - God's kingdom to this point is not peace, but violence. **11:12**

1) All of God's servants who have promoted God's kingdom have been violently mistreated.

2) Most of Israel believes the kingdom will be established by a violent overthrow.

**(Fact #5)** - If Israel would properly respond, the kingdom could be established. **11:13**

It is predicted that before the Messiah comes, Elijah would come (Mal. 4:5-6). This will actually take place during the Tribulation. However, if Israel were to respond now, John could be a type of Elijah and the kingdom could be established now.

**PART #4** – Jesus addresses the crowds about Israel. **11:15-19**

**(Point #1)** - Israel is like unstable children who are playing games in religion. **11:16-17**

**(Point #2)** - Israel rejected John because he was too strict. **11:18**

**(Point #3)** - Israel rejected Jesus because he was too liberal. **11:19**

It did not matter who the prophet or preacher was, Israel would not respond to God's truth.