

CHAPTER 11:1-30 THE BAPTIST & THE MESSIAH (W10)

Chapter 11 is a ‘hinge’ chapter that swings the Gospel into its next major section. The deeds of Jesus are causing people to seek his identity, who is this Jesus of Nazareth? Thus begins a long section (16:16) reporting how people respond to the Son of Man and Son of God.

11-6 John Inquires About Jesus

11 When Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and preach in their cities.

2 Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” 4 And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: 5 the **blind** receive their sight and the **lame** walk, **lepers** are cleansed and the **deaf** hear, and the **dead** are raised up, and the **poor** have good news preached to them. 6 And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

Is John’s faith wavering? Is he confused? What was he expecting? Instead of answering with a simple “yes” Jesus reveals his identity through Divine Scripture

- Isa 29:18; 35:5; 42:18- Blind and deaf seeing and hearing
- Isa 35:6- The lame leaping for joy
- Isa 26:19- The Dead come to Life
- 1sa 61:1- The Poor Hear Glad Tidings

Jesus offers surety not merely by his word, but from the testimony of Scripture

This section is the mirror opposite of the previous verse, now it is Jesus who poses a series of question to reveal the true identity of John.

7 As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? 8 What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. 9 What then did you go out to see? **A prophet? Yes,**

I tell you, and more than a prophet. John not only prophesied of the Messiah coming but participated in its fulfillment. 10 This is he of whom it is written,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.” (Mal 3:1)

11 Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. **Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. John did not live to see the fullness of the Messianic times** 12 From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence,⁴ and the violent take it by force. 13 For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, 14 and if you are willing to accept it, **he is Elijah who is to come.** 15 He who has ears to hear, let him hear. **This is a call to hear and believe on the Messiah, the One whom John prophesied!**

The Unbelief of This Generation

16 “But to what shall I compare this generation? **“This Generation” generally refers to an unfaithful generation (Noah’s Day Gen 6:5-8; Faithless Generation Deut 1:35; 32:5, cf. 17:17)** It is like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling to their playmates,

17 “We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not mourn.’ 18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, ‘He has a demon.’ 19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’ Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds.” **They turned their backs on the feasting and fasting, for they wanted nothing to do with the Wisdom of Messiah nor his forerunner.**

Judgment on Unrepentant Cities

Jesus’ theme of judgment continues, focusing on three specific Galilean cities who rejected Him and his call to repentance (Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernum).

20 Then he began to denounce the cities where most of his mighty works had been done, because they did not repent.

21 **“Woes” prophetic judgment upon Israel (Isa 5:8-25; Mic 21-5; Hab 2:9-12)**

“Woe to you, **Chorazin!** Woe to you, **Bethsaida!** For if the mighty works done in

you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22 But I tell you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon **Gentile Strongholds** than for you. 23 And you, **Capernaum, Jesus' home town** will you be exalted to heaven? You will be brought down to Hades. **Isa 14:12-15** For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. 24 But I tell you that it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment for the land of Sodom than for you.” **The judgment of these three cities will be great, for they saw, heard, touched, interacted with Christ and yet they rejected him; to whom much is given much is required.**

Come to Me, and I Will Give You Rest

“Matthew now gives his readers an intimate opportunity to hear Jesus address his Father in prayer (**Gethsemane 26:39, 42; On the Cross 27:46**)

25 At that time Jesus declared, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; 26 yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. **A disciples willingness to embrace the mystery of Jesus has NOTHING to do with intelligence or degree of learning; rather, disciples are recipients of grace that comes from the Father in heaven (cf. 16:17).**

27 All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son **and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.** 28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, **those laboring under the law and from their sins** and **I will give you rest.** 29 **Take my yoke** upon you **religious instruction**, and **learn from me**, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” **Yoke = commandments of Torah defining what it means to live in covenant relationship with God (Acts 15:10; Gal 5:1).** In other Rabbinic traditions, the yoke was instruction in wisdom to guide men and women in righteousness (Sir 6:24; 51:23-30). Jesus is the new Torah for the people of God and Divine Wisdom incarnate for all who seek spiritual fulfillment and rest (Prov 8; 16:25).

Sirach 6:23-31

- 23** Listen, my child, and accept my judgment;
do not reject my counsel.
- 24** Put your feet into her fetters,
and your neck into her collar.
- 25** Bend your shoulders and carry her,
and do not fret under her bonds.
- 26** Come to her with all your soul,
and keep her ways with all your might.
- 27** Search out and seek, and she will become known to you;
and when you get hold of her, do not let her go.
- 28** For at last you will find the rest she gives,
and she will be changed into joy for you.
- 29** Then her fetters will become for you a strong defense,
and her collar a glorious robe.
- 30** Her yoke is a golden ornament,
and her bonds a purple cord.
- 31** You will wear her like a glorious robe,
and put her on like a splendid crown.

Sirach 51:26-30

- 23** Draw near to me, you who are uneducated,
and lodge in the house of instruction.
- 24** Why do you say you are lacking in these things,^[a]
and why do you endure such great thirst?
- 25** I opened my mouth and said,
Acquire wisdom^[a] for yourselves without money.
- 26** Put your neck under her yoke,
and let your souls receive instruction; it is to be found close by.
- 27** See with your own eyes that I have labored but little
and found for myself much serenity.
- 28** Hear but a little of my instruction
and through me you will acquire silver and gold.
- 29** May your soul rejoice in God's mercy, and may you never be ashamed to praise him.
- 30** Do your work in good time, and in his own time God will give you your reward.