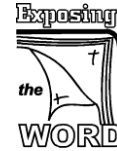




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The Gospel of **Verifying** John the MESSIAH

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2- The Testimony of John the Baptist: *John 1:6-8; 19-34; 3:22-36*

There has never been one that we can be more sure that was sent from God than the man who will testify and verify the Messiah in this session.

The man's name was John. We know him as John the Baptist because of his baptizing of men, including Jesus. John is the beginning subject of the gospel of Mark and his birth is given to us as part of the story of the birth of Messiah. In Luke's gospel we have the record of the Birth of John and the events surrounding it. Matthew also records information about John the Baptist.

I- Came to be a Witness:

John 1:6-8 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

John the Apostle had just told us that Jesus came and was God and sent by God. Although both Jesus and John were sent by God, Jesus was the only divine one. In contrast he clearly points out that John, a great man, was only a man not God.

Jesus said of John in , *Matthew 11:11 "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist..."*

John was the son of Elizabeth, said to be cousin of Mary. However, the original language is the word for a kinsman, not necessarily a cousin. Adam Clarke points out, they could only have been cousins on their mothers side because Elizabeth was from the tribe of Levi (Luke 1:5) and Mary from the tribe of Judah. Never the less, Mary

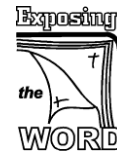
and Elizabeth were kinsman and that made John the Baptist a kinsman of Jesus as well.

II- Testimony in Wilderness Before Jesus Was Baptized:

The testimony of John begins with John in the wilderness. Notice the account in *John 1:19-28 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? 20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. 21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. 22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? 23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. 24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. 25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? 26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; 27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. 28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.*

Notice with me several things I have emphasized in the text.

The group sent was probably from the Sanhedrin, thought it is not specified here. They were on guard for anything that would threaten their religious authority.



They ask if John was the Messiah, he said no. Next they asked are you Elijah, he again said no. Then they asked if he was the prophet like Moses that they knew would come, again he said he was not. This exhausted their list of potentials that anyone was looking for so they said well, who are you then. He replied, ***"I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias."*** He linked his ministry to the promise and prophecy made by the prophet Isaiah. ***Isaiah 40:3 "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."***

As part of his answer he also gives witness to the Messiah that stood among them even now. Jesus had not manifested Himself in any way to this point that we know of.

John points out the superiority of Christ and his understanding that he, a great prophet sent from God, still was not worthy to unbuckle His shoes. ***John 1:27 "He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose."***

III- Testimony at Baptism:

One of the things John does well is transition from time periods precisely. The next day's events are in the next verse.

John 1:29-34 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. 30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. 31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. 32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it

abode upon him. 33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. 34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

I underlined the words of John the Baptist recorded here as he gave testimony.

He called Jesus the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. He told them this was the man he spoke of the day before. How did he know? Two things, the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus and the voice of God that told Him to watch for this and by this he would know.

He also declares him to the Son of God. John, the baptism, verified Jesus at His baptism by his testimony as a first hand witness and participant in the events.

IV- Testimony in Judaea:

During the course of events we move forward into the ministry of Jesus to after the public manifestation and miracle of Cana. Jesus had also cleaned out the temple of money changers and had a conversation with Nicodemus. These are the ***"these things"*** in ***John 3:22-36. After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. 23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized. 24 For John was not yet cast into prison.***

Now notice additional testimony of John in ***John 3:27ff. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. 28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. 29 He that hath the bride is the***



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bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. 30 He must increase, but I must decrease. 31 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. 32 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. 33 He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. 34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. 35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. 36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Again notice a few emphasized things. He reiterated his testimony before that he was not Messiah but a forerunner.

He then points out that Christ must increase and he must decrease and step aside. He points to the Messiah as being the focus and not himself. A great lesson for all of us to learn, relearn and continually reestablish in our own lives.

He included the fact that all things are given into the hands of the Son. I feel the Bible teaches that the judge that sits at both the Bema judgment seat for believer and the Great White Throne judgment for nonbeliever will be the Christ.

Life in Christ through faith is also clearly established with the testimony of John.

III- Verified Jesus Was Messiah Again:

Luke records for us the imprisonment of John by Herod. *Luke 3:18-20 And many other things in his exhortation preached he*

unto the people. 19 But Herod the tetrarch, being reprov'd by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, 20 Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

While in prison John sent two of his disciples to Jesus. *Matt 11:2-6 Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, 3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? 4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: 5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. 6 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.* (see Luke 7:18-23)

Some feel it was John wanting to make sure of Jesus in his own heart while others see it as John wanting to expose his disciples to the truth of Jesus first hand.

JV McGee says, "John's question is a logical one. He has every reason to believe that the King would have assumed power by this time. He is definitely puzzled that the Lord is moving so slowly toward the throne." (*Thru the Bible Commentary*)

So if in fact John was having doubts what does that say to us? It says that God is a God who can answer any doubts with facts. Please notice what Jesus said to these disciples about verification back to John. "... *shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: 5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.*"

Jesus is verified by the testimony of John. Do you believe?