

NOON BIBLE STUDY: MATTHEW 11 (PART 1)

- WHAT DOES "MESSIAH" MEAN?
- WHAT DOES "THE MESSIAH" MEAN?
- WHAT IS THE MESSIANIC EXPECTATION FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT?

JOHN'S MINISTRY & MESSAGE: MATTHEW 3:4-15

JOHN 1:19-29, 35-36 - THIS IS THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN, WHEN THE JEWS SENT TO HIM PRIESTS AND LEVITES FROM JERUSALEM TO ASK HIM, "WHO ARE YOU?" 20 AND HE CONFESSED AND DID NOT DENY, BUT CONFESSED, "I AM NOT THE CHRIST." 21 THEY ASKED HIM, "WHAT THEN? ARE YOU ELIJAH?" AND HE SAID, "I AM NOT." "ARE YOU THE PROPHET?" AND HE ANSWERED, "NO." 22 THEN THEY SAID TO HIM, "WHO ARE YOU, SO THAT WE MAY GIVE AN ANSWER TO THOSE WHO SENT US? WHAT DO YOU SAY ABOUT YOURSELF?" 23 HE SAID, "I AM A VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE STRAIGHT THE WAY OF THE LORD,' AS ISAIAH THE PROPHET SAID." ... 24 NOW THEY HAD BEEN SENT FROM THE PHARISEES. 25 THEY ASKED HIM, AND SAID TO HIM, "WHY THEN ARE YOU BAPTIZING, IF YOU ARE NOT THE CHRIST, NOR ELIJAH, NOR THE PROPHET?" 26 JOHN ANSWERED THEM SAYING, "I BAPTIZE IN WATER, BUT AMONG YOU STANDS ONE WHOM YOU DO NOT KNOW. 27 "IT IS HE WHO COMES AFTER ME, THE THONG OF WHOSE SANDAL I AM NOT WORTHY TO UNTIE." 28 THESE THINGS TOOK PLACE IN BETHANY BEYOND THE JORDAN, WHERE JOHN WAS BAPTIZING. 29 THE NEXT DAY HE SAW JESUS COMING TO HIM AND SAID, "BEHOLD, THE LAMB OF GOD WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD..." 35 AGAIN THE NEXT DAY JOHN WAS STANDING WITH TWO OF HIS DISCIPLES, 36 AND HE LOOKED AT JESUS AS HE WALKED, AND SAID, "BEHOLD, THE LAMB OF GOD!"

Q - HOW WOULD YOU SUMMARIZE JOHN'S MINISTRY & MESSAGE?

MATTHEW 11:1-6

V. 2 - JOHN IMPRISONED

MATTHEW 4:12 - NOW WHEN JESUS HEARD THAT JOHN HAD BEEN TAKEN INTO CUSTODY, HE WITHDREW INTO GALILEE:

MATTHEW 14:3-5 - FOR WHEN HEROD HAD JOHN ARRESTED, HE BOUND HIM AND PUT HIM IN PRISON BECAUSE OF HERODIAS, THE WIFE OF HIS BROTHER PHILIP. 4 FOR JOHN HAD BEEN SAYING TO HIM, "IT IS NOT LAWFUL FOR YOU TO HAVE HER." 5 ALTHOUGH HEROD WANTED TO PUT HIM TO DEATH, HE FEARED THE CROWD, BECAUSE THEY REGARDED JOHN AS A PROPHET.

V. 3 - JOHN'S QUESTION: "ARE YOU THE EXPECTED ONE, OR SHALL WE LOOK FOR SOMEONE ELSE..."

Q - WHY WOULD JOHN ASK THAT QUESTION?

MATTHEW 11:4-6 - JESUS' ANSWER

Q - HOW DOES JESUS ANSWER THAT QUESTION AND WHY DO YOU THINK HE ANSWERS THIS WAY?

V. 4-5 - GO AND REPORT BACK WHAT YOU HEAR AND SEE: JESUS HAD ALREADY DONE THESE THINGS, BUT HE HIGHLIGHTS SPECIFIC WHICH WERE PROPHESIED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. WHILE NOT EVERY ELEMENT OF JESUS' MINISTRY IS SPECIFICALLY SPOKEN OF IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, THERE WAS AN EXPECTATION THAT WITH THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH, THERE WOULD BE HEALING AND RESTORATION FOR GOD'S PEOPLE.

HEALING & MIRACLES: ISAIAH 35:1-6

ISAIAH 29:17-20 (NLT) - SOON-- AND IT WILL NOT BE VERY LONG-- THE FORESTS OF LEBANON WILL BECOME A FERTILE FIELD, AND THE FERTILE FIELD WILL YIELD BOUNTIFUL CROPS. 18 IN THAT DAY THE DEAF WILL HEAR WORDS READ FROM A BOOK, AND THE BLIND WILL SEE THROUGH THE GLOOM AND DARKNESS. 19 THE HUMBLE WILL BE FILLED WITH FRESH JOY FROM THE LORD. THE POOR WILL REJOICE IN THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL. 20 THE SCOFFER WILL BE GONE, THE ARROGANT WILL DISAPPEAR, AND THOSE WHO PLOT EVIL WILL BE KILLED.

THESE SIGNIFICANT HEALINGS WERE ASSOCIATED WITH THE MESSIANIC AGE. JESUS IS PERFORMING THESE MIRACLES (SIGNS) - SOMETHING IS HAPPENING!

CONCERN & CARE FOR THE POOR AND NEEDY: ISAIAH 61:1-7

JESUS' MINISTRY IS THE BEGINNING OF THE "YEAR OF THE LORD'S FAVOR". OVER TIME, THE PROPHECIES OF THE AGE TO COME GOT FUNNELED INTO THE APPEARANCE OF THE MESSIAH AS THE TIME THESE THINGS WOULD OCCUR. RESURRECTION HAPPENS IN THE AGE TO COME, THE DEFEAT OF ISRAEL'S ENEMIES HAPPENS IN THE AGE TO COME, ETC → AND SO WHEN THE MESSIAH COMES, THESE THINGS COME WITH HIM. HERE'S WHAT IS LIKELY A POOR ANALOGY TO HELP: IF A CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR RUNS ON A PLATFORM OF MAKING POTHOLES ILLEGAL TO EXIST FOR MORE THAN 24 HOURS - IF/WHEN THAT MAYOR GETS ELECTED, THE POTHOLES WILL BEGIN TO DISAPPEAR.

TO ILLUSTRATE THIS, WE CAN READ ONE OF THE FRAGMENTS OF THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS WHICH SPEAKS TO THE THINKING OF THE JEWISH WORLD A CENTURY BEFORE JESUS. (THIS WAS WRITTEN APPROXIMATELY 100-50 BC):

"THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH WILL LISTEN TO HIS MESSIAH, AND NONE THEREIN WILL STRAY FROM THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE HOLY ONES. SEEKERS OF THE LORD, STRENGTHEN YOURSELVES IN HIS SERVICE! ALL YOU HOPEFUL IN (YOUR) HEART, WILL YOU NOT FIND THE LORD IN THIS? FOR THE LORD WILL CONSIDER THE PIOUS AND CALL THE RIGHTEOUS BY NAME. OVER THE POOR HIS SPIRIT WILL HOVER AND WILL RENEW THE FAITHFUL WITH HIS POWER. AND HE WILL GLORIFY THE PIOUS ON THE THRONE OF THE ETERNAL KINGDOM. HE WHO LIBERATES THE CAPTIVES. RESTORES SIGHT TO THE BLIND, STRAIGHTENS THE BENT, AND FOREVER I WILL CLEAVE TO THE HOPEFUL AND IN HIS MERCY...AND THE FRUIT...WILL NOT BE DELAYED FOR ANYONE. AND THE LORD WILL ACCOMPLISH GLORIOUS THINGS WHICH HAVE NEVER BEEN AS...FOR HE WILL HEAL THE WOUNDED, AND REVIVE THE DEAD AND BRING GOOD NEWS TO THE POOR...HE WILL LEAD THE UPROOTED AND MAKE THE HUNGRY RICH..." (A MESSIANIC APOCALYPSE, 4QS21, GEZA VERMES, THE COMPLETE DEAD SEA SCROLLS IN ENGLISH, PAGES 412-413)

JESUS' ANSWER IS ESSENTIALLY, "BE PATIENT, THE STORY ISN'T OVER YET." HE HIGHLIGHTS SOME OF THE MESSIANIC FULFILLMENT OF HIS MINISTRY TO GIVE HOPE TO THE IMPRISONED JOHN THAT

Q - WHY DOES JESUS END HIS ANSWER WITH *"BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO DO NOT TAKE OFFENSE AT ME?"*

MATTHEW 11:7-15 - JESUS' COMMENTS ON SIGNIFICANCE OF JOHN

THOUGH WE ONLY HAVE A FEW RECORDED INSTANCES OF HIS LIFE AND MINISTRY, JOHN WAS A VERY SIGNIFICANT FIGURE IN REDEMPTIVE HISTORY. JESUS ACKNOWLEDGES THAT PEOPLE WERE NOT DRAWN TO JOHN BECAUSE OF HIS APPEARANCE OR CHARM BUT BECAUSE HE WAS A PROPHET THAT GOD WAS POWERFULLY WORKING THROUGH. HE WAS SERVING A SPECIFIC PROPHETIC PURPOSE PROPHESED IN MALACHI 3 & 4, THE FINAL BOOK AND CHAPTERS OF THE OT:

MALACHI 3:1 - BEHOLD, I AM GOING TO SEND MY MESSENGER, AND HE WILL CLEAR 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.

MALACHI 4:5-6 - "BEHOLD, I AM GOING TO SEND YOU ELIJAH THE PROPHET BEFORE THE COMING OF THE GREAT AND TERRIBLE DAY OF THE LORD. 6 "HE WILL RESTORE THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS TO THEIR CHILDREN AND THE HEARTS OF THE CHILDREN TO THEIR FATHERS, SO THAT I WILL NOT COME AND SMITE THE LAND WITH A CURSE."

WE WILL DIVE INTO WHAT THIS MEANS NEXT TIME WE GET TOGETHER.