

I. John the Baptist's Question

A. Luke 7:18-19 The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, ¹⁹ calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?"

1. I tend not to read this in a way that pictures John on the verge of abandoning what he had so passionately proclaimed about Jesus as the "**Coming One.**"
2. I do hear a bold, tenacious faith as John is nearing the end of his life sitting in prison. He is saying, "it all comes down to this! It's now or never." He is eager to hear the report of what he had so long proclaimed, to hear of it so that he could die with closure.

II. Jesus' Response

A. Luke 7:20-23 And when the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?' " ²¹ In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. ²² And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. ²³ And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.**"**

1. Jesus is now carrying out the claim which He had earlier made in the Synagogue (Luke 4:16-30), fulfilling part of the Messianic prophecy of Isaiah 61.
 - a) It was a commonly held idea of the times that, "only the Messiah could heal a blind man."
2. "Not offended by Me." This is the central issue both in the day of John the Baptist and in this day. It is without question, the

most challenging obstacle to proclaiming Jesus as “the Coming One.”

- a) This phrase is the link between Jesus’ response to John and His address to the crowd. In John’s day, both the forerunner messenger and the audience of the message faced the same great challenge- namely, to become subtly more and more offended at how the “Coming One” comes and at what He does when He comes!
- b) This is why I want the prayer of **Philippians 1:9-10** to occupy a constant place in my prayer life:
“And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, ¹¹ being filled with the fruits of righteousness which *are* by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.” (NKJV)

III. Jesus’ Address to the Crowd

A. Luke 7:24-27 When John’s messengers had gone, 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? ²⁵ What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings’ courts. ²⁶ What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷ This is he of whom it is written, “ ‘Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.’**

- 1. What did you go out to see? Think about what captured you and about whether or not it was just a reed shaken in the wind.
- 2. Did you just go out to spectate or go out to the next “prophetic conference?

3. He was more than a prophet He was the forerunner messenger.

a) **Mal 3:1-5 Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare 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. ² But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap. ³ He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord. ⁴ Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years. ⁵ "Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts.**

B. Luke 7:28-35 I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." ²⁹ (When all the people heard this, and the tax collectors too, they declared God just, having been baptized with the baptism of John, ³⁰ but the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected the purpose of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him.) ³¹ "To what then shall I compare the people of this generation, and what are they like? ³² They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, " 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.' ³³ For John the Baptist has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon.' ³⁴ The Son of Man has come eating and

drinking, and you say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' ³⁵ Yet wisdom is justified by all her children."

1. "None is greater than John... but the least in the Kingdom."
 - a) Greater in privilege and access.
2. "To what shall I compare the people of this generation?"
 - a) Deaf, dull, and unresponsive spirit
 - b) Offended heart
3. Wisdom will be vindicated by the fruit it produces.