The Testimony of John the Baptist

John 1:19-34

Introduction:

I. The Curiosity of the Jews – 1:19-28

A. About His Title – 1:19-23

1. Reporters – 1:19

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“Now this is ﻿﻿the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?”

“Who are you?” John, the Baptist had caused quite a stir in Jerusalem and Judea. Matthew reported the following:

“Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.” (3:5-6)

This caused concern among the Jewish leaders. The temple was the place for confession of sins along with the proper sacrifices. So they wanted to know who John was. They certain O.T. Prophecies in mind.

2. Response – 1:20-21

a. Question: Are You the Christ?

They expected the Christ, the Messiah (the anointed One) to come.

Zechariah 9:9

“Rejoice ﻿﻿greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, ﻿﻿your King is coming to you; He *is* just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

They forgot about Isaiah 53:3-5

“Surely ﻿﻿He has borne our ﻿﻿griefs, and carried our ﻿﻿sorrows; yet we ﻿﻿esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He *was* ﻿﻿wounded ﻿﻿for our transgressions, *He was* ﻿﻿bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him,”

They ignored: Isaiah 61:1-2a ﻿﻿

“To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,” they went straight to 61:2b-3

      “And ﻿﻿the day of vengeance of our God;”

Jesus had to correct two of His followers in Luke 24:25, “Then He said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ﻿﻿Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His ﻿﻿glory?”

Answer” “He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, I am not the Christ”

b. Question: Are You Elijah?

They expected Elijah to come before the Lord comes to put down their enemies. They were right. John acted like Elijah. Jesus said that he was Elijah if they would accept him.

Answer: “He said, I am not.”

c. Question: “Are you the prophet?”

Deut. 18:18

“I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and ﻿﻿will put My words in His mouth, ﻿﻿and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.”

This is a reference to Christ the minister of the New Covenant, as Moses was of the Old Covenant.

Answer: “And he answered, "No.”

3. Request – 1:22-23

a. Question: “Then they said to him, “Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?”

b. Answer. ﻿“I *am* ﻿﻿‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: (Isaiah 40:3; Mal. 3:1)

      “Make straight the way of the Lord,” as the prophet Isaiah said.”

B. About His Teaching – 1:24-28

1. Jews: Why do you baptize? – 1:24-25

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“Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees. And they asked him, saying, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?”

2. John: “To introduce the real Baptizer” – 1:26-28

“John answered them, saying, ﻿﻿“I baptize with water,”

John’s water baptism was not to salvation. It was a baptism of repentance to avoid the judgment of God on that generation of the nation in 70AD and to prepare these Palestinian Jews to receive forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit.

[They, like everyone else on planet earth would have to believe on Jesus for eternal life.]

Jesus’ baptism was “Spirit Baptism”, looking forward to Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2), and beyond when the Holy Spirit would baptize believers into the body of Christ, at the time of their belief in Jesus. “For ﻿﻿by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.” (1 Cor. 12:13)

“but there stands One among you whom you do not know. ﻿﻿It is He who, coming after me, ﻿﻿is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose.”

That Spirit Baptizer is already here. He is among you. Though He came after me, He is greater than I am. I am not worthy to loose the strap of His sandal.

Note: “Loosing the strap of a sandal” was a task too lowly even for a slave to perform.

﻿“These things were done ﻿﻿in ﻿﻿ Bethany [near Jericho?] beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.”

II. The Confession of John the Baptist – 1:29-34

A. The Arrival of Jesus – 1:29a

“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him,”

B. The Announcement of John – 1:29b- 34

1. A Proclamation – 1:29b-30

“Behold! ﻿﻿The Lamb of God ﻿﻿who takes away the sin of the world! This is He of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man who ﻿﻿is preferred before me, for He was before me. (See v. 15)

2. A Problem – 1:31-34

a. Problem Stated – 1:31

“I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, ﻿﻿therefore I came baptizing with water.”

John did not know who He was. Yet, at the baptism he said, “I have need to be baptized by you.” At that point the dove had not descended on Jesus. That came after He was baptized.

b. Problem Solved - 1:32-34

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“And John bore witness, saying, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, ﻿﻿this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.”

I believe that John the Baptist received a special vision (revelation) of the Holy Spirit coming on Jesus prior to the public demonstration at the Baptism.

﻿“And I have seen and testified that this is the ﻿﻿Son of God.”

The prophesied Davidic King was God’s Son,

“He shall build a house for My name, and I will ﻿﻿establish the throne of his kingdom forever.” (2 Sam. 7:13)

And the messianic King is uniquely the Son of God”

“I will declare the ﻿﻿decree: The Lord has said to Me, You *are* My Son, Today I have begotten You.” (Psalm 2:7)

Jesus is the unique Son of God. Believers in the Gospel of John are not called sons; they are children. But in many places in the New Testament the overcoming believers are called sons. (Gal. 4:6-7; I Thess. 5:5; Rev 21:7)

Conclusion: