

# John the Baptist: Relation to Jesus, Temple & Kingdom

## **Peaceful Transfer of Disciples – Messiah Reception**

John 1:29 “The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. He is the one of whom I said, ‘A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.’”

John 1:35-37 “The next day John was there again with **two of his disciples**, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he said, “Behold, the Lamb of God.” The two disciples heard what he said and followed Jesus.

Luke 7: 18-23 The **disciples of John** told him about all these things. John summoned **two of his disciples** and sent them to the Lord to ask, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another? When the men came to him, they said, “John the Baptist has sent us to you to ask, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?’” At that time he cured many of their diseases, sufferings, and evil spirits; he also granted sight to many who were blind. And he said to them in reply, “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And **blessed is the one who takes no offense at me.**” (Let go, John and follow me!)

Matthew 11:2-6 “When John heard in prison of the works of the Messiah, **he sent his disciples to him with this question**, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?” ..... Matthew parallels Luke 7 here, but in a shorter version.

Matthew 11:7-14 “As they were going off, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John, “What did you go out to the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? Then what did you go out to see? Someone dressed in fine clothing? Those who wear fine clothing are in royal palaces. Then why did you go out? To see **a prophet?** Yes, I tell you, and **more than a prophet**. This is the one about whom it is written: ‘Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way before you’ (quote of Mal 3:1). Amen, I say to you, **among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist**; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent are taking it by force. All the prophets and the law prophesied up to the time of John. And **if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah, the one who is to come**. Mal 3:23-Elijah show 1<sup>st</sup>

From Zechariah’s Canticle Luke 1:76 “you, child, will be called **prophet of the Most High...**”

**Elijah?** Questions about Elijah-John? Matthew 17:10-13 “Then the disciples asked Jesus, “Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?” He said in reply, “Elijah will indeed come and restore all things; but I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him but did to him whatever they pleased. So also will the Son of Man suffer at their hands.” Then **the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John Baptist.**”

Luke 1:17 ‘he will go before him **in the spirit and power of Elijah** to turn the hearts of fathers toward children and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous,...

*John dresses as Elijah, also a desert dweller like Elijah*

Matthew 3:4 “John wore clothing made of camel’s hair and had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey.” 2 Kings 1:8 “hairy garment, leather belt at waist”

**Was John a Nazirite?** From Announcement Luke 1:15 “He will drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother’s womb.”

A Nazirite Vow principally meant three observances:

1. Abstaining from strong drink, all grape products-wine or the fruit, fresh or dried, seed or skin (Num. 6:3, 4)
2. Allowing the hair of the head to grow, unshaven- no razor used (Num. 6:5)
3. Abstaining from coming near of a dead body to avoid defilement (Num. 6:6).

Also, Nazarites were highly esteemed among the Hebrews (Amos 2:11; Lam. 4:7).

Other examples, included Samuel a Nazirite (1 Sam. 1:11), and also Samson (Judges 13:4, 5).

## **John’s Moral Teaching**

Luke 3:10-15 “And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” 11He said to them in reply, “*Whoever has two tunics should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food should do likewise.*” 12Even tax collectors came to be baptized and they said to him, “Teacher, what should we do?” 13He answered them, “*Stop collecting more than what is prescribed.*” 14Soldiers also asked him, “And what is it that we should do?” He told them, “*Do not practice extortion, do not falsely accuse anyone, and be satisfied with your wages.*” 15Now the people were filled with expectation, and ***all were asking in their hearts whether John might be the Messiah.***”

Matthew 3:7-10 “When John saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “*You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? (Luke 3:7 “John said to the **crowds**... brood of vipers”-Jesus likes that phrase too, says it of Pharisees/Scribes in Matthew 12:34, 23:33). **Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance.** And do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you, God can raise up children to Abraham from these stones. 10Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees. Therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”*

## **John’s Relation or Not to the Temple – A Statement or Inauguration of New Kingdom**

*John was Son of a Priest-Levite:*

Luke 1:5, 8-9 “there was a priest named Zechariah of the **priestly division of Abijah**; his wife was from the daughters of **Aaron**, and her name was Elizabeth.....verse 8-9 “Once when he was **servicing as priest** in his division’s turn before God, according to the practice of the **priestly service**, he was chosen by lot to **enter the sanctuary of the Lord to burn incense.**

*But John not named with a Priestly Lineage Name*

Luke 1:13 “Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall name him John.”

Luke 1: 60 “but his mother said in reply, “No. He will be called John.” But they answered her, “There is no one among your relatives who has this name.”

Luke 3:2 “during the high **priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas**, the word of God came to John the **son of Zechariah** in the desert. He went throughout [the] whole region of the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins...”

John, 1) not named like a priest, 2) not dressed like a priest and 3) not serving in the Temple?

## ***Were all of these statements synchronized with the later explicit teaching of Jesus on Temple?***

### **OT Background of Abuses in Temple Worship**

Isaiah 1:11 What do I care for the multitude of your sacrifices? says the LORD. I have had enough of whole-burnt rams and fat of fatlings; In the blood of calves, lambs, and goats I find no pleasure

Amos 5:21-22 "I hate, I despise your feasts, I take no pleasure in your solemnities. Even though you bring me your burnt offerings and grain offerings I will not accept them; Your stall-fed communion offerings, I will not look upon them."

#### ***Do these passages reflect Jesus' attitude to the Temple?***

Luke 21:5-6 "While some people were speaking about how the temple was adorned with costly stones and votive offerings, he said, "All that you see here—the days will come when there will not be left a stone upon another stone that will not be thrown down."

John 4:20-21 "the woman said, 'you people say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem.'" Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem....."

#### ***Why was Jesus' cleansing of the Temple was so provocative?***

The event occurs in all of the gospels (near end for Matthew 21:12–17, Mark 11:15–19, Luke 19:45–48 but at beginning for John 2:13–16). This action would have caught Jewish, Roman and all of the public's attention.

#### ***Mark's Gospel especially presents the event in the context of Jesus' cursing a fruitless tree to death.***

Mark 11:12-21 "The next day as they were leaving Bethany he was hungry. Seeing from a distance a fig tree in leaf, he went over to see if he could find anything on it. When he reached it he found nothing but leaves; it was not the time for figs. And he said to it in reply, "May no one ever eat of your fruit again!" And his disciples heard it. *They came to Jerusalem, and on entering the temple area he began to drive out those selling and buying there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves. He did not permit anyone to carry anything through the temple area. Then he taught them saying, "Is it not written: 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples'? But you have made it a den of thieves."* The chief priests and the scribes came to hear of it and were seeking a way to put him to death, yet they feared him because the whole crowd was astonished at his teaching. When evening came, they went out of the city. Early in the morning, as they were walking along, they saw the fig tree withered to its roots. Peter remembered and said to him, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered."

#### ***Dead Worship Condemned – Elsewhere Jesus says this about the Coming Day of the Lord***

Luke 17:37 "They said to him in reply, "Where, Lord?" He said to them, "Where the carcass is, there also the vultures will gather."

*A Charge and allegation at Jesus Trial brings this up?*

Mark 14: 57-58 Some took the stand and testified falsely against him, alleging, "We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands and within three days I will build another not made with hands.'"

Matthew 27:40 On the cross, he is jeered at "and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself, if you are the Son of God, [and] come down from the cross!"

John 2:18-21 "At this the Jews answered and said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and you will raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking about the temple of his body.

*Also, a similar charge was leveled at St Stephen in Sanhedrin Trial?*

Acts 6:14 "For we have heard him claim that this Jesus the Nazorean will destroy this place and change the customs that Moses handed down to us."

***Is there a connection between Zechariah who was murdered at Temple, & John's Father?***

Luke 11: 49-51 Therefore, the wisdom of God said, 'I will send to them prophets and apostles; some of them they will kill and persecute' in order that this generation might be charged with the blood of all the prophets shed since the foundation of the world, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who died between the altar and the temple building. Yes, I tell you, this generation will be charged with their blood!"

2 Chronicles 24:19-21 ***Is this the Zechariah killed?*** "Although prophets were sent to them to turn them back to the LORD and to warn them, the people would not listen. Then the spirit of God clothed Zechariah, son of Jehoiada the priest. He took his stand above the people and said to them: "Thus says God, Why are you transgressing the LORD's commands, so that you cannot prosper? Because you have abandoned the LORD, he has abandoned you." But they conspired against him, and at the king's command they stoned him ***in the court of the house of the LORD.***"

Matthew 23:35 describes this murdered prophet in the Temple as "says his name as "Zechariah son of Berechiah", which would put him in line with being the OT Book Prophet as we read in Zechariah 1:1 "the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah, son of Berechiah"

Zechariah 8-12 especially is about rebuilding the Temple and Glory again there-worthy worship Note that the prophetic and infamous price of Jesus being handed over to Sanhedrin was the 'thirty pieces of silver' for the good shepherd and it comes from ***Zechariah 11:12*** as reported by Matthew 26:15 "What are you willing to give me if I hand him over to you?" They paid him thirty pieces of silver, and from that time on Judas looked for an opportunity to hand him over.

*Ezekiel's Vision of Departing Glory - Temple Abandoned and Desolate*

Ezekiel 10: 18Then the glory of the LORD left the threshold of the temple and took its place upon the cherubim.

Ezekiel 11:22-23 "Then the cherubim lifted their wings and the wheels alongside them, with the glory of the God of Israel above them. The glory of the LORD rose up from the middle of the city and came to rest on the mountain east of the city."