

Jesus and John the Baptist - (Luke 7:18–35)

¹⁸ John’s disciples told him about all these things. Calling two of them, ¹⁹ he sent them to the Lord to ask, “Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?”

²⁰ When the men came to Jesus, they said, “John the Baptist sent us to you to ask, ‘Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?’ ”

²¹ At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. ²² So he replied to the messengers, “Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. ²³ Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me.”

²⁴ After John’s messengers left, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? ²⁵ If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear expensive clothes and indulge in luxury are in palaces. ²⁶ But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷ This is the one about whom it is written:

“ ‘I will send my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’ ”

²⁸ I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”

²⁹ (All the people, even the tax collectors, when they heard Jesus’ words, acknowledged that God’s way was right, because they had been baptized by John. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God’s purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John.)

³¹ “To what, then, can I compare the people of this generation? What are they like? ³² They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling out to each other:

“ ‘We played the flute for you, and you did not dance;
we sang a dirge, and you did not cry.’ ”

³³ For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ ³⁴ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and “sinners.” ’ ³⁵ But wisdom is proved right by all her children.” ¹

Jesus and John the Baptist - Notes from *The Bible Guide*

John the Baptist is in prison. He feels abandoned. If Jesus is the Messiah, then surely his first act of Jubilee must be to release his cousin from jail? He sends his disciples to ask Jesus to explain the delay.

Jesus responds with an unmistakable demonstration of God’s power. He heals the handicapped, cures diseases and delivers from evil spirits. He sends John’s disciples to tell what they’ve seen—and to encourage the prophet to be patient.

When they have gone, Jesus pays tribute to John. He is none other than the prophet that Malachi had foretold—the one who would appear to announce the Messiah (Malachi 3:1; 4:5, 6).

Jesus says there’s no pleasing people. They find fault with John’s fasting and solitude—and with Jesus’ feasting and partying. Time will prove them both true to God in their character and calling.²

¹ *The Holy Bible: New International Version*. (1984). (Lk 7:18–35). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

² Knowles, A. (2001). *The Bible guide* (1st Augsburg books ed., pp. 478–479). Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg.