

## Questions Posed for Study

Question: Why was important to mention what John the Baptist wore & ate?

### The office of a prophet

(Matthew 3:3 - 4)

**Inro:** When it comes to several topics mentioned from the Scriptures, there are some folks who get quite testy. Subjects like money and tithing, appropriate or inappropriate clothing. There is no doubt biblically speaking, the issue of either is a **Galatians 5:16 - 18** in action and more pointedly, **verse 17**. However, this is not the point of our study, just thought I would put it out there as food for meditation. Anyhow, we must come to an understanding that God doesn't just simply toss out information to fill up the pages, these things are divinely placed in the Word of God, by God, for us to consider, to think & meditate upon their significance. And as we do, we will often find amazing tidbits of information that will help us to understand the character and the characteristics of the time and settings. So, don't always be in a rush to gloss over the seemingly insignificant details, they are there for a reason – savor them!

For about 300 to 400 years (from Malachi) to this time of John Baptist, Israel has been dominated by the Greeks and then the Romans. During the four hundred years of silence, Hellenism had a huge impact on Israel and they were without any significant prophets following Malachi until we come to John Baptist, the one who spoken of by Isaiah – **Isaiah 40:3** – **“The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”** (Approximately 800 years earlier.)

#### I. The message in word – **Matthew 3:3b.**

A. John Baptist was cousin to Jesus Christ and was born several months before Christ.

1. John the Baptist was born into the family lineage of the \_\_\_\_\_, both his father & mother were of the lineage of Aaron. (Zechariah & Elizabeth)
2. The message, “prepare ye the way of the Lord”, was first divinely inspired by God through \_\_\_\_\_ the prophet. (**Isaiah 40:3**)
3. The word, “repent” signifies the reality of the \_\_\_\_\_ of sin in the lives of the Jews.
4. If there is no sin, there is no need for a \_\_\_\_\_ let alone for one to repent.
5. However, every Jew and Gentile are born sinners, \_\_\_\_\_ from God and need to turn from their sin which begins with repentance. **Colossians 1:12** – **“And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in *your* mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.”** (**John 3:15 -21**)

6. The emphasis of John the Baptist was the need for sinners to \_\_\_\_\_ for if one doesn't repent they can't have a relationship with God, they remain alienated from God.
  7. The rejection of repentance continues to manifest itself as the words would have it  
**Colossians 1:21** - "enemies" or hostile to God and "wicked works."
- B. Take special note that John Baptist doesn't take \_\_\_\_\_ for the message, he clearly stated when he was accosted by the religious crowd, that he is but a voice, the message is God's message. **John 1:22 & 23.**
1. One of the most important reasons for you and I to \_\_\_\_\_ ourselves is so that nothing in or about our lives is a hindrance to the Gospel message. (**John 3:30**)
  2. We have heard the expression that the proof is in the pudding. It applies nicely to our lives being an open and clear \_\_\_\_\_ that shows the power of God at work in our lives. (**Matthew 5:14 – 16**)
  3. "Proof in the pudding" is the best way to know if something is true or not, it is to experience it firsthand. If folks can see God at work changing our lives, they are more apt to listen and consider.

## II. The message in clothing and food – **Matthew 3:4.**

- A. The message here is the humble nature of John as God's messenger.
1. The camel's hair and the locust would be the typical items used by the very \_\_\_\_\_.
  2. The idea is \_\_\_\_\_ rather than extravagance as even the common people of his day wore more comfortable clothing. (**I Peter 3:4**)
  3. Again another aspect of John's plainness was to reveal that he had \_\_\_\_\_ his flesh. **Colossians 3:5** – "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:"
  4. Anyone remember those days when in the winter there were \_\_\_\_\_ long johns?
- B. The point being that it was important for John to \_\_\_\_\_ his flesh rather than revel in the delights of the \_\_\_\_\_.
- C. There was nothing \_\_\_\_\_ about John in how he dressed or the food he ate, what was important to John, was \_\_\_\_\_ himself from the world and the world's delights so he could spend more time focusing on God and serving God.
- D. John the Baptist was a \_\_\_\_\_ man, dedicated to serving God, preaching a plain message, "Prepare Ye the way of the Lord."
- E. What one would see of John and what we read of John reveals the inner character of John, his \_\_\_\_\_ belonged to God and purpose for which God called John, to serve.