

BLESSED IS HE WHO IS NOT OFFENDED

As John the Baptist languished in prison, he had some questions. How did his experience fit in with his preconceived ideas about Jesus being the Messiah? So he had a messenger go to Jesus and ask Him: “Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?” (Matt. 11:3)

Matthew 11:4–5 (NKJV)

4 Jesus answered and said to them, “Go and tell John the things which you hear and see:

5 The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

The works of Jesus were in perfect alignment with kingdom truth and what the Messiah would do in relation to the kingdom. His works were a little sample of kingdom works showing that He was indeed the promised Messianic King.

Isaiah 26:19 (NKJV)

19 Your dead shall live; Together with my dead body they shall arise. Awake and sing, you who dwell in dust; For your dew is like the dew of herbs, And the earth shall cast out the dead.

Isaiah 29:18 (NKJV)

18 In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book, And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness.

Isaiah 35:5–6 (NKJV)

5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

6 Then the lame shall leap like a deer, And the tongue of the dumb sing. For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, And streams in the desert.

Isaiah 61:1 (NKJV)

1 “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound;

What Jesus was doing were prophesied kingdom sign miracles in perfect accord with kingdom realities which served to show that He was the

Messiah Who brings in the kingdom. These were kingdom credentials of the Messiah!

Matthew 11:6 (NKJV)

6 And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.”

This serves as a mild rebuke of John. It serves as a reminder that all believers who recognize Jesus as the Christ are blessed (cf. Jn. 20:31).

Now of course John knew this. It was John who claimed to be the voice in the wilderness preparing the way of the LORD (Jn. 1:23). It was John who said there stands one among you “whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose” (Jn. 1:27). It was John who announced Jesus to be “The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (Jn. 1:29). It was John who testified that Jesus is “the Son of God” (Jn. 1:34). And it was John who said, “I am not the Christ, but, I have been sent before Him (Jn. 3:28).

John was not renouncing all this – just trying to make sense of his current situation in light of his understanding of what he thought the Messiah was going to immediately do.

“It is less what Jesus did and said that makes Him a stumbling block for many; it is rather that He does not conform to what we think He ought to have done and said.”

– *The New International Bible Commentary*

It is way too easy to assume a Jesus of our own making according to our own human thinking, when in fact God’s ways may be completely different. That is why we must not approach God with any preconceived ideas about Who He is or how He works. We must let Him tell us. This is the lesson that Jesus is teaching John at this point.

Isaiah 55:8–9 (NKJV)

8 “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the Lord.

9 “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are **My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.**”

Vance Havner called this “*The Forgotten Beatitude*” – “*Blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.*” We must let God be God – let Jesus be Jesus. Don’t try to conform Him to our human thinking or our preconceived ideas.

Even if we can't make sense of things – we must remain firmly camped on the truth of Who Jesus is, knowing that He is Lord over all and that He has a sovereign plan that He is working out – even if we can't understand it. This is our calling as believers, whether it be Job, John the Baptist, or you.

The idea of being “**offended**” (Gk. skandalizo) is the idea of stumbling or being caught in sin. Just because Jesus isn't doing things the way we think He should be, or the way we expect, we should NOT fall into the sin of challenging or sinfully doubting God. The way of the blessed is not to be offended when things don't make sense. Don't blame Jesus! Don't be sinfully offended. Walk by faith. Never doubt in the dark what you have known to be true in the light.

“God is too good to be unkind,
Too wise to be mistaken; and
When you cannot trace His hand,
You can trust His heart.” – **Charles Spurgeon**

Interestingly, Jesus didn't really give John more insight. He just reminded him of what he already knew – which is that Jesus is the Messiah fulfilling prophecy. John ended up going to his death without having all his specific questions answered or understanding how his prison experience fit in with “the kingdom being at hand.” Job had a similar experience. Job likewise never got all the answers he was demanding.

Sometimes God says, “You have all the evidence you need. Just hold onto your faith consistent with the Scriptural truth.” That is the blessed position before God.