

Messiah Will Remove Your Burdens

Matthew 3:11-17

I. Israel's plight

- A. The prophets had warned of God's judgment.
 - 1. This had come to pass.
 - (a) They had gone into exile and returned.
- B. The prophets had also spoken of restoration.
 - 1. There was the promise of a Messiah.
 - (a) Messiah would bring a restoration of God's Kingdom.
 - 2. So, Israel's hope looked to the fulfillment of promises.
- C. There were different ideas of how God's Kingdom would be restored.
 - 1. A political/military view.
 - (a) The Messiah would be a conquering King.
 - (b) He would break the yoke of Roman oppression.
 - 2. A religious view.
 - (a) God's Kingdom would be ushered in through Law following.
 - (b) Breaking the Law brought judgment.
 - (c) Adhering to the Law would bring restoration.
- D. God had another plan.
 - 1. The Messiah would be a different kind of king.
 - (a) His kingdom would be a spiritual kingdom.
 - (b) It would not be a kingdom of this world.
 - (c) You would enter the kingdom through faith in the King.
 - (d) So, Messiah would not be a politician or a general.
 - 2. The Pharisees and Sadducees said the Law was the key.
 - (a) But there were some things they didn't understand.

II. John's words for the religious leaders seem harsh (Mt 3:7-10).

- A. Doesn't he want them to repent?
 - 1. As a prophet, John knows their motives.
 - (a) They are not coming to repent.
 - (b) They are there to check him out, to evaluate him.
 - (c) They are jealous that people are going to him.
 - (d) They are hypocrites.
 - 2. The Pharisees and Sadducees don't think they need to repent.
 - (a) They strive to follow the Law
 - (b) They see themselves as righteous through the Law.
 - (c) They are righteous in their own eyes.
 - (d) Think they need to make the people righteous like them.

- B. Legalism breeds self-righteousness and hypocrisy.
 - 1. Legalists don't understand the nature of sin.
 - (a) They focus on behavior and self-reformation.
 - (b) But behavior is external. It is only symptomatic.
 - (c) Sin is a heart problem, a problem of our nature.
 - 2. Sin is about who we are, not just what we do.
 - (a) So, we can't solve our problem by changing behavior.
 - (b) Legalists are self-righteous because they think their own efforts to follow the Law make them righteous.
 - (c) They compare themselves to others, and point accusing fingers. They burden people with Law.
 - 3. Legalists don't understand that access to God requires perfect holiness (James 2:10).
 - (a) That's why we need a Savior who fulfills the Law for us (2 Corinthians 5:21).
 - (b) That's why we need grace.

III. Isaiah foretold that the Messiah would be a humble Servant.

- A. The Spirit of the Lord will rest upon him (Isaiah 11:1-3).
 - 1. "A shoot from the stump of Jesse."
 - 2. He will have wisdom, understanding through the Spirit.
- B. Old Testament kings were anointed with oil.
 - 1. Oil represents the Spirit.
 - (a) The Spirit empowered them to fight holy war (David).
 - (b) The Spirit gave them discernment to make judgments (Isaiah 11:3).
 - 2. The Spirit will empower the Messiah (Isaiah 61:1-3).
- C. Why does Jesus need to get baptized? He had no sin.
 - 1. John's baptism was not a sign of salvation.
 - (a) It was preparation; turning hearts back to God.
 - 2. For Jesus, it was like an ordination; an anointing.
 - (a) Jesus is consecrating himself to God, as Servant.
 - (b) Heaven opens. Father anoints the Son (like David).
 - (c) The Father speaks a blessing over Jesus (pleasing).
- D. Isaiah said the Servant would suffer.
 - 1. Through his suffering he will fulfill the Law (pleasing sac.)
 - (a) The Spirit's anointing will be on all who trust in him (Joel 2:28-29).
 - (b) As John said, Jesus baptizes us in the Holy Spirit.
 - 2. You will not find Jesus through following Laws and rules.
 - 3. You find Jesus by admitting you're a sinner and trusting in Him.
 - 4. He is not a politician, a general, or a lawyer.
 - 5. He is the Servant who became King. Is he your King?