

JOHN

John: The Gospel of Gospels

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John 1:9-11

Lesson 8: Painful Rejection of The Word Incarnate

“There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him” (John 1:9-11).

The apostle John in these 3 verses, identifies eight truths regarding the coming of the Word Incarnate: 1) the Word as the True Light, 2) the homecoming of the True Light into the world, 3) the Light’s enlightenment of every man, 4) the Light’s presence in the world, 5) the world as His masterpiece, 6) the world’s ignorance of Him, 7) His visit to His own, and 8) His own’s rejection of Him.

Let’s unpack the truth that John packed in these 3 verses.

Verse 9: “There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.” We begin with the first half of the verse, “There was the true Light.”

1. The Recognition of The True Light

In verse 9, the apostle John uses the adjective *true* to contrast Jesus Christ with John the Baptist, who was merely a ‘lamp’ (5:35). **John** in his Gospel has no intention of demeaning the Baptist. In 1:8, he said that the Baptist is not the Light and even the Baptist himself in John 1:20, “openly declared, ‘I am not the Christ.’”

In essence, “I am not the True Light, I am simply a *lamp* on the path to the True Light.” This brings us to the second half of v. 9.

2. The True Light’s enlightenment

John brings the truth home: v. 9b “the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.”

This passage has been a source of contention among scholars as to what it means. Does it mean that every man is carrying the light of God in him? Not at all! Some read this and claim that every human being has God’s light or that God lives in every person. That’s not true either.

What the apostle is saying here is that,

- through creation Christ has enlightened every man (1:3; cf. Rom. 1:18-21).
- through proclamation and distribution of the gospel to the nations, every man is enlightened and will continue to be enlightened. “And the gospel must first be published among all nations” (Mk. 13:10) KJV. Which brings us to the third point.

3. Homecoming of Jesus Christ

“He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him” (v10, 11).

In these two verses, John the apostle reveals a chilling experience—rejection of Christ, the Messiah. He came to two group of people, the world and Israel.

A Visit to the World

The Maker, the Redeemer and the Ruler, King of kings, Lord of lords, the creator of the world was in the world He created, and yet they could not have cared less. Imagine, the Creator came to those He created. They behaved as if they didn’t even see Him. This would have been a time to welcome the One who created and gave meaning to everything man cherishes. And they didn’t. Rather, they treated him like scum, like a dead smelly animal. Mind you, this is the world He created in all its charming beauty. One would think that the world would have welcomed Him with great excitement and homage. No. That didn’t happen. What pain! With a feeling of rejection, He goes to His special people.

A Visit to His Special People

He came specifically to Israel, His chosen people. They not only rejected their own Messiah but arranged for His execution. Luke tells us:

“Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know; this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.” (Acts 2:22, 23).

That must have been painful. Isa. 1:3-4. **Of all the** people, the Israelites were in a better position to welcome Him. They were the custodians of the oracle of God. **Rom. 9:4, 5.** The Hebrew Bible gives them every detailed account about the coming of the Messiah. It precisely gives them: 1) the tribe from which He would come (Gen. 49:10), 2) the place He would be born (Micah 5:2; fulfilled in Matt. 2:1-6; John 7:40-43), 3) the manner of His birth (Isa. 7:14), 4) the year of His birth (Dan 9:25 fulfilled in Luke 2:25-32). and 5) the miraculous signs He would perform (Isa. 35:5, 6; fulfilled in John 6:14; John 7:31; Matt. 11: 2-6), and 6) the coming of the forerunner (Mal. 3:1). How can anyone blame God? He gave them six signs of the coming of the Messiah... The tribe, place, manner, year, sign miracles and forerunner.

How could anyone in Israel miss this? It could be forgivable for the Gentiles who didn't have the record, but for the Jews, God gave them all the signs they needed to identify Him when He comes. God is not a God of confusion.

How could they have missed this? In one word, **religion...**

- They were blinded by religion. (**2 Cor. 4:4**). They had been in spiritual darkness for 400 years. They saw, but didn't know what they were looking at... Mk 4:12 cf. Isa. 6:9
- Their blindness kept them from recognizing God's three-dimensional wisdom regarding the coming Messiah:
 - 1) The humble means by which He came (John 6:41-43; Matt. 13:54-56).
 - 2) God's offering Him as a sacrifice (John 1:29). (It baffles them, how can their Messiah be sacrificed?)

3) His death on the cross (Gal. 3:13; 1 Cor. 1:18-21). That was the last straw for their rejection. Association with the cross is a curse (Gal. 3:13). So they saw Christ as a cursed One.

Recapping John 1:9-11, There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.

“My ways are not your ways... (Isa. 55:8). Who received Him then? We’ll answer this question next lesson, until then may God richly bless you in times such as these.