

John # 27 “Our Lord’s Earthly Ministry Begins” *John 1:30-35*

In the four centuries that passed between Malachi and Matthew, we see changes in Palestine to include even the language of the people along with their customs and religious institutions, so much so that the prophet Malachi wouldn’t have recognized his own country.

The Sanhedrim is the Supreme court of the Jewish government with a limited power as the high priests

were for the most part, puppets of Rome.

Yes, once proud patriotic Israel who had every right to rule the world as God’s direct representatives for evangelization, had fallen prey to her own rebellious apostasy more so than any other country could have.

During the 400 years of Israel’s prophetic silence, a new group of leaders emerged known as the Pharisees, the self-proclaimed champions of separation of the Jews from all other nations.

This separation was a great idea as long as it was a separation from sinful behavior which included man’s worst sin of arrogance which is far more difficult to achieve than wearing different clothes, eating different food and speaking a different language.

The Pharisees were patriotic, even to the point of being racist, longing for an independence of their country, absolutely hating the foreign occupation of Rome.

The scribes of Israel had an incredible opportunity to showcase the God of the Old Testament and His grace to the entire world but they wasted their chance.

Instead they used their position for unmerited attention and respect along with selfish gain. *As their commentaries on the Scriptures grew in popularity and acceptance, the people studied the commentaries instead of God’s Word.*

Then of course, the traditions of men became of equal and then superior value to God’s Word.

And so, the God-breathed authority of the Holy Scriptures became a matter of opinion, an arbitrary system in which any member of the in-crowd’s ideas could be considered to be divine authority.

There was also a party at that time known as the Sadducees; proud worldly men who refused to follow the restrictions of the Pharisees desiring rather to live a life of comfortable self-absorption.

They hated the idea of Pharisaic separation because they had no issues with Gentile

fellowship or Greek culture and no interest in fighting for freedom for their country.
The Sadducees were of upper-class royalty and wealth, while the Pharisees and scribes were of the middle class.

And of course, both Pharisees and Sadducees considered themselves far above the lower class of publicans and sinners, who were equally worthless in their minds.

Israel was God's priest nation which was given the sacred revelation of God Himself, not to keep under a bushel basket but to share with all other nations for the regeneration of all mankind.

The Lord Jesus Christ's baptism does not represent salvation.

Question: What was John the Baptist saying?

In the O.T. animal sacrifices, the animals paid with their physical deaths, whereas the Lord Jesus Christ paid for the sins of mankind with His substitutionary spiritual death.

The Levitical offerings communicated the Gospel to those who could see even though they couldn't read.

Romans 6:23-"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Genesis 2:17-"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you should not eat, for in the day that you eat of it (dying) you shall surely die."

Question: Is it Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit?

The salvation of every believer from Jesus' first disciples in John 1 down through the ages, whether it be by verbal proclamation or not, is a witness for the Lord Jesus Christ.

When a person is honest and says "I know who I am, I need forgiveness, I want to be rid of my guilt and I want happiness, peace and meaning in life, the Lord Jesus Christ will turn, meet and accept him.

Three Types of Evangelism: 1. Mass evangelism 2. Personal evangelism 3. Contact evangelism

The most difficult witnessing from an audience perspective is personal evangelism.