

# WHO'S WHO?

John 1:19-34 / Yeshua §§ 26-27

Next Week: John 1:35-51 / § 28

From being pulled over for speeding, to trying to get into your college dorm, there are countless times and situations that require us to provide proper identification about who we are. But our identity is far more than just our name. It connects us to our history, to our citizenship, to our finances, to our relationships and to so much more. In the 1st century, where proper documentation was far more difficult to obtain, the role of a witness played an important part in society. In our passage today, we will see John the Baptizer provide testimony both about who he is, and far more importantly, about who Jesus is.

Part 1.	The Coming of the King
→	<i>Who's Who?</i>
Part 2.	The Authentication of the King
Part 3.	The Controversy over the King
Part 4.	The Training of the Twelve by the King
Part 5.	The Opposition to the King:
Part 6.	The Preparation of the Disciples by the King
Part 7.	The Official Presentation of the King
Part 8.	The Preparation for the Death of the King
Part 9.	The Trial of the King:
Part 10.	The Death of the King
Part 11.	The Resurrection and the Ascension of the King
Part 12.	The Sequels

## JOHN'S TESTIMONY ABOUT HIMSELF (JOHN 1:19-28)

Clearly the ministry of John the Baptizer had caught the attention of the Jewish religious leaders. In Matthew 3:7 we see the first instance of a number of Pharisees and Sadducees coming out to investigate and observe John and his ministry. There seems to have been a two step investigation process used by the Jewish Sanhedrin (the highest Jewish legal and religious authority). First they would send a delegation to "observe and report" on any growing religious movement. Next, if needed, they would send a delegation to question the leader to determine more clearly who he claimed to be and what he were hoping to accomplish.

John the baptizer continued to collect quite a following, as people were recognizing that he was some sort of prophet. In this passage we see that the second official delegation had been sent out, to get to the bottom of exactly who John claimed to be. He answered their questions regarding his identity with three specific denials. John made it clear that he was: **not "the Christ"** (meaning "Messiah"), **not "Elijah"** (see Malachi 4:5-6), **and not "the Prophet"** (see Deuteronomy 18:15-19). This obviously did not give them the information they had been sent to acquire and so they once again asked him to positively identify who he actually was. John's response is very interesting, and reveals to us two seemingly contradictory truths. John was both important and insignificant at the same time. He was unbelievably important, as he was the prophesied herald of the Messiah, yet John recognized that he was less than a slave in comparison to the present Messiah King.

We will continue to see this incredible attitude of humility in John as the story continues. John was the greatest prophet the world had ever seen (see Matthew 11:11) because God had selected him to be the forerunner to the Messiah King, and yet, in comparison to the Messiah King, he was not even worthy to untie Jesus' sandal.

## JOHN'S TESTIMONY ABOUT JESUS (LUKE 1:29-34)

The next day John was approached again, but this time not by men seeking to find out what he had to say about himself, but by the very man whom he had been sent to prepare the way for, and testify about. This was the moment John had been prepared for, the time had come for John to publicly declare who Jesus was. However, John's declaration is not at all expected! John didn't cry out "Behold, Jesus, the Messiah!" as we would naturally predict. Rather, John's testimony, here at the very beginning of Jesus's ministry, unveils two surprising truths about Jesus, that virtually no one would have expected.

First, John declared that this Jesus was "the lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!". John was clearly building on the Old Testament picture of a sacrifice made for sin, and applying it to the Messiah. This would have been a shocking and confusing thing to hear, for the Messiah was expected to come and set God's people free from bondage and establish the permanent kingdom of Israel! Almost no

one expected the Messiah to come as a sacrifice for sin, yet this was exactly what had been revealed to John, and it was this title that John used to publicly identify Jesus, the Messiah King.

Secondly, John revealed that this man in front of him was deity. This was an even more radical claim! We see this when John says, "after me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me" (1:30). We have seen this statement before in the introduction to this gospel (1:15). While this statement seems confusing at first reading, as we break it down, we can understand exactly what John was saying, and surprising as it is.

"After me" - This is either referring to the fact that temporally, Jesus was born after John, or that his ministry follows after John's.

"ranks before me" - Referring to the fact Jesus was far more important than John.

"because he was before me" - here John is once again using temporal language, saying that the reason that Jesus was more important, was because Jesus existed before John. John could not be referring to the natural birth of Jesus, since John knew he was born first, so the only way to understand what John was saying, is to acknowledge that God had revealed to John, that Jesus was a pre-existent being, and therefore divine. Here the Apostle John (author of this Gospel) is tying together this Jesus Messiah King, who stands before John the baptizer, with the pre-existent Word from Chapter 1 (1:1).

John has now publicly and clearly testified to the character and ministry of Jesus the Messiah King. This is what he had been called by God to do, but God is certainly not finished with him yet. Now will begin the ministry of Jesus, the Messiah King.

### **Timeline Of Jesus' Early Ministry**

<b>Jesus' Baptism by John</b>	<b>Jesus' Temptation (40 Days)</b>	<b>Jesus Returns to John to be publicly identified</b>
<b>Matt 3:13-17; Mk 1:9-11; Lk 3:21-23</b>	<b>Matt 4:1-11; Mk 1:12-13; Lk 4:1-13</b>	<b>John 1:19-34</b>

### **Grace Family Needs, News and Notes**

#### **Family Needs!**

Children's Ministry is looking to fill their last few volunteer spots! If you don't have a place to serve yet, talk with Cathy Nelson on the patio or email [cnelson906@gmail.com](mailto:cnelson906@gmail.com) to find out more.

#### **Kick the Dust Up! Free Country Line Dancing w/ BBQ Food Truck!**

Friday June 7th, 7-10pm.