

# AN ODD GOD

<sup>1</sup> *In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea* <sup>2</sup> *and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”* <sup>3</sup> *This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: “A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”* <sup>4</sup> *John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey.* <sup>5</sup> *People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan.*

Matthew 3:1-5

<sup>21</sup> *“The Lord will rise up...to do His strange work, and perform His task, His alien task.”*

Isaiah 28:21

<sup>22</sup> *reject every kind of evil.*

I Thessalonians 5:22

...God breaks 400 years of prophetic silence with this strange man.

I. John came from an odd pedigree. / Don’t judge anyone after the flesh in this season.

A. Faithfulness without fruitfulness can be misread as divine disfavor. John’s parents, Zacharias and Elizabeth, bore a grievous stigma. (Luke 1:6,7)

<sup>6</sup> *Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly.* <sup>7</sup> *But*

*they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.*

B. John was expected to be a priest and to carry on Zacharias's line. But God had other plans.

II. John and a diet of locusts / It is a time for discriminating wisdom.

A. John ate locusts as a prophetic act. His very food being that which usually made a wilderness.

B. Locusts looked odd, but were clean according to Leviticus chapter 11.

C. God's works are going to look strange in this time.

D. Locusts are always misunderstood. Their legs, not their wings, contain their strength.

E. Locusts are utterly unpredictable in their leaping, and once they surrender to the wind they lose all power of navigation.

III. John, Samson, and wild honey (Judges 14:8,9) / It is the season for interpreting complex details with discrimination.

*<sup>8</sup> Some time later, when he went back to marry her, he turned aside to look at the lion's carcass, and in it he saw a swarm of bees and some honey. <sup>9</sup> He scooped out the honey with his hands and ate as he went along. When he rejoined his parents, he gave them some, and they too ate it. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey from the lion's carcass.*

A. Honey was clean, but bees were not.

B. The honey of bees was permitted, because the bees stored it up in their bodies, but it did not contain secretions from their body.

C. Sweetness will come from that which sought to destroy you.

IV. John and camel's hair / We must discern between the truly clean and unclean.

A. Camels were unclean yet their hair was not.

B. The camels are coming. (Genesis 24:63-65)

*<sup>63</sup> He went out to the field one evening to meditate, and as he looked up, he saw camels approaching. <sup>64</sup> Rebekah also looked up and saw Isaac. She got down from her camel <sup>65</sup> and asked the servant, "Who is that man in the field coming to meet us?" "He is my master," the servant answered. So she took her veil and covered herself.*

C. True help and deliverance are coming to the world.

D. The training of a lifetime has prepared you to bear the ornaments of a lifetime. (Genesis 24:19,20,22)

*<sup>19</sup> After she had given him a drink, she said, "I'll draw water for your camels too, until they have had enough to drink." <sup>20</sup> So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough, ran back to the well to draw more water, and drew enough for all his camels. ... <sup>22</sup> When the camels had finished drinking, the man took out a gold nose ring weighing a beka and two gold bracelets weighing ten shekels.*

V. John, winnowing, and the threshing floor (Luke 3:17) / It's time to discern between light and heavy matters. (Isaiah 21:10)

[Luk 3:17 NIV] <sup>17</sup> *“His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”*

[Isa 21:10 NIV] <sup>10</sup> *My people who are crushed on the threshing floor, I tell you what I have heard from the LORD Almighty, from the God of Israel.*

- A. Winnowing occurs on the threshing floor when wheat (the valuable thing) is separated from its chaff (the now worthless husk).
- B. The west wind, the flail, or the ox will do this work.
- C. Only the Son of God can winnow away from us what is no longer necessary.

#### VI. John's message / Offenses will only increase.

- A. The Jews baptized the Gentiles, but John was baptizing the Jewish leaders.
- B. John utterly deconstructed any sense of entitlement, pedigree, or human works.