



# Daily Reflections

**December 14, 2017**

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## Scripture

### **Matthew 11: 11-17**

Jesus said to the crowds:

"Amen, I say to you,

among those born of women

there has been none greater than John the Baptist;

yet the least in the Kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

From the days of John the Baptist until now,

the Kingdom of heaven suffers violence,

and the violent are taking it by force.

All the prophets and the law prophesied up to the time of John.

And if you are willing to accept it,

he is Elijah, the one who is to come.

Whoever has ears ought to hear."

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## Our Scripture Reflection

In order to help them cope during Roman occupied times, the people of Israel looked towards the future and the day when God would send them a Messiah, a savior who would liberate them from oppression and make the world right. Some thought that would be King David, others thought it would be Elijah or some other great Prophet. Some had thought John was the one, but he was in prison. Jesus tells the crowds that someone who is least in the Kingdom would be the One. And who might that be? The One who personified humility, Jesus. To their amazement the humble One was the great One.

# Food for your Journey

Has politics become a God-substitute? Have political "messiah figures" become false gods? ...

To believe in a political messiah requires one to accept by faith that we have no power of our own. Under this notion, we must believe that our station in life is not as good as it might be if a politician to our liking is in Congress and the White House. Political messiahs love to preach this message because it enhances their power over us. Polarizers on the left and right promote the messiahs of their choice so that disciples of their organizations will bring them "offerings," enhancing the fiction that they, too, have power. Broadcast and cable networks encourage bickering because conflict brings higher ratings and greater profits.

For a messiah figure to succeed, he must be matched to the real, not perceived, needs of his disciples. Are those needs economic and political, or are they moral and spiritual? If the former, by all means, vote for the best "deliverer." If the latter, I can only give you what the angel Gabriel told Joseph about that Messiah: "He will save his people from their sins."

That's a real need no political messiah can meet. But the authentic Messiah can.

—Cal Thomas, "Politics: The new religion," Jewish World Review, December 21, 2006, <http://jewishworldreview.com>.

Dear Jesus, Please give me the Grace of humility so that I can learn to imitate You through my words and actions. Amen.