**An Israelite Indeed**

*John 1:47*

**Introduction**

1. Philip told Nathanael about Jesus, and when he went to Jesus, Jesus described him – **John 1:47**
2. Israelite indeed:
   1. **Romans 9:6** – not all Israel who are of Israel.
   2. **Romans 2:28-29** – inward circumcision of the heart, inward Jew.
   3. The majority of Jews were merely God’s people as it pertained to the flesh. They were born Israelites, but their hearts were far from God (**cf. Isaiah 29:13**).
   4. God wanted their sincere service – **Micah 6:8**
3. None can become a Christian except through a sincere trust in God from the heart. However, some who are added to God’s family do not continue to develop, and/or lose the qualities which led them to gain an entrance into the Divine family.
4. Are you a Christian indeed?
   1. What are some qualities of Nathanael which led to Jesus’ statement about him?
   2. Are we merely nominal Christian, or are we living up to the name?
   3. The qualities possessed by Nathanael are what led to Him believing in Christ, and becoming a follower of Christ – they are qualities seen in those who are indeed Christians.
5. Refusing to Yield to Doubt
6. Nathanael expressed doubt/skepticism to Philip’s claim upon hearing where this Jesus was from – **John 1:45-46**
   1. Perhaps the skepticism came from a missing link in Nathanael’s mind concerning prophesy – **John 7:40-52**
      1. Nazareth in Galilee.
      2. **(v. 42)** – The Christ is supposed to come from Bethlehem.
      3. **(v. 52**) – no prophets have come from Galilee.
   2. Perhaps Nathanael was prejudiced toward Nazareth, and those from there – **John 1:46** – perhaps contempt in his voice.
      1. “The character of the people of Nazareth was such that they were proverbially despised and contemned, Joh 1:46; Joh 7:52. To come from Nazareth, therefore, or to be a Nazarene, was the same as to be despised, or to be esteemed of low birth.” (Albert Barnes’ Notes on the New Testament, Matthew 2:23)
      2. **Matthew 2:23** – Called a Nazarene in connection with being from Nazareth.
         1. General prophesies about the lowly estate of the Messiah.
         2. **Isaiah 53:1-3** – no form/comeliness, despised rejected.
   3. Regardless of the reason, the thought of Jesus being from Nazareth made Nathanael doubt He was the Messiah.
   4. However, this did not keep Nathanael from coming to see for himself:
      1. Philip said, ***“Come and see.”***
      2. Nathanael came, and reached the conclusion – **John 1:49**
      3. HE DID NOT YIELD TO HIS DOUBT AND WAS MADE TO BELIEVE.
7. **Hebrews 11:6** – impossible to please God without faith.
   1. **Romans 10:17** – faith comes from hearing God’s word.
   2. **2 Peter 3:18** – Must grow in such.
8. Faith, being something we grow in, will need to overcome doubts.
   1. Example of Peter – **Matthew 14:28-33** – “little faith” “why did you doubt?”
      1. Peter had enough faith to get out of the boat.
      2. **(v. 29)** – He did not sink immediately.
      3. **(v. 30)** – He sank when he lost focus on Jesus and yielded to his doubt.
   2. Man whose son had a mute spirit the disciples weren’t able to cast out due to unbelief – **Mark 9:21-24**
      1. Help my unbelief – NOT WILLING TO YIELD TO DOUBT.
      2. Give me the assurance I need.
      3. **Luke 17:5** – a desire for an increase in faith.
9. Satan is seeking to devour us – **1 Peter 5:8**
   1. **Ephesians 6:16** – shield of faith to quench fiery darts.
   2. Those darts may be points of doubt, but the Christian always trusts in God, and seeks answers from Him, not succumbing to doubt, and giving up.
      1. “My heart has no desire to stay Where doubts arise and fears dismay; Though some may dwell where these abound, My prayer, my aim, is higher ground.” (Higher Ground)
      2. The Christian does not “dwell where these abound.”
10. Desiring Truth
11. The doubt/skepticism Nathanael expressed showed to some degree that his perception of the Messiah was different than who He actually was – **John 1:45-46**
    1. This did not mean he was unwilling to accept anything different.
    2. It simply meant that he was mistaken.
    3. Yet, he obviously desired truth, FOR WHEN HE HEARD SOMETHING WHICH DIDN’T FIT HIS ORIGINAL THOUGHT, HE DID NOT REJECT IT, BUT INVESTIGATED.
    4. Most of the Jews rejected Jesus upon hearing His teaching with conflicted with their views. EVEN THOUGH THE WORKS PERFORMED VALIDATED HIS CLAIMS.
12. Those who are “Christians indeed” have a love for the truth – **Psalm 1:2** – delight in the law of the Lord.
13. Unlike Ahab – **1 Kings 22:5-9** – question of Jehoshaphat (Judah) would go to take Ramoth Gilead with Ahab (Israel).
    1. **(vv. 6-7)** – Ahab sought direction from false prophets.
    2. **(vv. 7-9)** – Jehoshaphat simply wanted the truth.
14. **Psalm 19:11-12** – Law of the Lord warns and brings to light faults hidden from us.
    1. Not a desire to remain ignorant.
    2. A desire to know in order to change.
15. Unlike Israel – **Jeremiah 5:30-31** – people love to have false prophesy.
    1. **Jeremiah 6:16** – ask for the old paths.
16. A Christian indeed is not willing to settle for fables, for he knows only the truth can save – **2 Timothy 3:16-17; 4:1-4**
    1. Even if there are some things hard to hear.
17. Having a Malleable Heart
18. While the knowledge Jesus revealed was miraculous, it paled in comparison to the miracles He would perform, but Nathanael believed anyway – **John 1:47-50** – you will see greater things.
    1. This is the extreme opposite of the obstinate Jews – **Matthew 12:38-42** – after Jesus had already healed a demon-possessed man, blind and mute.
       1. They claimed He did it by Beelzebub, and Jesus showed them the folly in such a claim.
       2. Their hearts were hardened against Jesus, and no sign would have changed them.
    2. **John 11:47-48** (after raising Lazarus) – acknowledged the signs, but didn’t believe.
    3. **Acts 4:16** (after Peter and John healed the lame man) – even after the resurrection of Jesus, and then the signs of the apostles they didn’t believe.
    4. Many did not believe due to their dull/hard hearts – **Matthew 13:14-15**
       1. I.e. they did not have hearts willing to change to conform to the truth.
       2. They were set in their ways, and even God cannot do anything with such a heart.
19. **Ezekiel 36:26-27** – prophecy concerning what God would do for spiritual Israel. (Messianic text)
    1. The inhabitants of the Messianic kingdom would be those who took God’s word to heart and molded their lives by it.
    2. I.e. spiritual Israel would be different than physical Israel in that in order for one to be a citizen at all God’s word must be written on his heart.
    3. **Cf. Jeremiah 31:33-34** – write on hearts, they will all know the Lord. (Personally upon entrance)
20. The Lord is the Potter, and we are the clay – **Jeremiah 18:1-11**
    1. The Lord sought to bring them to repentance.
    2. Malleable hearts – would be molded by the Lord’s will – repent.
    3. Stubborn hearts – would be destroyed.
21. NOT – **2 Timothy 3:5** – godliness but denying its power.
22. RATHER – **Romans 1:16; 12:2** – submitting to the power of the gospel to transform you.
    1. Receiving word with meekness – **James 1:21**
    2. Instead of replying against God’s will, making sure you are a vessel of honor – **Romans 9:19-24**
    3. “His pow’r can make you what you ought to be; His blood can cleanse your heart and make you free; His love can fill your soul, and you will see ’Twas best for Him to have His way with thee.” (Let Him Have His Way With Thee)
23. Having Sincere Faith
24. Jesus’ description of Nathanael as ***“an Israelite indeed”*** is qualified by ***“in whom is no deceit”*** – **John 1:47**
    1. Deceit – *dolos*, primarily “a bait, snare”; hence, “craft, deceit, guile,” (Vine)
       1. “taking advantage through craft and underhanded methods, deceit, cunning, treachery” (BDAG) (“in whom there is nothing false”)
    2. Putting something forth that appears as one thing but is in reality something else.
    3. Nathanael was not dishonest and hypocritical in his faith. He was legitimately following God and interested in spiritual things.
25. Deceit before God and others:
    1. **Romans 2:21-24** – straight hypocrisy, leading to blasphemy.
       1. **Matthew 23:1-3** – they say and do not do.
    2. **James 4:4-8** – spiritual adultery, double living. (double-mindedness)
26. Deceit of self:
    1. **James 1:22-24** – thinking there is blessedness in hearing without doing.
    2. **Galatians 6:7-8** – thinking you can sow to the flesh and reap eternal life.
    3. One is blessed when he is without deceit, and comes to God for healing – **Psalm 32:1-2**
27. Purpose of commandment is love from sincere faith – **1 Timothy 1:5; Ephesians 6:24**
28. A Christian indeed is one who is fully invested in loving the Lord and is not holding anything back from Him.

**Conclusion**

1. Nathanael was called an Israelite indeed.
2. We learn from the characteristics of Nathanael displayed in the text in order to be Christians indeed.