

# Matthew 21:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

## Analysis

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**The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?**—Jesus forces binary choice: divine origin (ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, ex ouranou) or human invention (ἐξ ἀνθρώπων, ex anthrōpōn). John's baptism represented his entire prophetic ministry, which authenticated Jesus (John 1:29-34). Their answer would reveal whether they recognized God's voice.

**If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?**—The leaders' political calculation (διελογίζοντο, dielogizonto, 'reasoned among themselves') exposes hearts seeking advantage, not truth. John had testified that Jesus was the Lamb of God—acknowledging John's divine authority meant confessing Jesus's Messiahship.

## Historical Context

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John's baptism had attracted massive following, including Pharisees and Sadducees whom he denounced (Matt 3:7). The people revered John as a prophet (v.26), creating political pressure. The religious leaders had rejected John's call to repentance, maintaining their self-righteousness—the root issue with Jesus.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. When has fear of consequences kept you from acknowledging truth you knew in your conscience?
2. How does political calculation ('what will people think?') compete with truth-seeking in your spiritual decisions?

## Interlinear Text

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τὸ	βάπτισμα	Ἰωάννου	πόθεν	ἥν	Ἐξ	οὐρανοῦ	ἢ
G3588	<b>The baptism</b>						
	G908	G2491		G4159	G2258	G1537	G3772
			<b>whence</b>	<b>was it</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>heaven</b>	<b>or</b>
							G2228
Ἐξ	ἀνθρώπων	οἱ	δὲ	διελογίζοντο	παρ'	έαυτοῖς	
<b>From</b>	<b>men</b>	G3588	<b>And</b>	<b>they reasoned</b>	<b>with</b>	<b>themselves</b>	
G1537	G444		G1161	G1260	G3844	G1438	
λέγοντες	Ἐὰν	εἴπωμεν	Ἐξ	οὐρανοῦ	ἐρεῖ	ἡμῖν	
<b>saying</b>	<b>If</b>	<b>we shall say</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>heaven</b>	<b>he will say</b>	<b>unto us</b>	
G3004	G1437	G2036	G1537	G3772	G2046	G2254	
Διατί	οὖν	οὐκ	ἐπιστεύσατε	αὐτῷ			
<b>Why</b>	<b>then</b>	<b>not</b>	<b>believe</b>	<b>him</b>			
G1302	G3767	G3756	G4100	G846			

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 John 3:20** (Parallel theme): For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

**John 3:18** (Faith): He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

**John 1:15** (References John): John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.

**Luke 20:5** (Faith): And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not?

**John 1:6** (References John): There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.