

*The Gospel of*

***John***

# John

## Introduction

*Each of the four gospels emphasizes a different aspect of Jesus Christ. Matthew presents Christ as Messiah, fulfiller of prophecy. Luke presents Jesus the Son of Man, while Mark concentrates on the miracles and the things that Jesus did. The gospel of John centers on the deity of Christ and on what He said.*

*This book is authored by John the apostle, who also wrote three letters and the book of Revelation. It is believed that this gospel was written around 90 A.D. from Ephesus, but some put a much earlier date on the writing. The bottom line is that as far as place written and date of writing we cannot be certain.*

*John was one of the so-called inner circle of apostles along with his brother James and Peter. He is spoken of five times as the apostle "whom Jesus loved." He is the one whom Jesus entrusted with the care of His mother. (John 19:26-27)*

*John knew Jesus Christ as well as any man. He walked with Him daily. He sat next to Him at the last supper. He was with Him before the high priest, (John 18:15-16) and he stood before the cross when He died. He was the first to arrive at the tomb.*

*Having been intimately associated with Jesus Christ, having listened to Him and observed Him, the conclusions that he reached are that Jesus is the Bread of Life, the Living Water, the Good Shepherd, the Messiah and God Incarnate.*

*His desire is to share with anyone who will listen what he knows to be true, namely, that the One of whom he writes is "Life and Light". (1 John 1:1-4) He writes this gospel in the same spirit of sincerity and love*

**v. 1:1. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

*John begins his gospel by stating in no uncertain terms that Jesus Christ is God. It is this truth upon which the gospel message depends.*

- a) *“In the beginning” signifies creation. (Gen. 1:1) In other words the pre-incarnate Christ existed before creation, and so, before time. He had eternal life within Himself, a fact pointed out by the writer of Hebrews as being an essential qualification of the Messiah. (Heb. 7:24-25)*
- b) *“The Word was with God” shows that He is a distinct person or substance, however, “The Word was God” shows the oneness that existed in power, intent, purpose; a oneness that existed in all ways. Distinct and yet one.*
- c) *The fact that distinction of persons existed in the Godhead was made known by the incarnation of the Word. He “left” the Godhead and became man. (Phil. 2:6-7) Before this event in time, this distinction was hidden in the oneness that existed before time began. (John 17:5)*
- d) *The inspired writer of Hebrews shows us through a “heavenly conversation” that this distinction did indeed exist before time. (Heb. 10:5-9) So the incarnation did not cause this distinction, but simply made it known and apparent. The incarnation, however, disrupted this oneness and at one point even seemed to have severed it. (Mark 15:34)*
- e) *John refers to the pre-incarnate Christ as the “Word”. He is the only biblical author that uses the term and employs it in this gospel (v. 1:1, 1:14), in his letters (1John 1:1), and in the book of Revelation which he also authored (Rev. 19:13).*
- f) *Using the term Word to describe the pre-incarnate Christ is an interesting choice. A word is something that gives expression to thought, and something that makes it possible to manifest our thoughts to others. Christ is the manifestation of the very mind and being of God. He reveals God to man, and so He is the term word personified.*

*Author’s note:*

*The Father is described as “I Am” showing the vastness and eternity of His being. The Son is “The Word” which perfectly communicates the being of God. The Holy Spirit is “The Comfortor” which shows the intimacy and relationship which God desires to have with His creatures. I Am, Word, and Comfortor are simple terms chosen by God himself to describe himself to man.*

**v. 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.**

*John seems to repeat what was said in verse 1, but he does so to make certain that what he has stated cannot be misinterpreted. Before he can go on he must establish the eternity and the deity of the Word*

- a) *The Word was in the beginning. The Word was with God in the beginning. This was a relationship that existed before time and did not commence with the coming of time.*

*Author’s note:*

*John is so very careful to clearly state these facts and yet his statements are still ignored or misunderstood. Some insist that Jesus Christ was a created being.*

**v. 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.**

John explains that the creating power of the word of God was Jesus Christ. All things came into being through Him as he perfectly manifested the mind and intent of God. It was Jesus Christ, as the Word, who gave substance to pure spirit.

- a) It is first stated positively and then negatively that all things were created by Him. There are no exceptions. All things continue to exist through His agency. (Col. 1:16-17)

**v. 1:4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.**

As the maker of all things Jesus Christ is also the source of life. It is in Him that life resides, both physical as well as spiritual. He is the giver and sustainer of life. In his first letter John refers to Him as, "the Word of Life."

- a) Life is called light, or life is the means by which man has knowledge of God. All life points to its source, which we have seen is Jesus Christ.
- b) The life unique to man is spiritual as well as physical. It is the spiritual aspect of life that John addresses and expands upon. Man is a rational and moral creature that possesses a conscience. This life given to him by Jesus Christ, therefore, serves man as a light, providing an ever present beacon to lead him to his creator.

**v. 1:5. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.**

The knowledge of God has always been present in the life of man as well as in the life around him. In the terminology of John, the light shines.

- a) The light shines in creation. Christ can be seen in His handiwork. All of the wonders of nature and the mysteries of the heavens point to the creator.
- b) The light shines in the conscience of men. All men possess the knowledge of good and evil, and so, the soul of every man points to the creator.
- c) The light shines in the scriptures which is the revealed word of God. The old dispensation pointed to Christ in all of its types and figures. In the new dispensation the light burst forth in all of its brilliance as the creator was fully revealed and the mysteries made known.
- d) The light shone and continues to shine into the darkness of the fallen human nature. It shines into the darkness of human understanding and into a world ruled by sin and death.
- e) The word translated "comprehended" means admitted it not or received it not. Man does not have the ability in himself to respond to the light. (Rom. 1:18-22; 1 Cor. 2:14)
- f) Peter speaks of the scriptures as "a light that shines in a dark place." (2 Peter 1:19) John also writes the words of life and light. It is by this revelation that the light of Christ is understood and received. (1 Cor. 1:21)

**v. 1:6-8 There was a man sent from God, whose name [was] John. The same came for a witness,**

***to bear witness of the Light, that all [men] through him might believe. He was not that Light, but [was sent] to bear witness of that Light.***

*John seems to proceed in steps as he first spoke generally about the light. He now speaks of "the Light," and will soon identify this Light specifically as Jesus Christ.*

- a) *The author introduces John the Baptist as one who was divinely commissioned to testify of the Light, but points out clearly that John was not the Light.*
- b) *This was necessary for John was a great man, the likes of which no one living at that time had ever seen. Christ himself called him the greatest man ever born. (Matt. 11:11) He had made many disciples, some of whom followed his teachings even after his death. (Acts 19:1-3) It is in this same region that this gospel was supposedly penned.*
- c) *The word "witness" is used three times in these verses. John the Baptist was a witness. His job was to give testimony of, and to point out or to introduce the Christ.*
- d) *The author's intent in this gospel is to prove that Jesus Christ is God in the flesh, that He is the Messiah. He calls John as his first witness, who was in fact God's first witness also. He is a credible witness, recognized by his friends and enemies alike as a prophet of God. (Matt. 21:25-26)*

***v. 1:9-11 [That] was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.***

*The Light of whom John testified was the true light that had come into the world. It was the light that now shone on every man. The Light was made manifest, of which no man could now claim ignorance.*

*Author's note:*

*The phrase "that cometh into the world" can refer either to the Light (as explained above) or to every person. If the latter is true, then it refers to Christ touching everyone that was ever born through creation, conscience and now directly through the gospel message. This seemed to be the context in verses 4 and 5, but the present context is the Light coming into the world. So the meaning here is probably "the true Light that came into the world lights everyone."*

- a) *The author relates to his readers facts that he seems to think are unbelievable. The One that made the world had come into the world and His creation did not recognize Him.*
- b) *In fact, He specifically came unto His own people. A people that He had chosen, separated from the world, and that He had communicated with, instructed and even told He was coming. These rejected Him, the same as did the unbelieving world.*

***v. 1:12-13 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, [even] to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.***

*John points out that salvation is a personal, individual act. The world rejected the Messiah, the Jews rejected the Messiah, but He was accepted by individuals.*

- a) *These individuals were from the world as well as from the Jewish nation. Both Jews and gentiles, by accepting Him, became the children of God. (Gal. 3:26-29)*
- b) *John touches on the human responsibility of responding to the Light. He teaches that one must accept Christ and so believe on and trust in His name.*
- c) *Those who accept Him are given the right, the power, and the authority to become children of God. This power is conferred upon the individual upon acceptance. (1 John 3:1-3)*
- d) *The author next touches on the sovereignty of God, declaring that His children are born according to His will. They do not become His children by nationality, through carnal desire, or by any other means that they might devise. The will of man is totally discounted and in subjection to the will of God.*

***v. 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.***

*John stresses that it was the Word, with the Father in eternity, the Life and the Light, who was made flesh. The creator came to live with His creation. The term used literally means "pitched his tent and lived among them." In other words, He was approachable. He lived as a man and was a man.*

- a) *John tells his readers that he was a witness to the things he writes along with many others.*
- b) *The word "beheld" means "careful and deliberate vision which seeks to interpret its object." In other words, John studied Him, scrutinized Him, and contemplated the things that He said and did. He examined Him in every way possible for some three years.*
- c) *The conclusion carefully arrived at by John is that this man was divine. He exhibited a glory or attributes that made any other conclusion impossible. John, no doubt, has in mind the transfiguration of Christ, that he witnessed, as well as the miracles and all that he said and did.*
- d) *The Word made flesh was filled with grace and truth. He was grace and truth personified. In everything He said and in everything He did He was merciful and gracious, looking out for the good of others and seeking nothing in return.*
- e) *Everything about Him was truth. There was no falsehood or guile with Him. He was the authority and could not be successfully challenged. (1 Peter 2:22) Christ declared himself to be the truth.*

***v. 1:15. 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.***

*The author again turns to the testimony of John the Baptist. Although John was the elder and was in the ministry before Christ, John testified that Christ was the greater in rank. The reason given is that Christ existed before him. The Baptist testified that Christ was the Word made flesh.*

***v. 1:16-17 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, [but] grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.***

*The writer had described the Word made flesh as being full of grace and truth. (v. 14) Returning to this thought he includes himself with all those who believe, as partaking of this fullness. (vs. 12-13)*

- a) *This fullness is the knowledge and understanding of the gospel, along with all of the gifts imparted by the indwelling Holy Spirit.*
- b) *The idea is that the believer is constantly receiving grace upon grace and favor upon favor. The source of grace and mercy, which is the fullness of Christ, is inexhaustible. One favor is constantly replacing another. The grace in the believer's life is always fresh and alive.*
- c) *The law pointed to or demonstrated the grace and truth of God, but it was shrouded in imperfection, given through a man and only to a particular nation. It pointed to a greater grace that was to come. (Gal. 3:22-15; Heb. 3:1-6)*
- d) *With Christ came the dispensation of grace and truth. The fullness of God's plan was made known, the law fulfilled, and the hope of our final redemption born. This gospel will proclaim the grace and truth that came by Christ.*

***v. 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared [him].***

*The author briefly compared the law to grace, showing grace to be superior as the external intent, by associating it with truth. We learn in the writings of Paul that the truth of grace was distorted by a misunderstanding of the intent of the law. John without discussion simply ranks grace as being the truth.*

- a) *Another comparison is that of Moses and Jesus Christ. Again with little discussion, Christ is ranked superior because of His intimate knowledge of God and His association with truth.*
- b) *The author declares that no man had ever seen God. Christ is immediately ranked above Moses and above all men as one who has not only seen God but one that intimately knows him.*
- c) *The phrase "in the bosom of the Father" points out this intimacy. It refers to the custom of reclining next to someone at a meal. It denotes deep friendship and affection. The idea is that no one had ever known God in this way and only the begotten Son was qualified to declare or reveal God to man. (Heb 1:1-2)*

*Author's note:*

*In what can be called the introduction of this gospel John has systematically identified the Word that was with God, the Word that was God, the Word made flesh and the true Light as Jesus Christ. (v. 17)*

***v. 1:19-28 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I [am] the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. And they which***

*were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.*

*The author has already briefly pointed out the purpose of the ministry of John the Baptist, that is, to introduce the promised Messiah to the world. (vs. 6-8, 15)*

- a) *The author now includes the actual testimony of the Baptist given before a group of religious leaders that were sent to investigate him. The author is mainly concerned with what the Baptist said about Jesus Christ.*
- b) *The dialogue that took place between these religious leaders and the Baptist is recorded. The delegation belonged to the party of Pharisees and consisted of priests and Levites. This was the so-called strict sect among the Jews and so the pointed questions. John usually dealt harshly with such delegations. (Matt. 3:3-9)*
- c) *The Baptist had become well known and respected by the people (no doubt in part because of what he said about the religious leaders) and so the specific task of the delegation was to find out exactly who John claimed to be.*
- d) *John did not shirk their questioning but answered them directly. He clearly denied that he was the Christ.*
- e) *The Jews erroneously interpreted Malachi 4:5 and so were looking for the literal return of the prophet Elijah. Although John was the fulfillment of this prophecy, he was not Elijah, and so answered, 'No.'" (Luke 1:17; Matt. 17:12)*
- f) *The question concerning "that prophet" is a reference to Deuteronomy 18:15-18. Some again erroneously interpreted this verse as having reference to another forerunner of the Messiah. The correct interpretation is that it refers to the Messiah himself. (Acts 3:22) Again John answers that he is not that prophet.*
- g) *In explaining who he is the Baptist loosely quotes Isaiah 40:3 and Malachi 3:1. In doing so he subtly shows them that he is "The Elijah" that would prepare the way for the Messiah.*

*[Baptism was a rite of purification among the Jews administered to those converting to the faith. Jews were not baptized for it would be a denial of their heritage.]*

- h) *The fact that John called for all to be baptized was a serious departure from Jewish belief and custom. Only a prophet of the stature of Elijah or the Messiah could initiate such a change. Having completely missed his claim that he was "The Elijah" of the prophecies, they next questioned his authority.*
- i) *John does not re-explain who he is or deny that he is initiating change, but states that he is simply the forerunner of the One who possesses great authority. John's authority comes from the One who will follow him.*
- j) *John alludes to the fact that he is but the humblest of servants compared to the One that will*

*follow him, as well as to the fact that a greater baptism for all would be made available. This is what the author referred to back in verse 12.*

***v. 1:29-34 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.***

*The author does not give the account of the baptism of Jesus but instead gives the account of John the Baptist's introduction of Christ as the Messiah. Again, the author seems more concerned with what was said than with what happened.*

- a) *Jesus was not introduced to the people as the Messiah at His baptism. In fact, the significance of the baptism of Jesus was between himself and John. Only the Baptist was made privy to the descent of the Holy Spirit and the voice from heaven. Right after this event Jesus went into the wilderness for 40 days. (Matt. 3:13 – 4:1)*
- b) *Sometime after His return, if not immediately, Jesus was pointed out to the people, and John shared his testimony of what he had seen. John claims direct revelation as to his message, his baptism, and his recognition of Jesus as the Messiah.*
- c) *He states twice in these verses that he did not know who the Christ was. he was expecting the Messiah according to revelation but did not know Him until the event was at hand. According to the account in Matthew he knew for the first time when Christ stood before him to be baptized. What followed confirmed what was revealed to him and fulfilled the word given to him by God.*
- d) *He is introduced by John as he Lamb of God and declared by him to be the Son of God. A lamb was offered every morning and every evening, with two on the Sabbath, as a sin offering. The Passover lamb, slaughtered and eaten once every year, signified a release from bondage. Jesus was plainly introduced as the God ordained and God accepted sin offering. He was the sin offering provided by God. He was not the sin offering of the Jew only but of the world, in other words, for all who would receive Him. (v. 12) (John knew this by revelation. A dying Messiah was not what the Jews were looking for.)*
- e) *The conclusion of the Baptist according to the revelation given to him, that was confirmed by what he saw and by what he heard, is that Jesus is the Word made flesh, the Lamb of God, and the Son of God.*

***v. 1:35-42 Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. One of the two which heard John [speak], and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own***

**brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.**

*The author, the apostle John, gives a narrative of what was probably his first encounter with Jesus. John, as well as Andrew, were disciples of the Baptist. As the two were standing with the Baptist he said what amounts to, "Look, the Lamb of God."*

- a) *The author tells us of four successive days that changed his life. (vs. 1:29, 35, 43) He even remembers the time of day that he met Jesus (about 10:00 AM).*
- b) *Jesus lived in the area and at His invitation the two stayed with Him the entire day, no doubt answering His questions and telling Him what they sought.*
- c) *Being John's disciples they sought the Messiah. Having spent the day with Jesus they were no doubt convinced of the Baptist's testimony, for the first thing Andrew did was to go get his brother Simon and proclaim that he had found the Messiah. It is probable that John also went and got his brother James.*
- d) *Christ "looks Simon over" upon his arrival and gives him the name Cephas or Peter, which the author interprets as meaning a stone.*

*Author's note:*

*Why did Jesus give Simon the name Peter, an event that tends to give credibility to the Roman Catholic system. This verse is significant for it shows that Christ gave Simon the name Peter the first time they met. In the context we can see this brash skeptical man standing before Jesus, probably literally dragged there by his brother Andrew. Christ "looks him over" and calls this impulsive man a stone. Peter is probably the last disciple at this point that anyone would predict would become as a rock in the faith. The significance of this event does not come to light until Peter professes to Christ before the other disciples that Jesus is the Son of the living God. Peter at this point becomes the stone as Christ had predicted the first time they met. (Matt. 16:16-18)*

*This pronouncement upon Peter is the fulfillment of a prediction and not a new prophecy concerning his role in the church. The play on words between stone and rock now makes sense. "Peter, you are now a stone, and upon the great truth you have confessed, the rock by which you have become a rock, I will build my church." This prediction of a change in Peter's character seems to be the only significance of this added name. It may have been for Peter's personal benefit for twice more would Christ predict to Peter things that would happen in his life. He predicted the denial and also the kind of death that he would die. (John 21:18-19) It is interesting to note that even Christ after the resurrection stilled called Peter by his real name, Simon, son of Jonas. (John 21:15-17)*

**v. 1:43-51** *The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before*

*that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel. Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.*

*The group of disciples now grows to six as Philip is called directly by Christ. Philip in turn gets Nathanael (Bartholemew).*

- a) *The dialogue that took place between Philip and Jesus is not given, however, Philip's mind has been opened as he relates Jesus to the law and the prophets.*
- b) *Many think that Nathanael takes a cheap shot at the region of Nazareth, but in all probability he is familiar with Moses and the prophets and asks how the Messiah could come from Nazareth. Philip's answer is something like, "I don't know, but just come and see."*
- c) *Nathanael is not a hypocrite but according to Jesus was straight forward and honest. These were not qualities that the Jews were noted for beginning with Jacob who stole the birthright through deceit.*
- d) *Something happened under the fig tree that is not revealed. It was something that only Nathanael could have known. Possibly something in his thoughts or a decision he had made that somehow proved his integrity?*
- e) *Because the disciples, as far as we are told, never had the actual vision described by Christ, He is probably alluding to Jacob's ladder, which then becomes a type of Christ. Nathanael confessed Jesus to be the Son of God, while Christ immediately refers to himself as the Son of Man. Jesus is the ladder bridging the distance between God and man, heaven and earth. The disciples will all come to see Jesus in this role. This is the greatest truth that anyone can come to see.  
(Gen. 28:12-14)*

*Author's note:*

*In this chapter John, including himself, has provided seven witnesses that shortly after meeting Jesus had concluded that He was the Messiah.*

*v. 2:1-11. And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do [it]. And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare [it]. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: [but] thou hast kept the good wine until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.*

*Throughout the Old Testament God bore witness of His true prophets by miracles. These supernatural events accompanied those who wrote and spoke the inspired truth of God. These signs of approval from God continued with Christ and the inspired witnesses that followed Him. (Heb 2:3-4)*

- a) *John gives us an account of the first miracle worked by Christ. The power of God was put on open display in the life of Christ. John will conclude this gospel by saying that the books of the world could not contain all of the things that Jesus did in His relatively short ministry. (v. 21:25)*
- b) *John writes this gospel almost like a diary, being careful to keep the events of which he writes in chronological order. This particular event took place three days after the calling of Philip and Nathanael, probably the time that it took to travel to Cana of Galilee.*
- c) *The wedding took place in the region of Nazareth where Jesus grew up. Mary must have been very close acquaintances with the couple for she was aware of what was going on behind the scenes and had the authority to give direction to the servants. Christ must have also been acquainted with them for He and His disciples were also invited. (Could it have been a relative or even a sibling of Jesus? Matt. 13:55)*
- d) *The question is, "When Mary told Jesus that the wine had run out did she expect a miracle or merely some other appropriate action on the part of Jesus?" If this was the first miracle of Christ, Mary had no reason to expect a supernatural solution.*
- e) *Jesus' response to Mary is basically, "Why are you bringing your concern or problem to me?" or "What does this have to do with me?" It seems that this next line, "my hour is not yet come," tips Mary off that He is going to take some action, and therefore she instructs the servants.*
- f) *This idea of a "divine timetable" is emphasized in the gospel of John. Seven more times in this gospel will Christ speak about designated pre-ordained times for certain events. God is perfect and precise to exact time. He is in control. There is no variance or chance. (Matt. 10:30)*
- g) *The details of this miracle are given so that there can be no doubt that it is indeed a supernatural event. He uses waterpots. Something that never contained wine or that was not ordinarily used for wine. The pots were filled to the top so nothing could be added. They took the water turned wine to an unbiased individual who made the call. Finally the volume produced. Commentators estimate it between 100 and 150 gallons.*

- h) *Although it took place in a public setting the miracle seems to have been primarily intended for the six disciples and Jesus' mother. The power of God was manifested to them and it increased their faith.*

**v. 2:12-13** *After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days. And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,*

*After the wedding, Jesus, his disciples, his mother and brothers went to Capernaum, a town on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. The reason for the trip is not given. They did not stay long for Jesus went up to Jerusalem for the Passover feast.*

- a) *The Passover was a seven day feast commemorating the Jews release from bondage in Egypt. Every male Jew twelve and older was expected to go to Jerusalem for the feast.*

**v. 2:14-22** *And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up. Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.*

*When Jesus entered the temple in Jerusalem, He immediately saw the dishonesty and corruption that was defiling that holy place. Under the old economy the presence of God dwelt in the Holy of Holies and Jesus rightfully called the temple His Father's house.*

- a) *One could bring his own animal to the temple to sacrifice, but the priests would not approve such animals, so the people were forced to buy from the vendors who gave a percentage of their take to the high priest. In turn, these animals could only be bought with Jewish currency, and so the need for moneychangers. The people were cheated by the moneychangers and gouged by the vendors.*
- b) *Jesus proceeded to fashion a whip out of cords and drove the animals out of the court. Jesus also turned over the tables of the moneychangers, creating a scene of total chaos as men tried to pick up their money as the animals stampeded over it.*
- c) *When Jesus makes reference to His Father's house His disciples are reminded of Psalm 69:9. The rest of this verse will also be fulfilled as those who brought reproach to God through their corruption would now come to hate Christ for his actions in defense to His Father.*
- d) *Jesus must have commanded a manner of great authority to single-handedly clear out this portion of the temple and meeting no resistance. He must have invoked a certain respect and fear in them as they scurried away to get their leaders. True to the Psalm, He was consumed by a great zeal for the pure worship of God.*

- e) *The question put to Jesus by the religious leaders who quickly assembled to confront Him is an interesting one. They did not ask Him why He did it, but only by what authority did He do it. This question also gives us insight into why He did not meet any resistance. The light of their consciences were obviously pricked as they heard the words of He who was the true Light. (v. 1:8-9)*
- f) *The leaders could not justify the corruption that existed, but questioned Jesus as to His credentials that gave Him the right to take action. Basically, if He was a prophet He would produce a sign, but if He was not a prophet then what was going on was none of His concern.*
- g) *The Jews who insisted on a sign had unknowingly already received it. Prophecy was being fulfilled. (Mal. 3:1-3) He had suddenly appeared and cleansed the temple with an authority that left Him unchallenged.*
- h) *Christ's reply has a double meaning. It predicts His death and resurrection, but also the death of worship at the temple, and the beginning of a new spiritual worship. They will kill His body and He will arise, but His death and resurrection will also destroy the physical temple as a place of worship. (Matt. 27:51) Note that at Christ's trial they twisted His words saying that He said that He would destroy the temple. (Matt. 26:61) In reality He said that they would destroy the temple and so predicting His death and the resulting death of the physical temple as a place of worship. (v. 19)*
- i) *The Jews, blinded as to the true meaning of their scriptures, take Jesus to mean the physical temple. At the time the temple had been in construction for 46 years. They ridiculed Him for saying that it could be destroyed and He could rebuild it in three days. At the same time they had no intention of destroying it to put Him to the test, so the incident passed.*
- j) *The author explains that Jesus was referring to the temple that was His body. At the time even he did not realize it as he witnessed the event and heard the words of Christ. John along with the other apostles pondered these words until after His resurrection when they came to a full understanding. John now shares his understanding of Jesus and His fulfilling of the scriptures with his readers.*

*Author's note:*

*This is the first of two incidents in which Jesus cleansed the temple. This first incident is recorded only by John and took place at the beginning of His ministry. The second incident is recorded in the other three gospels and took place at the very end of His ministry. (Matt. 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-19; Luke 19:45-48)*

**v. 2:23-25. Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast [day], many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all [men], And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.**

*The cleansing of the temple by Christ must have taken place just prior to the Passover, for John now writes that during the actual Passover feast Jesus performed numerous miracles among the people.*

- a) *Jesus proved his authority as the leaders had challenged Him to do, but He did it in His own time, and not at the command of the leaders or for their benefit. The signs meant for the leaders were*

*usually the fulfilling of prophecy that they should have been very familiar with. Through the words of Christ they usually received greater signs than the miracles, but never caught on.*

- b) As a direct result of the miracles many believed in Him as a prophet or even the Messiah. Jesus, however, was very cautious. He did not trust Himself to them as He did to His disciples. The reason given is that He knew the fickle character of men. Their belief in Him was selfish and self-serving. Most of the early believers would desert Him as the truth of His mission became apparent.*
- c) Stressing the deity of Christ, John states that Jesus, the maker of every man, knew man. He did not have to rely on the testimony of other men or even Himself observe a man. He, as God, knew the heart of everyone that He came into contact with. (Jer. 17:9-10)*

*Author's note:*

*This fact concerning Christ lays the groundwork for the next two chapters where Christ encounters a leader named Nicodemus and a Samaritan woman.*