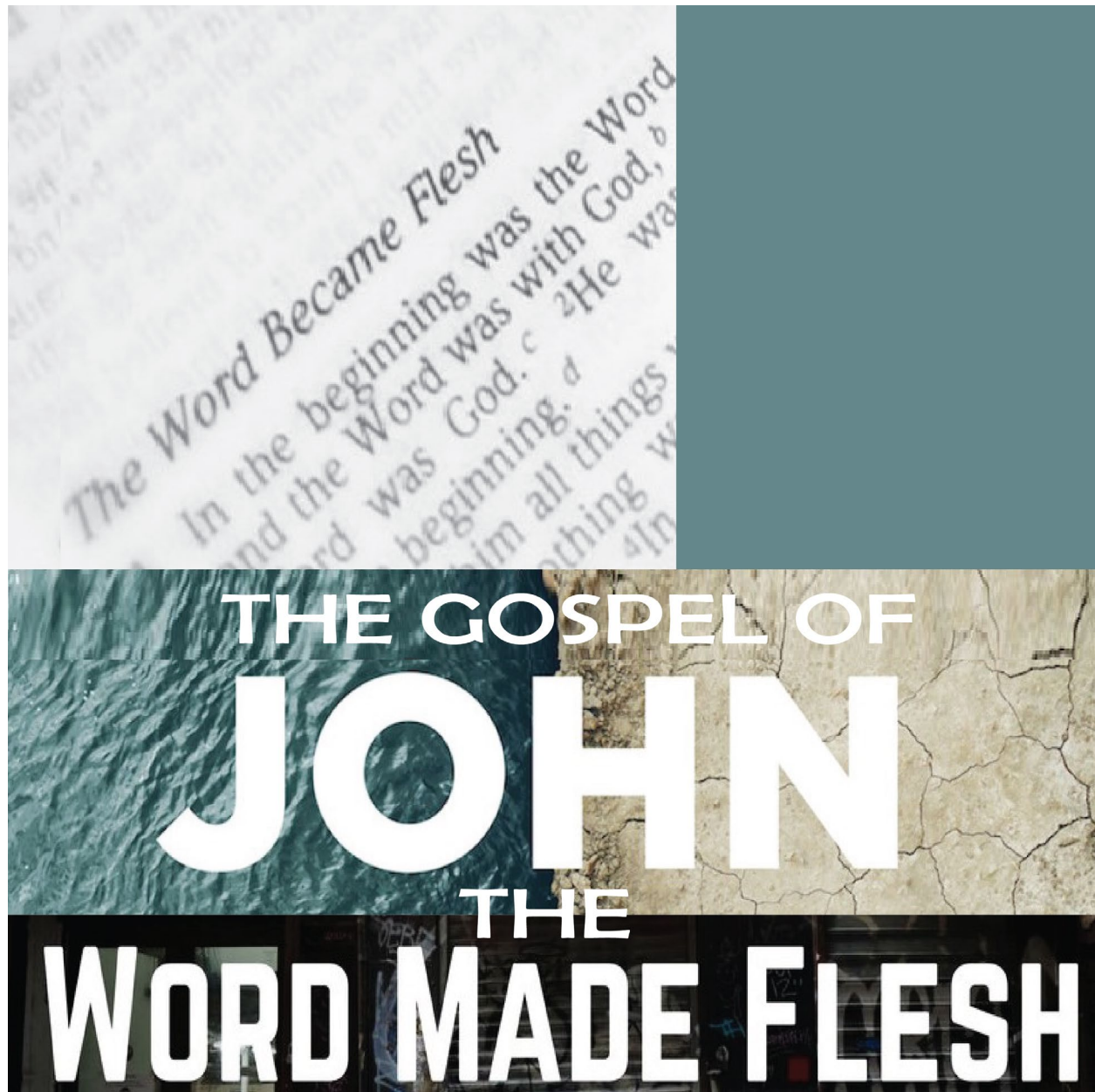




Background

The Gospel of John serves as the second Genesis to the scriptures. The narrative of John does not begin with a timeline of the Messiah's ministry on earth. This Gospel introduces the beginning of "being" before the world or man existed. John is the only gospel to present Him as eternal and as God. The other gospels refer to his title as "Son of God," mainly as they capture the responses of others, including demons that were intimidated by Him. John fully defines his divine nature as the son of God and being one and the same as God.

The most unique reference to illustrate the divine nature of the Son of God is perhaps the infamous litany in John's Gospel's sixth chapter. The declarations made by the Son of God could arguably be the most controversial. Following the great miracle of feeding a crowd of five thousand souls, John, the author of the Gospel, captures an addendum not mentioned anywhere else in scripture.

The fed souls were content with the miracle of eating bread and fish to sustain their physical needs. In contrast, they were wholly ignorant or ambivalent of the greater miracle. They missed the creator's identity because they were content with the work of creation. In exchange for temporal bread, they missed the opportunity to feast on the bread of life. (John 6:48)

The discourse of Jesus refers to the manna the forefathers ate in the wilderness. They consumed to their fill, but the manna did not give them life forever.

Jesus delivered what became known as a "hard saying," declaring, as paraphrased here: "Except you eat of my flesh and drink of my blood...you have no life in you". (John 6:53-56)

The declaration that men should eat and devour His flesh, without an appropriate context, appears cannibalistic.

The declaration that men should eat and devour His flesh, without an appropriate context, appears cannibalistic. Eating is used as a metaphor for consumption. The metaphor emphasizes the act of eating and consuming a complete meal. A complete meal includes food and drink. The Son of God compared His physical body and blood to a full meal set before His disciples as a spiritual feast. He was the embodiment of the eternal word of God (John 1:1).

The disciples were expected to consume every word spoken to them entirely, leaving not even a single crumb untouched or uneaten.

Jesus does not advocate cannibalism. Consuming everything presented on a plate of food signaled to the host that the meal was respected and fully received. He is offering men the opportunity to fully consume and digest the gift of life.

Many followers who were not disciples walked away after hearing this declaration, and Jesus turned to those who remained and asked if they would also turn away. Peter responds as the spokesman and says: "to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. (John 6:68)

John presents the gospel and the teachings of the Messiah with tangible truth. The word is God and is made alive by the Son of God. It is a living word made flesh in the life of the Messiah. God became flesh to give us access to eternal life.

John also authored the last book of the Bible, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ.”

The only gospel writer to present God's divine nature woven into man's identity would also reveal the identity of the resurrected Christ exalted in eternity as the glorified Son of God. Revelation, the final writing to the early Church, is a beacon of hope for believers challenged by the lapse of time, eagerly awaiting the return of the glorious King. John's commission to write his revelation of the enthroned son of God is a testimony of His victory over the enemies of God and His kingdom, a victory already celebrated in eternity. This victory in eternity is the ultimate assurance that God's promise to provide a place in His kingdom for His people is not just a hope but an inevitable reality.

The Gospel

The Gospel begins with an introduction of John the Baptist, the prophet ordained as the forerunner and witness of the Messiah. As the prophet, John was assigned to identify the Messiah to his generation. The Gospel author captures the backstory that reveals a family connection between the prophet and the Messiah he would introduce to the world. In detail, the author notes the encounter between the two mothers who are six months apart in their pregnancy, each carrying a male cousin that will impact the world they are born into. On an occasion when the two mothers crossed paths, the unborn cousins shared an encounter. While in his mother's womb, the prophet leaps for joy in the presence of the child messiah.

This event is notably included in the gospel's backstory to provide perspective when the adult prophet raised questions about the identity of the Messiah. This notation can be used as a reflection to show how doubt can overtake even those who have witnessed the truth with certainty. As the gospel's author, John maintains a reliable, consistent voice, constantly affirming the truth. Even when capturing the fearful doubts of others, John continues to present the identity of Jesus (Messiah) as man and God.

The other gospels present the human need to become one with God, while John presents a dual perspective, including the need for man to become one with God but emphasizing God becoming one with man. The other gospels focus largely on the work of Christ on earth, while John emphasizes Christ's identity before coming to earth.

Other gospels portray Christ only as a parabolic teacher, using metaphors and references to everyday life experiences to help illustrate principles of divine truth. In John's Gospel, the parables are upgraded with the emphatic, unequivocal “words of God.” The Messiah-teacher identifies Himself as the metaphor, an object not from this world but from the world above and before. As the metaphor, He presents himself as the object lesson and says: I am the Bread and Water, The Door, True Vine, Good Shepherd, The Way, The Truth, and The Life.

The study of this gospel is intended to advance the reader and student from a general encounter and awareness of God to becoming one with Him. When Christ is fully revealed and presented to us, in His fullness, He will also require us to eat His flesh, challenging us to consume and digest the truth about Him fully. The end goal of this study should provoke us to acknowledge that we can only find life in Him; there are no alternatives or substitutions.

God created us to discover that our craving for life can only be satisfied by Him. The beginning of understanding God's work in us begins with the “Word” -the Word of Life!

The Word Made Flesh

the word of God brought to life

The word made “flesh” is an expression that brings the word of God to life. Every word God speaks is filled with life, and life is filled with every word God speaks. The Gospel of John is uniquely written to affirm the deity of Christ in proximity to his humanity. In contrast to the synoptic writings of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, John’s gospel explores the identity and authority of Jesus before coming to earth.

In John’s Gospel, Jesus is immortal, invincible, and inventor of the universe. He existed before time, in time, and moves through time. Consistently, in this gospel, Jesus is depicted as all God as He is also portrayed as all man. The other gospels make note of His hunger for bread; only in John’s gospel is Jesus referenced as the bread of life.

The Son of God is not hiding in this gospel. As Messiah, Jesus is prominent and presented as the son of God, the word of God, the life of God, the fullness of God, and one with God. The highlights in this gospel offer dissertations directly from the mouth of Jesus, attesting to His identity as the son of God. The synoptic gospels are presented with a significant focus on the rebuffs against Jesus by the Pharisees and Scribes. In John’s gospel, the scoffers are met with counter-messaging and consequences for doubters and unbelievers to consider.

The theme of Christ’s empirical nature is continued in the later writings of John’s epistles to the early Church. Each epistle is dedicated to affirming the deity and eternal nature of Jesus on earth and in heaven. In the first chapter of John’s epistle, the Apostle expresses his encounter with Jesus as “handling the word of life.” (John 1:1). This description brings to life the impression Jesus had on John’s life. The encounter between Jesus and John was tangible, a real person he could touch and an experience that profoundly touched him.

John’s gospel and Genesis have a synchronous relationship with the Bible; they both offer a view of God’s word at work in the beginning. Genesis records the first words spoken to spark creation: “Let there be light.” (Genesis 1:3). The Gospel of John opens with an introduction to eternity before the creation of the world: “In the beginning was the word...” (John 1:1). The living word was present in eternity before a single word was spoken to birth creation. The gospel of John magnifies the principle of the living word holding precedence over the written word. The word written is a testimony to the word spoken. In the days before a written record of God’s word was available, the only word(s) known to man were words spoken by God.

Comparative facts exist between the Gospel of John and the other three gospels. Facts include using certain words found in all the gospels but over-used by John, such as the word “father”- as representing God. Father is found 121 times in John and 76 times in all the others combined. The word believe is found 99 times in John and 35 times in the other gospels combined. Light is found 23 times in John and 14 times in the other combined gospels. The word “life” is found 36 times in John and 17 times in the others combined; witness is found 14 times in the gospel of John and four times in all the others; truth is found 25 times in John and only seven times in the other gospels combined.

John 1:1- In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:2- The same was in the beginning with God.

Lesson Notes:

(1:1-2)–

There is spiritual symmetry between Genesis chapter one and John chapter one. In Genesis 1:1, “in the beginning” pinpoints the beginning of things created. In John 1:1, the same expression points to the source of creation. John embraces the question, “Is Jesus God?” answering “yes” with a profound revelation of His deity and position before creation. While the other gospels focus on aspects of His natural characteristics, John highlights the supernatural. John places emphasis upon every aspect of His eternal nature, especially the “Logos,” the spoken words and unspoken thoughts or intent of God.

“In the beginning” was the word, acknowledging that God alone existed before creation. Genesis opens in the same manner, “In the beginning God,” the only form of life that existed before creation. These accounts are identical, stating the same truth, affirming that the only form of life before creation was God and His word.

As he over-emphasizes the account, John continues, “The word was with God, and the word was God.” There are two essential terms used here; the first term, “with,” means to “stand before,” and the other term, “was,” is a reference to the existence of something in the same time or place. John establishes in this revelation that the Word is standing before God, and the Word is in the same time and place as God.

God’s word is not independent or separate from His will. The Greek word “logos,” as it is used here, represents God’s spoken or written words, also known as the “oracle,” the unspoken intent of God, reflecting His thoughts and desire behind His spoken words. The words heard or written are informed by God’s intent and thought. God has set His thoughts above creation and outside the reach of His creation; as revealed through the prophet Isaiah, God’s ways and thoughts are higher than our comprehension. (Is. 55:8-9)

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

Lesson Notes:

(1:3) – All things that were created were fashioned by God’s wisdom; nothing was created without the tool of wisdom. Wisdom reveals the intended use and purpose of all things created.

Understanding wisdom, as instructed by the author of Proverbs, will allow us to discover the true intrinsic purpose of everything God created. Without God’s wisdom, we misuse the work of God’s creation and, therefore, forfeit the benefits of the good things God created.

John 1:4- In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

John 1:5- And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

Lesson Notes:

(1:4-5) – John reveals three eternal elements: the word (logos), life, and light. They are associated and actively co-exist together. In Him, the Logos is life. The creator activates life. Without the creator (logos), there is no life. Life from the logos (creator) is also light to His creation. The breath of life in every man illuminates or gives light to the truth about the Creator (logos).

All men do not respond to the light, but no breathing man can justifiably deny the exposure to the light. There is no measure of darkness that can comprehend or swallow up the presence of light. The man or woman who lives in the darkest place of creation will see the brightest light. (Isaiah 9:1-2)

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

John 1:7- John The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe.

John 1:8- He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

John 1:9- *That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

Lesson Notes:

(1:6-9)– God will send a man into every generation as a witness to His creation. In the days of Jesus, John was the man sent by God to witness to his generation. John witnessed the Light that would come to lead people out of darkness. John could not lead people out of darkness because he was not the light. John could only lead people to the light. This is an essential note as believers consider the current responsibility to be a witness to their generation today. Believers are not called to lead people out of the darkness; instead, they are entrusted to lead people to the light.

John 1:10- He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

John 1:11- He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

John 1:12- 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:

John 1:13- Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Lesson Notes:

(1:10-13)– Witnesses are needed because “the Light” is in the world, but people are unaware of the identity of the “Light.” Some will be introduced to “the Light,” but instead of receiving light, they will reject it. Those who accept Jesus as the light will be given the power to become “sons of God.” The term “sons,” as it is used here, can mistakenly be interpreted as like or the same as the only begotten son, Jesus. The accurate translation refers to “children” or “offspring,” meaning those who accept the truth of Jesus as Messiah, son of God, will be known as His progeny (descendants). Birth into God’s family is not by flesh and blood but by His will, established by His truth. Our relationship and alliance with God are not earned; they are given to us. The expression also shows the relationship and alliance given to those who accept and believe in Jesus, distinguishing them from those who reject Him.

John 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.

Lesson Notes:

(1:14) – The logos (wisdom) becomes flesh. Becoming flesh allows creation to behold God's perfect glory in the person of His son. God replicates Himself in the flesh, allowing the man He created to identify with his creator, making God into a man because man can never become a God. The intent is to give man a better look at God. God wants to allow man to see His creator. Man can see God when he sees God's complete (fullness) identity in the only begotten son.

John 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.

Lesson Notes:

(1:15) – John the Apostle introduces John the Baptizer as the witness to identify the one “preferred before,” meaning the one caused to be in front or ahead of all creation, the son of God. The only one before all men and creation, “the Word with God,” would be introduced to humanity by John the Baptist. In context, the Baptizer is related to the earth family of the son of God through his mother, Elisabeth, the cousin of Mary, the earth mother of Jesus. The Baptizer had his first introduction to the Messiah via the womb when the two mothers came in contact before giving birth to their children. The phenomenon of the baby jumping in the womb of Elisabeth (Luke 1:41) foreshadows the single person on earth with the ability to know the Messiah sight unseen.

John 1:16- And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

John 1:17- For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

John 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*.

Lesson Notes:

(1:16-18) – The Apostle emphasizes the presence of God in the physical form of Jesus, revealing His eternal identity as both fully God and fully man. Through Him, we have been given complete access to grace, the Son of God, and a gift to humanity. In Jesus's fullness, grace is multiplied or doubled, meaning we have access to grace for grace. This means we can access God's gift of Messiah and His divine favor.

Through the law, Moses gave God's people ordinances to teach them His ways; however, the law independently does not provide the grace of salvation; it offers only righteousness and judgment. Grace is present in the law, and some of those laws govern grace. Grace has always existed as one of the dominating characteristics of God's nature, second only to "Love, and has been present in creation.

The grace of God has been present in the law since Adam's time and has helped to preserve the relationship between man and God. This grace allowed Adam to continue his physical existence for over 800 years, even though he had disobeyed God. However, in the end, the consequence of physical death affirmed Adam's lost access to eternal life.

The written law was given to Moses on Mount Sinai. However, the people gathered at the mountain's base already violated the first commandment, which prohibited idolatry. They had constructed a golden calf to lead them back to Egypt. Despite their disobedience, God's grace was already fully present in the law. God's tolerance and mercy demonstrated this, as he did not destroy them.

John explains that believers receive "grace for grace" due to the completeness of Messiah, who is God's word and son. The grace in God's word (law) and the grace in the work of the Messiah (sin offering) provide salvation through grace. While Moses gave the law with grace present, it lacked the second work of grace to bring man back to the path of eternal life. Thanks to the fullness of Christ, the complete work of grace and truth is now available to us. Christ is the word (the law) and the sin offering (work of grace) that gives us access to eternal life.

John the Baptizer reveals the identity of Messiah that was hidden from the eyes of humanity. John alone knew the Messiah at birth and could reveal Him to others. This revelation principle is also applied to the son of God, declaring the creator's identity to His creation. No man has ever seen or fully experienced God except the "Word," the logos (wisdom) present with Him at the beginning of creation. Jesus alone is qualified to represent the identity of God, the Creator, to His creation.

John 1:19- And this is the record of John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

John 1:20- And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

John 1:21- And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

John 1:22- Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

John 1:23- He said, I *am* the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

John 1:24- And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.

John 1:25- And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

Lesson Notes:

(1:19-25) – John the Apostle briefly shifts the focus to verify the identity of John the witness. The ministry of John the Baptist was brought to the attention of Jewish temple leaders. From Jerusalem, they send a priest entourage to verify the Baptizer's identity. The contingency of priest asks John to clear up any misgivings about his identity. In response, John clarifies that he is not Christ, the Messiah, assuring them that he is not the subject of his message. They continued to question him, asking if he was Elijah. He replied with a negative response. They sought assurance and asked why he was baptizing if he was not Elijah.

The temple leaders were worried about John being the reincarnated prophet Elijah because they were afraid of the prophecy mentioned in Malachi 4:5, which predicted Elijah's return as a precursor to the day of the Lord, also known as the "day of judgment" upon mankind and creation. All Jewish leaders, especially priests, were aware of this prophecy.

John the Baptist recaptured the words of another prophet, Isaiah, and those words also caused great concern. In the manner of Isaiah, John called for making a straight path in preparation for the coming of the Lord. The call to repentance was a prophetic sign to prepare for God's judgment upon the earth to restore righteousness. (Isaiah 40:1-4)

Baptism was a signal of repentance, and the call to repent generally came from Old Testament prophets just ahead of a great judgment God was preparing against the unjust and wicked. The temple priest wanted to confirm if God was preparing to visit His people with judgment for fear that they would be found among the evil to be judged.

John 1:26- John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

John 1:27- He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

John 1:28- These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Lesson Notes:

(1:26-28)—In his final reply, the Baptizer informs them that something much greater than judgment is nigh. He warns that the one who is coming is preferred, the term meaning that He came before John. The one who came before wears sandals that John feels he is unworthy of untying, denigrating himself below a servant generally given such a task.

The one preferred who came before is among you (now). This can mean that the Messiah was already living among them. It was also true that the Messiah would be known as a Rabbi and was already among the Pharisees in Jerusalem. The Messiah was among them but unknown to them, in the same way, that many are part of religious systems organized around the concept of God but unaware of the truth about God.

These events took place near the southern end of the Jordan River. The wilderness region where John the Baptizer preached the message to prepare the way for Jesus

John 1:29- The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

John 1:30- This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.

John 1:31- And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

John 1:32- And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

John 1:33- 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.

John 1:34- And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

Lesson Notes:

(1: 29-34) – The following day, Jesus is seen by John the Baptist. As He approaches, John formally announces Him as “the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world”. The statement is a significant prophetic declaration. God alone has the authority to “take away sin” and the religious ordinance in place since the days of Moses and Aaron require the priest to present a sin offering on behalf of the entire house of Israel. The celebration called, Rosh-Hashanah (head of the year) is the day of Atonement when Israel makes offerings, prays, and host solemn feast to appeal for God’s forgiveness and a clean slate for the incoming year. (Lev. 23:23-27)

This statement to forgive sin is not in sync with the religious calendar, falling well past Rosh-Hashanah and just ahead of Passover. The Baptizer responded to the voice of God’s spirit and could not be restricted by natural time and religious calendars. The text shows that John had never physically seen him, although they were cousins by natural birth. As stated, “I knew him not,” only sure that the Messiah would be made manifest to Israel. John did not recognize Jesus by His clothing or physical appearance; the sign given to him was the spirit of God descending upon him in the shape of a dove. (Lk. 3:22). The sign of the Holy Ghost rested and remained upon Him. It would be unusual for the spirit of God to stay upon a man of flesh. The history of God’s presence among His people demonstrated visitations and seasonal allocations upon men or women empowered by His Spirit. The identifying signature of the Messiah was the spiritual anointing of God, remaining constant upon Him.

This signature, seen by the eyes of the Baptizer, became the qualifying record to identify the Messiah. All men would know or be introduced to the Messiah through the eyes of John the Witness. Believers presently have the same mandate: everyone we encounter would know Christ through our witness.

First Miracle

New wine, a symbol of new life

Lesson Two

John cp 2:1-11

Background:

The Miracle – The fact that the first miracle takes place at the wedding should not be overlooked.

The wedding ceremony is an important life event, and this one is filled with significant symbolism. A wedding is a planned union to join two separate individuals and families together. The background of a wedding to frame the first miracle is symbolic of God's planned arrangement to re-unite lost humanity back into the family of its creator.

John 2:1- And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

John 2:2- And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

Lesson Notes:

(2:1-2)—The wedding is in Cana, near Nazareth; both cities are part of the province of Galilee.

The wedding must have been of great importance because Jesus and the men He called to follow Him were invited separately. We should assume they were familiar with the families that joined together through this union.

John 2:3- And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him,
They have no wine.

John 2:4- Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine
hour is not yet come.

John 2:5- His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto
you, do *it*.

John 2:6- And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner
of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

John 2:7- Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they
filled them up to the brim.

Lesson Notes:

(2:3-7) – Wine symbolizes life and is often used for consecration and blessing. The wine was served for the wedding feast to celebrate the fruitfulness of the union and its expected longevity: the more wine available to serve, the greater emphasis on celebrating a long life. For every wedding, the availability of wine will come to an end.

The end of the wine indicates the wedding feast is ending. Based on the celebrants' reactions, the wine must have been exhausted sooner than desired or expected by those hosting the wedding feast.

Mary noticed the wedding's wine reserves were running low, so she asked Jesus for help. She knew the wedding feast would end early if the wine ran out, so she didn't hesitate to suggest that her son could do something about it. Mary said to Jesus, "They have no wine." In response, Jesus said, "What have I to do with you?" This showed that He felt no responsibility relative to the wedding provisions.

In time, all wine on earth will run out, and all celebrations of life will end. The insufficiency of wine or early termination of a wedding feast is unrelated to His purpose. Firmly, Jesus says to His mother, "My hour has not yet come," when it does, He alone will respond to it because it is His, and He alone must own it.

His mother does not respond; she must know there is no argument against the truth He has spoken. However, it does not prevent her from directing her commands to the nearby servants, instructing them to do whatever her son asks.

In this passage, Jesus realizes that any help he offers to the people he is with will only be temporary. He then asks the servants to bring him six stone pots that are usually used for ceremonial washing of the hands. These pots have a capacity of 2-3 firkins, equivalent to 216 pints or 27 gallons of fluid. The servants are told to fill each pot with water, which indicates that the pots were empty and had been set aside, just like the wine, because their contents had also been exhausted.

John 2:8- And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bear *it*.

John 2:9- 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,

John 2:10- 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.

John 2:11—At this beginning of miracles, Jesus in Cana of Galilee manifested forth his glory, and his disciples believed in him.

Lesson Notes:

(2:8-11) – The second instruction to the servants was to draw out the contents of the water pots. The new wine must be drawn out of the large water pots and poured into smaller empty vessels for serving. The new wine is a symbol of new life. As Messiah, Jesus will pour out His life into the smaller, empty, life-less vessels of humanity.

The new wine is served first to the governor of the feast. Serving the governor first was to prove the newly transformed wine. If the governor received and accepted it, it would be deemed appropriate for all others. The governor judges the latter wine as preferable to the former wine he was served. Comparing the two wines is a foreshadowing of the contrast that would be made between Jesus and the leadership of Judaism on that day. The Pharisees represent the first wine intended to intoxicate those following them into blind rituals without a relationship with the creator. Jesus will present the new wine not designed to intoxicate but to invigorate and give life to those who believe He is the son of God.

This transformation of water to wine gives life to lifeless vessels. It was the beginning of miracles manifesting the glory of the Son of God. This miracle empowered the newly selected disciples to believe He was the Messiah.

John 2:12- After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.

John 2:13- And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,

John 2:14- And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:

John 2:15- 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;

John 2:16- And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

John 2:17- And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

Lesson Notes:

(2:12-13) – The wedding feast in Cana was near the northern border of Galilee. Following the wine miracle, he travels with his mother, brothers, and the disciples further north into Capernaum. He remained in the northern quarter for only a few days because the time for Passover was approaching.

(2:14-15) – As he arrived in Jerusalem, the newly identified Messiah found vendors profiting from the sale of ceremonial animals and sacrifice rituals required for the offerings of Passover.

In his anger towards the moneychangers who prioritized profit over worship, he took physical action by overturning the booths and vendor tables in the courtyard. This disruption was aimed at the transactions taking place in the area where both Jews and Gentiles gathered before entering the sacred grounds of the temple.

(2:16-17) – The exchangers are scolded for transforming the place for prayer into a den of thieves. The turn of words reflects reversing the transaction of men offering penance to God to vendors profiting from the receipts of men. Selling doves to people who could not bring live animals on their journey from the cities and towns outside of Jerusalem made them vulnerable to unfair trading, which caused them to pay more than the standard cost.

The disruption witnessed by the disciples caused them to contemplate the words embedded in their memory from Psalms 69:9, which describes the zeal of a man disturbed by those who strip away their commitments to God.

John 2:18- Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

John 2:19- Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

John 2:20- Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

John 2:21- But he spake of the temple of his body.

John 2:22- 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.

(2:18)—The Jews responded defensively, favoring the vendors because it was profitable to some of their temple leaders. They challenged the authority of the man who was hailed as the Messiah.

The Jews preparing for Passover had no concerns about tainting God's presence with the presence of profit-making vendors. They felt no remorse for their oversight or the least conviction for the disrespect publicly revealed by their Rabbinic brother. Their response focused solely on requiring the truth speaker to offer a sign to prove His identity as “Messiah.”

(2:19-20)—He offered them evidence they could not believe or understand. They heard Him say that the temple in the background would be destroyed in three days. They countered with a declaration that celebrated the forty-six years required to build the temple scoffing at the possibility it could be taken down so easily.

The temple was the centerpiece of their culture and an important symbol of their freedom. It was the only part of their daily life they could control without intrusion from their Roman oppressors. From their viewpoint, it was blasphemous to speak about the temple's destruction.

(2:21-22)—Although they would soon witness the demise of their beloved holy place, they were unaware that the physical temple was not the concern of the Son of God (God actively present on earth).

John 2:23- 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.

John 2:24- But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew
all *men*,

John 2:25- And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew
what was in man.

(2:23) – Many people present for Passover also witnessed the miracle at the Cana wedding and other miracles in Capernaum. He was celebrated as a great miracle worker and prophet, with many believing Him to be the Messiah.

(2:24-25) – He did not become subject to the trend of their belief. He understood that people's hearts change over time, being swayed by new opinions and trends. Instead of relying on their words to testify for him, he trusted that his work and the truth would speak for themselves.

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