

EXPLANATION OF 43RD BIBLEBOOK

JOHN 2 (A.D. 70-95)

INTRODUCTION

John 1 to 12 relate the public ministry of Jesus Christ.

John 1:15 to 2:12 describe how Jesus Christ reveals himself to John the Baptist and to his early disciples.

OUTLINE

(I) 2:1-11. Jesus reveals himself to his disciples.

- a. Jesus gets involved in the lives of other people (2:1-2).
- b. Jesus' relationship with his mother (2:3-5).
- c. The Jewish cleansing ritual (2:6).
- d. Jesus turned water into wine (2:7-10).
- e. The purpose of the miraculous sign (2:11a).
- f. Jesus showed his glory (2:11b).

(II) 2:12-25. Jesus reveals himself to the crowds at Jerusalem.

- a. Jesus in Capernaum (2:12-13).
- b. Jesus cleanses the temple (2:14-17).
- c. Jesus introduces the coming new order (2:18-22).
- d. Jesus knows everything about all people (2:23-25).

EXPLANATION

(I) 2:1-11. Jesus reveals himself to his disciples.

a. Jesus gets involved in the lives of other people (2:1-2).

2:1. And on the third day there was (viad) a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was (viia) there.

2:2. And also Jesus was invited (viap) to the wedding together with his disciples.

The third day. John 1:19-28 probably took place between the last days of December A.D. 26 to March A.D. 27. The third day here was probably the third day of travelling *after* Jesus had gained his first disciples: John, Andrew, Peter, Philip and Nathanael, which could have taken several days. It took about two days to walk from Bethany (36 kilometres SE of Nazareth) where John the Baptist baptised, to Cana in Galilee (14 kilometres N of Nazareth) where the wedding took place.

The mother of Jesus. Throughout the Gospel of John, the apostle John never mentions his own name or the names of his family members. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was probably the sister of Salome, the mother of John the Baptist (19:25)¹. Mary was probably a helper at the wedding. That is why she knew when the wine was finished and why she had authority to give the servants an order (2:5).

The invitation may be connected to Nathanael who came from Cana (21:2). Jesus was no ascetic: he ate and drank². He also got involved in the lives of his disciples and his family.

b. Jesus' relationship with his mother (2:3-5).

2:3. And when (the supply of) wine fell short (vpaa), the mother of Jesus said (vipa) to him, "They have (vipa) no wine."

2:4. Jesus said (vipa) to her, "What (is this) to me and to you, woman?" My hour has not yet come (vipa)."

2:5. His mother said (vipa) to the servants, "Whatever he tells (vspa) you, do (vmaa)!"

The discussion between Jesus and his mother. Mary let Jesus know that there was no more wine. Of all the people present, Mary knew best who Jesus was³. He was the Son of the Most High for whom nothing was impossible⁴. Mary expected a miracle. But Jesus literally replied, "What is this to me or to you, woman?" The expression is an answer of protest putting off an impatient urging from the side of Mary: "Is that your concern, or mine, woman?" Jesus called his mother 'woman', not out of disrespect for her, but to make clear to her that *the relationship between his mother and her son had changed*. Mary should no longer only regard Jesus as her son, but also as her Lord!

Jesus' time (literally: hour) had not yet come. Jesus let his mother know that he was aware that God had entrusted him with a task and that he was ready to act in God's good time. For each part of God's eternal plan there is a time⁵. There is a time to suffer on earth (7:30; 8:20; 12:23; 17:1) and a time to ascend to heaven (13:1). In the context it refers to the time to reveal his glory to his disciples.

While Mary sought a solution for the problem of the wine, Jesus wanted to reveal his glory as the crucified and risen Lord. But that time had not yet arrived. His glory would only be fully revealed when he would be lifted up from the earth: on to a cross at his crucifixion, at his resurrection and at his ascension and enthronement (cf. 12:27-32).

¹ Mark 15:40

² Matthew 11:19

³ Luke 1:26-38

⁴ Luke 1:37

⁵ Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Nevertheless, Jesus complied with her request, performed a miracle and showed his glory. Although the sign was a revelation of his glory (2:11) the time for the full revelation of his glory in his death and resurrection had not yet arrived.

Mary said to the servants, “Do what he says” (2:5). She felt responsible that there should be enough wine. And she was convinced that Jesus would only act if it was the right time. She gave the order to the servants, because they might not take an order from a guest (Jesus).

c. The Jewish cleansing ritual (2:6).

2:6. Now there were (viia) six stone water jars standing there (+vppn) in accordance with the ceremonial cleansing (purification) of the Jews, each containing (vppa) two to three metretes (one metretes is a liquid measure).

The Pharisees devised a religious ceremonial law that people should wash their hands before every meal⁶. The water for this ritual was kept in large stone jars, each holding about 120 to 180 litres of water. *Water was scooped from the jar and poured from above on or over the hands while the person turned one fist in the other hand*⁷.

d. Jesus turned water into wine (2:7-10).

2:7 Jesus said (vipa) to them, “Fill (vmaa) the jars of (with) water.” So they filled (viaa) them to the brim.

2:8. And he said (vipa) to them, “Now draw (vmaa) (some out) and bring (vmpa)(imperatives) (it) to the master of the banquet.” And they brought⁸ (viaa) (it).

2:9. And when the master of the banquet tasted (viad) the water that had effectively become (vprp) wine, and he did not know (by intuition) (vila) from where it came (vipa), though the servants who had drawn (vpri) the water knew (vila), the master of the banquet called⁹ (vipa) the bridegroom

2:10. and said (vipa) to him, “Everybody always serves¹⁰ (vipa) the choice wine first and when they have had much to drink (or: have become drunk) (vsap) the cheaper (lesser, inferior)¹¹ wine; but you have kept back (saved up)(vira) the best till now.”

When the miracle of turning water into wine actually happened. John 2:9 literally says, “The water, which the servants had drawn (perfect tense), had been turned into (perfect tense) wine.” What happened was that the servants ladled some water from a jar into a cup. After they had drawn the water into a cup it was still water! But when the master of the banquet tasted it, it was wine! The water had turned into wine between the drawing of the water by the servants and the tasting done by the master of the banquet.

The great amount produced by the miracle. Six large water jars is an amount of about 240 to 360 bottles of wine! The amount of water turned into wine pointed to the greatness of the miracle and to the greatness of the grace of Jesus (1:16).

Drinking fermented drinks is not necessarily wrong. Wine was a part of the daily food in Israel. During the Old Testament period the Israelites were required to use one tenth of their income every year to buy food, wine or other fermented drink *in order to have a joyful celebration in the presence of the Lord in the temple*¹². During the New Testament period Jesus and his disciple *drank wine as a part of their daily meal*¹³. Drinking a little wine was used as a medicine¹⁴. Jesus even turned water into wine at this wedding banquet (2:9-10). In Palestine, grapes become ripe during June to September. This wedding banquet took place a few days after Jesus had called his first disciples in December A.D. 26. There is no good reason to believe that wine served at weddings that took place between October and May would be anything else but fermented grape-juice, that is, real wine.

In the Bible the drinking of fermented drinks is deliberately limited. Excesses due to fermented drinks and drunkenness is strictly prohibited in the Bible. During the Old Testament period the priests were prohibited to drink fermented drinks during the period they served in the temple¹⁵. Israelites who made a special vow, had to refrain from drinking fermented drinks during the whole period of their vow¹⁶. Government officials should not drink alcohol at all, lest they drink and forget what the law decrees¹⁷.

“Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has strife? Who has complaints? Who has needless bruises? Who has bloodshot eyes? Those who linger over wine, who go to sample bowls of mixed wine. Do not gaze at wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly! In the end it bites like a snake and poisons like a viper. Your eyes will

⁶ Mark 7:3

⁷ 2 Kings 3:11; Mark 7:3; cf. Luke 11:38-39

⁸ G: feró, énegka

⁹ G: phónéó)

¹⁰ G: titheó or tithémi

¹¹ G: elassó, comparative of ‘mikros’

¹² Deuteronomy 14:22-26

¹³ Matthew 11:19

¹⁴ 1 Timothy 5:23

¹⁵ Leviticus 10:9

¹⁶ Numbers 6:1-4

¹⁷ Proverbs 31:4-5

see strange sights and your mind imagine confusing things. You will be like one sleeping on the high seas, lying on top of the rigging¹⁸.

During the New Testament period leaders were required to be self-controlled with regard to drinking alcohol and they were absolutely prohibited to get drunk¹⁹. People who abuse alcohol and participate in orgies will not inherit the Kingdom of God²⁰.

In particular circumstances the drinking of alcohol is wrong. Christians may not give offence to other people who believe that the drinking of alcohol is wrong. Christians should not drink alcohol in their presence or advocate the drinking of alcohol²¹. The freedom of Christians may never become a stumbling-block for others²². But vice versa, people who believe that the drinking of alcohol is wrong, may not judge others who drink alcohol at other occasions²³.

e. The purpose of the miraculous sign (2:11a).

2:11a. This Jesus did (viaa) as a beginning of his miraculous signs at Cana in Galilee.

John likes to use the word 'sign'²⁴ instead of 'miracle'^{25 26}.

A sign is a miracle that is viewed as a proof of divine authority and majesty. *The purpose of a sign is to lead the attention of the spectator away from the deed itself to the Divine Doer of the miracle! Miracles in the Bible occur especially around the times in history when new revelation occurred.*

- **Moses.** When God revealed the law to Moses, God performed miracles through Moses. He sent ten plagues against his enemies. He caused the water of the Red Sea to recede so that Israel could cross on dry ground. He made bitter water sweet, etc. Through these miracles, Moses proved that the law is given by God's authority.
- **Elijah and Elisha.** When God revealed his reality to Judah and Israel during a time in which they turned away from God, God performed miracles through the prophets Elijah and Elisha. He created food for a poor widow. He sent fire from heaven to devour the sacrifice, the water and even the stones of the altar, to prove that idols have no power. He raised children from the dead. He protected his servants by surrounding them with chariots of fire, etc.
- **Jesus Christ.** When God took on the human nature in Jesus Christ and came to live among us, he performed the greatest amount of miracles as well as the greatest miracles. He healed the sick. He set the demon-possessed free. He restored the handicapped, blind and deaf and raised the dead. He fed the hungry crowds and he calmed the storm.

But the greatest miracles were the following: he took on the human nature when he was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born from the virgin Mary. He was raised from the dead. He ascended into heaven. He has never stopped saving millions of people from sin and eternal judgement. He has transformed their lives into becoming citizens of the Kingdom of God!

- **The apostles.** When God established his Church everywhere through the work and writings of the apostles, he performed many miracles especially through the apostles. They too healed the sick, set the demon-possessed free, restored the handicapped and the blind, and raised the dead. But even more important, God used them to preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth, to transform the lives of many, to establish the first churches among the Jews, the Samaritans and the Gentiles, and to write the last books of the Bible.

A sign is a work of power in the physical realm that illustrates a principle that is operative in the spiritual realm.

A sign has a specific purpose: *the miracle that takes place in the physical sphere of creation points away from itself to the miracle that takes place in the spiritual sphere of redemption.* For example:

- In John 6:14, the sign of the multiplication of the loaves of bread intends to fix people's attention on Jesus Christ as *the Bread of Life* (6:35), which gives eternal life to those who believe in him.
- In John 9:16, the sign of opening the eyes of the man who was born blind intends to show people that Jesus is *the Light of the world* (8:12), who gives spiritual light to people who believe in him.
- In John 11:47 and 12:18, the sign of raising Lazarus from the dead intends to centre on the fact that Jesus is *the Resurrection and the Life* (11:25), which gives believers a new spiritual life now and will transform their lowly bodies to be like his glorious body at the resurrection²⁷.

Only the context will show if a sign has this second deeper spiritual meaning or not. In every case, a sign always points away from itself to the One who performed it! Here in John chapter 2:11, the sign of turning water into wine is called

¹⁸ Proverbs 23:29-34

¹⁹ Isaiah 28:7-9; 1 Timothy 3:2-3,8

²⁰ 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:21; 1 Peter 4:3-5

²¹ Romans 14:21-23

²² 1 Corinthians 8:9; 10:23-24, 32-33

²³ Romans 14:1-4

²⁴ G: sémaion

²⁵ G: teras

²⁶ cf. 2 Corinthians 12:12

²⁷ Philippians 3:21

the first of Jesus' miraculous signs. *The sign intends to show that Jesus Christ has come into the world to fulfil²⁸ and terminate²⁹ the old order and to replace it by the new order (4:24)³⁰. The new order surpasses the old order as much as wine surpasses water!*

The new order: the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ resulting in the world wide Body of Christ (the Church) surpasses the old order: the ceremonial law with its animal sacrifices and temple building (2:17-22).

A sign is done, both to create faith and to strengthen faith. The original Greek in John 20:30-31 says that "the signs remain recorded (perfect passive) in the Bible in order that you may *once for all* believe (subjunctive aorist active)" or '*continue to believe* (subjunctive present active) that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by *continuing* to believe you have life in his name". Faith is created by the Holy Spirit through the proclamation of the Word³¹. *The purpose of the miracles as signs together with the teachings connected to these signs is especially to strengthen true, saving faith!* The apostle John wrote the Gospel of John in order to strengthen the faith of the believers in the face of enemies and false teachers.

f. Jesus showed his glory (2:11b).

2:11b. And he manifested (viaa) his glory and his disciples believed (viaa) in him.

The glory of the Lord Jesus Christ is all his divine attributes shining through the veil of his human nature.

Jesus manifests his glory in his grace and truth. The apostle John says, "We have seen his glory ... full of grace and truth" (1:14-18). *To see his glory* means to examine and reflect on his divine attributes. In John chapter 1 his glory is the grace and truth that are manifested in his incarnation and dwelling among people on earth, including his works and words.

Jesus also manifests his glory in his miraculous signs. In John 2:11, he revealed his divine attributes by turning water into wine at a wedding feast. The glory of Jesus Christ is contained in two examples: he revealed his *perfect moral values* by honouring the institution of marriage and he revealed his *divine generosity* by supplying abundant wine and thus helping his hosts out of their embarrassment.

(II) 2:12-25. Jesus reveals himself to the crowds at Jerusalem.

a. Jesus in Capernaum (2:12-13).

2:12. After this he himself went down (viaa) to Capernaum with his mother, his brothers and his disciples; and there they stayed (viaa) for a few (not many) days.

2:13. And the Passover of the Jews was (viiia) approaching and Jesus went up (viaa) to Jerusalem.

After this. The expression indicates an event that follows shortly on the previous event. The wedding banquet at Cana took place about in the end of February to the beginning of March in the year A.D. 27.

Going down to Capernaum. Nazareth lay on a high plateau, but Capernaum lay at the Sea of Galilee about 200 metres below sea level. They all stayed some time in Capernaum, where most probably John and James lived with their father Zebedee and mother Salome³².

It was almost time for the Jewish Passover. The Jewish Passover commemorated the Exodus from Egypt³³. The Passover lamb was slaughtered on the 14th day of the month Abib (April) and the feast of Unleavened Bread was celebrated during the following seven days (15th to 21st Abib). The Passover meal was on the 15th Abib. After the Exile the Jewish religious leaders required boys of twelve years old to come to the Jewish Passover Feast³⁴.

The Passover mentioned in John chapter 2 was in the year A.D. 27. The other Jewish festivals in the Gospel of John are: the Passover of the year A.D. 28 (5:1); the Passover of the year A.D. 29 (6:4); the Feast of Dedication (of the temple) (winter A.D. 29) (10:22); and the Passover of the year A.D. 30 (11:55; 12:1; 13:1; 19:31). The other three Gospels only mention the last Passover. John explained the Jewish festivals, because many of his readers were non-Jews who had no knowledge of the Jewish customs.

Going up to Jerusalem. Capernaum lay about 200 metres below sea level and Jerusalem lay on a mountain about 760 metres above sea level. '*Going up to Jerusalem*' meant a climb of about one kilometre high.

b. Jesus cleanses the temple before his death and resurrection (2:14-17).

2:14. And he found (viaa) in the temple those who were selling (vppa) cattle, sheep and doves, and the moneychangers sitting (vppn)(at tables).

²⁸ Matthew 5:17

²⁹ Ephesians 2:15; Colossians 2:14

³⁰ Mark 2:18-22

³¹ Romans 10:17

³² Mark 1:19-21

³³ Exodus chapter 12

³⁴ Luke 2:41-42

2:15. So he made (vpaa) a whip out of cords (made of rushes, because sticks and weapons were not allowed in the temple area) and drove (throw) (viaa) the whole lot out of the temple: the sheep and the cattle; and poured out (send flying)(viaa) the small coins of the moneychangers and turned over (viaa) the tables.

2:16. And to those who were selling (vppa) doves (pigeons) he said (viaa), “Take (vmaa) these things from here! Stop making (vmpa) (imperatives) the house of my Father a marketplace!”

2:17. His disciples remembered (viao) that it is (+vipa) written (vprp+), “The zeal for your house will consume (vifd) me.”

The vendors and moneychangers. All Jews were required to celebrate the Passover Festival every year at Jerusalem³⁵ and pay the temple tax³⁶. During the seven-day Passover festival many animals were offered in sacrifice to the Lord³⁷. Because many Jews came from distant countries, they had to buy their animals to sacrifice in Jerusalem. A wicked ruler of the Sanhedrin, called Annas, wanted to make a profit out of kick-backs from the vendors and money-changers. Therefore he gave permission to them to use a part of the temple, called the court of the Gentiles for their business. Of course, the dealers in cattle and sheep would be tempted to charge exorbitant prices for their animals and exploit the worshippers.

Also the moneychangers used this court of the temple to do business. Every male worshipper had to pay the annual temple tribute of half a shekel. Therefore, Jews who lived in other countries had to exchange their foreign money for Jewish coins. Naturally, the moneychangers would charge an extra fee for every exchange-transaction. Here too, there were abundant opportunities for deception and abuse.

So when Jesus came to the temple, he found in the temple court people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. The temple, which was intended to be a place where people could pray and worship³⁸, had been turned into a marketplace where people were being robbed!

Jesus cleansed the temple as the Son of God. Jesus called the temple *his Father’s house*³⁹. By cleansing the temple, he exercised his authority or right as the Father’s only-begotten Son⁴⁰ to keep his Father’s house holy and to restore it to its purpose as a house of worship!

Jesus cleansed the temple as the Messiah. The Jews did not know their own Bible! The prophet Malachi prophesied that the Lord would suddenly come to his temple. He would be like a refiner’s fire ... and he would purify the people of the tribe of Levi⁴¹! Thus, the Old Testament already proves that the Messiah had the right to cleanse the temple!

A thousand years B.C., king David prophesied, “The zeal for the Lord’s house would *consume* him”⁴². The cleansing of the temple would in some way contribute to *the death* of Jesus.

When Jesus cleansed the temple, the disciples remembered that these prophecies were written about the Messiah in the Old Testament. Jesus Christ used force to cleanse the temple, because he had the authority of the Father’s only-begotten Son and the authority of the Messiah to execute an act of punishment⁴³!

The temple had to be cleansed more often. Even in the days of Christ, history repeated itself. Three years later Jesus again had to cleanse the temple after his triumphal entry into Jerusalem⁴⁴. Apparently this temple trade was very unpopular with the crowd, because of the greed of those who conducted it. Even three years before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70, in an uprising against it, the people swept away “the bazaars of the sons of Annas” as the temple market was then called.

c. Jesus introduces the coming new order *after* his death and resurrection (2:18-22).

2:18. Then the Jews answered (viao) and said (viaa) to him, “What miraculous sign do you show (vipa) to us in order to (justify) doing (vipa) these things?”

2:19. Jesus answered (viao) and said (viaa) to them, “Break down (vmaa)(imperative) this temple and in three days I will raise (vifa) it up.”

2:20. Then the Jews said (viaa), “Forty and six years this temple has been in the process of building (viap), and you in three days will raise (vifa) it up?”

2:21. But he was speaking (viia) about the temple of his body.

2:22. When therefore he was raised (viap) from the dead his disciples remembered (viao) that he had said (viia) this; and they believed (viaa) the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken (viaa).

³⁵ Exodus 23:14-17

³⁶ Exodus 30:11-16

³⁷ Numbers 28:16-25

³⁸ Isaiah 56:7

³⁹ Luke 2:49

⁴⁰ cf. Hebrews 3:1-6

⁴¹ Malachi 3:1-3

⁴² Psalm 69:9

⁴³ compare John 5:22

⁴⁴ Matthew 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-18; Luke 19:45-46

The riddle of Jesus about tearing down the old and reconstructing the new. Jesus said, “Break down this temple and I will raise it again in three days”. *This was a kind of a riddle, because the words have a double meaning.* The word ‘temple’ may refer to *the temple built of stones* standing in Jerusalem, or it may refer to *the temple of the body of Jesus*. And the word ‘break down’ may refer to *the tearing down* of a building, or it may refer to *the destruction* of the body of Jesus. And the word ‘raise up’ may refer to *the reconstruction* of a building, or it may refer to *the resurrection* of the body of Jesus!

The meaning of the riddle. Although the Jews will break down the temple of Jesus Christ’s body, in three days he will be resurrected.

*By breaking down the temple of Christ’s body, the Jews were also breaking down their own temple of stone and the whole system of religious practices connected with it. The death of Jesus Christ fulfilled the Old Testament Law and brought the Old Testament revelation to a close*⁴⁵.

*Nevertheless, as a result of the resurrection of the temple of his body, Jesus Christ established the New Testament revelation and a new spiritual temple (the Church) with completely new spiritual practises, in which people will worship God in Spirit and truth*⁴⁶!

The illustration (type) and the fulfilment (antitype) cannot be separated in the Bible. The illustration (type) is Israel’s tabernacle or temple building and was regarded as the place in which God dwelt⁴⁷. The fulfilment (antitype) is Christ’s human body, which is in a far superior sense the dwelling-place of God⁴⁸.

Therefore, if anyone destroys the body of Christ, he also pulls down the Jerusalem temple with its cult (religious ceremonies)! When Jesus Christ was crucified, the temple building and its entire religious system ceased to have any more meaning! The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom⁴⁹. Stephen and the apostle Paul taught that the temple has no more meaning⁵⁰. Also the book of Hebrews teaches clearly the once for all time fulfilment and replacement of the temple and its whole religious cult by Jesus Christ and his fulfilled work of salvation! In A.D. 70 the Romans finally +destroyed Jerusalem and the temple building.

In exactly the same way, the resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ implies the establishment of the new temple, another temple that is not made by man⁵¹. The New Testament teaches that the Body of Christ (the Church) is the spiritual temple of God⁵².

The Jews failed to see the fulfilment (antitype). They only saw the literal temple of stone, which took forty-six years to construct. If they had studied the Scriptures with a believing heart, they would have known that the temple of Jerusalem, together with its furniture and its ceremonies, was only an illustration (type, a shadow)⁵³, destined for destruction.

King David (1000 B.C.) said, “Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you have prepared for me. Burnt offerings and sin offerings you did not require. Then I said, ‘Here am I, I have come ... desiring to do your will’”⁵⁴. *The sacrifice of Jesus Christ fulfilled and replaced all other sacrifices.*

The prophet Isaiah (740 B.C.) prophesied that men *cannot* build a house (temple) for God⁵⁵. The prophet Jeremiah (627 B.C.) prophesied that *the ark* would not be missed, it would not be remembered and another ark would not be made⁵⁶!

The disciples failed to see that the temple of which Jesus was speaking, was the temple of his body. Only after Jesus was crucified, after the curtain of *the temple* was torn from top to bottom and after he was resurrected on the third day, did the disciples of Jesus understand the spiritual meaning of these words of Jesus!

Biblical examples where the physical represent the spiritual. The Jews failed again and again to discern that the physical symbolises the spiritual. Again and again they made unwarranted, crassly literal interpretations of the words of Jesus, which were intended to have spiritual meaning. For example, the following are some examples just from the Gospel of John:

- In John 3, ‘to be born again’ is not physical, but spiritual.
- In John 4, the ‘living water’ is not physical water, but the Holy Spirit and the everlasting life he brings.
- In John 6 ‘the eating of the flesh of Jesus’ is not physical or sacramental, but means receiving Jesus by faith.

⁴⁵ Matthew 5:17; Ephesians 2:14-15; Colossians 2:14

⁴⁶ John 4:21,23; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:22; 1 Peter 2:4-5

⁴⁷ Exodus 25:22

⁴⁸ Colossians 2:9

⁴⁹ Matthew 27:51

⁵⁰ Acts 7:48-49; 17:24-25

⁵¹ Mark 14:58

⁵² 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 2 Corinthians 6:16, Ephesians 2:21-22; 1 Peter 2:4-5

⁵³ Hebrews 8:5

⁵⁴ Psalm 40:6-7 in the Greek Old Testament translation)(cf. Hebrews 10:5-7)

⁵⁵ Isaiah 66:1-2

⁵⁶ Jeremiah 3:16

- And in John 8, ‘death’ does not refer to physical death, but to eternal separation from the presence and loving care of God.

d. Jesus knows everything about all people (2:23-25).

2:23. Now while he was (viia) in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast many believed (viaa) in his name as they were seeing (vppa) the miraculous signs he was performing (viia).

2:24. But Jesus was not trusting (viia) himself to them, because at all times he knew⁵⁷ (vnpa) all (men)

2:25. and that he had (viia) no need that anyone bear testimony (vsaa) concerning man, for he himself knew (by observation and experience)(viia) what was (viia) in man.

When the crowds at Jerusalem saw the miraculous signs Jesus was doing, many believed in him (2:23). However, Jesus did not entrust himself to them, because he knew who they really were. They thought that they knew Jesus, but Jesus did not know (acknowledge) them as belonging to him⁵⁸. This means that Jesus did not view all these individuals that believed in him as being true believers. Only Jesus knows all people. Only Jesus knows what is in the heart of all people. Only Jesus knows when a person is genuinely born again. Jesus did not need to listen to the testimony concerning any particular person, because his own penetrating eyes were able to look into the very depths of every person’s heart (2:25).

In John chapter 1, Jesus did not need anybody to tell him who Simon was, when he saw him for the first time. His own penetrating eyes saw that Simon was a big fisherman with a small heart. Jesus also did not need anybody to tell him who Nathanael was, when he saw him for the first time. He knew that Nathanael was an Israelite in whom there was nothing false. Likewise in John chapter 2, Jesus knew that the faith of many people in Jerusalem was not genuine saving faith. They were just believers in name or in culture. With his penetrating all-seeing eyes he read the secrets of people’s hearts. He knew their thoughts, motives and attitudes. And in John chapter 3, Jesus did not need anybody to tell him who Nicodemus was, when he met him for the first time. He knew that Nicodemus was not yet born-again!

Jesus knows everything about us. His penetrating, all-seeing eyes are able to look into our mind, heart and whole life⁵⁹. He knows our weaknesses as that of Peter, he knows our sincerity as that of Nathanael, he knows our faith as that of all other people and he knows the questions of our heart like that of Nicodemus.

APPLICATIONS

- 2:1. Honour marriage as God’s idea and institution.
- 2:1. As a Christian get involved in the ordinary activities of other people.
- 2:11. Meditate on the glory of Christ displayed in the Old Testament and the New Testament.
- 2:12. Spend some time with your parents and family.
- 2:15-16. Get angry at unrighteousness, but don’t sin in the process⁶⁰.
- 2:22. Believe the Old and New Testaments. Believe the words of Jesus Christ.
- 2:23. Do not entrust yourself to everyone.
- 2:25. Practise the presence of Christ. He sees and knows everything.

QUESTIONS

- 2:10. May Christians drink wine?
- 2:11a. What is the purpose of miracles in the Bible?
- 2:11b. What glory did Jesus reveal?
- 2:12-17. Why does Jesus cleanse the temple?
- 2:19-22. What is the meaning of destroying the temple and raising it again in three days?
- 2:24. Why did Jesus not entrust himself or his cause to everyone?

⁵⁷ G: ginóskó

⁵⁸ Matthew 7:21-

⁵⁹ cf. 2 Chronicles 16:9; Hebrews 4:13

⁶⁰ Ephesians 4:26