

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

6. Every verse of Scripture must be interpreted in the light of the entire.....
7. "And the Word became....., and..... among us."
8. "For the..... was given through Moses;..... and..... came through Jesus Christ."
9. To become sons of God we must be..... anew of God.
10. "Behold,, that taketh away the sin of the world!"

True or False?

1.Our finite minds cannot comprehend eternity.
2.John the Baptist was very unpopular.
3.The baptism of fire is promised to believers.
4.Nathanael was Andrew's brother.
5.James was Simon's brother.
6.Philip was Andrew's brother.
7.The four fishermen received only one call from Jesus.
8.The Old Testament may be very clearly understood without a knowledge of Christ.
9.Nathanael was the brother of Bartholomew.
10.Jesus declared Himself in a spectacular manner to all of Judea immediately after His baptism.

EXPOSITORY SERMON NO. 1

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST INTERPRETED

John 1:1-18

Introduction

- I. TELL BIRTH STORY BRIEFLY (Luke 2).
 - A. John's Prologue gives the definition of Christmas.
 - B. Especially consider verse 14.
- II. WHO IS THIS CHILD BORN 2000 YEARS AGO IN A STABLE IN BETHLEHEM?
 - A. Who is He, that men have celebrated His birth for 2000 years?
 - B. Who is He of Whom thousands of books have been written?
 - C. Who is He in Whom all of history centers, past and present?

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III. JOHN STATES THREE THINGS ABOUT THIS CHILD IN HIS PROLOGUE

- A. He is the eternal Word of God.
- B. He was made flesh to bring life to men.
- C. He is the complete and final opportunity for man's salvation.

LITTLE DID THE SHEPHERDS OR THE WISE MEN KNOW THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS CHILD . . . EVEN WE DO NOT REALIZE THE FULL SIGNIFICANCE OF HIS BIRTH BECAUSE MANY DO NOT RECOGNIZE THE FINALITY OF HIS REVELATION!

Discussion

I. HE IS THE ETERNAL WORD OF GOD

- A. *Logos* is defined as "the thought, purpose and expression of the mind of God."

Just as our thoughts and purposes are made known when we communicate by words,

SO GOD'S AGELESS PURPOSES ARE MADE KNOWN THROUGH CHRIST (Eph. 3:9).

- B. "The Word was with God" — the Word was of the very essence and nature of God.

1. Heb. 1:3.

2. Col. 2:9.

3. GOD WAS, AND EVER SHALL BE, ALWAYS LIKE JESUS REVEALED HIM — merciful, graceful, loving, yet wrathful against sin and hypocrisy.

- C. The Word was an equal agent in creation (v. 3).

1. Heb. 1:2-3.

2. JESUS IS THE GOD WHOM WE WORSHIP! HE WAS THE CREATOR COME IN THE FLESH!

- a. Let that knowledge burst afresh on our minds.

- b. We cannot deny the divinity of Jesus and still honor God (cf. Jn. 5:23).

- c. WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE ALL RELIGIONS THAT BELIEVE JESUS TO BE A PROPHET . . . A GOOD MAN, BUT NOT DIVINE?

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II. HE BECAME FLESH AND DWELT AMONG US TO BRING LIFE AND LIGHT

A. Blessed word! . . . "He *tabernacled* among us."

1. Our God is not aloof . . . not unsympathetic.
 - a. Every heathen concept of gods is of unsympathetic gods always seeking to do harm and hurt to man.
 2. God could have sent Logos into world and then quickly withdrawn Him.
 - a. BUT HE CAME . . . HE KNEW WEARINESS, THIRST, SADNESS, TEARS, TEMPTATION, PERSECUTION, YEA — DEATH.
 - b. He is not a high priest that cannot be touched with our infirmities.
WE ARE DRAWN CLOSER TO HIM BECAUSE HE DID COME AND TARRY IN THE FLESH.

B. In Him was life.

1. It was necessary for Him to come in the flesh . . . in order to condemn sin in the flesh.
 - a. MAN COULD NOT FULFIL THE LAW OF GOD . . . THUS THE LAW BECAME A CONDEMNATION TO MAN.
 - b. THEREFORE, GOD SENT HIS SON . . . IN FLESH . . . TO CONQUER SIN AND SUFFER THE PENALTY OF SIN.

C. Many rejected Him . . . and still do . . . BUT TO ALL WHO RECEIVE:

1. HE GIVES THE RIGHT TO BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD.
Notice that He gives — we do not earn.
2. YET WE MUST ACCEPT HIS GIFT.
 - a. This we do by being born of God (new birth).
 - b. Compare Jn. 3:3-5; Titus 3:5; I Pet. 1:22-23, etc.
3. Jesus gives both authority and power to live this new life . . . faith, hope, prayer and obedience.

III. HE CAME AS A COMPLETE AND FINAL REVELATION OF GOD

- A. In times past God spoke partial revelations (Heb. 1:1).
1. But at the end of the ages; in the fulness of time He spoke to man in His Son (Heb. 1:2).

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- a. The Law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
- B. The Law was only a shadow of the reality of God's truth.
 - 1. It was all realized in Christ.
- C. He is the only opportunity for men forevermore.
 - 1. "Except ye believe that I am He, ye shall die in your sins."

THIS MEANS THAT MEN WILL BE SEPARATED FROM GOD, AND THE WHOLE WEIGHT OF THE PENALTY FOR THEIR SIN WILL FALL UPON THEIR OWN SHOULDERS . . . THEY WILL PAY THIS PENALTY FOR ETERNITY.

- 2. All men will eventually live eternally — either in heaven or hell.
 - a. But Jesus gives Life with a capital L. He brings life and immortality to light through His resurrection.

HIS BIRTH WOULD MEAN LITTLE WITHOUT HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION!

OUR HOPE AND FAITH AND POWER TO LIVE A CHRISTIAN LIFE IS ALL BASED UPON HIS VICTORY OVER DEATH!

JESUS HAS COME . . . AND GOD IS LIKE JESUS . . . WE OUGHT TO SHOUT WITH THE MULTITUDE OF THE HEAVENLY HOST: "GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST!"

Conclusion

I THUS WE SEE THAT THE BABE BORN 2000 YEARS AGO WAS:

- A. He who put the stars in the heavens ;
He who created our delicate bodies from dust and breathed life into them ;
He who upholds all creation by the word of His power.
- B. It means that:
We no longer need to fumble and miss the way ; HE IS THE WAY.
We no longer need to grope for the truth ; HE IS THE TRUTH.

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We no longer need wonder how life ought to be lived;
HE IS THE LIFE.

II BUT WE ONLY BELIEVE THIS ON THE BASIS OF
HIS RESURRECTION.

- A. IF THERE WERE NO KNOWLEDGE OF RESURRECTION TO INCORRUPTION, there would be very little sense to life on this earth. It would then be sensible to adopt Solomon's philosophy.
- B. Jesus has proved that there is an eternal life beyond the grave. Thus we see that all his statements about heaven and hell are true!

SOME MAY LAUGH AND SCOFF NOW, BUT WHEN DEATH COMES, WHO IS GOING TO TAKE THEIR HANDS AND LEAD THEM ACROSS THE DARK, BLACK CHASM WHERE NONE BUT HE HAS RETURNED TO TELL ABOUT?

SURRENDER AND TRUST HIM . . . JESUS WILL LEAD YOU ACROSS! THAT IS THE REASON WHY THE CHILD WAS BORN IN BETHLEHEM 2000 YEARS AGO.

CHAPTER TWO

Some commentators make the first miracle of Jesus recorded in this chapter the beginning of His public ministry. We prefer, however, to consider the miracle at the marriage feast as the final preparation for His public ministry. Verse eleven of this chapter indicates that He performed this miracle especially to prepare His disciples for the public ministry to follow. Furthermore, this miracle goes unnoticed as far as the multitudes are concerned, and was not intended to be an open manifestation. Therefore, we continue in our outline with the Preparation Period:

- A. Preparation (cont.) 1:19-2:12.
 - 3. First miracle 2:1-11.
 - a. Mary's expectations rebuked by Jesus vv. 1-5.
 - b. Miracle performed vv. 6-11.
 - 4. Residence moved to Capernaum 2:12.

MARY'S EXPECTATIONS REBUKED BY JESUS

Text 2:1-5

- 1 **And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:**
- 2 **and Jesus also was bidden, and his disciples to the marriage.**
- 3 **And when the wine failed, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.**
- 4 **And Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come.**
- 5 **His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.**

Queries

- a. Why would Jesus go to a wedding?
- b. What was Mary expecting from Jesus?
- c. Did Jesus rebuke His mother?

Paraphrase

The third day after finding Philip and Nathanael, Jesus arrived in Cana of Galilee. There was a wedding feast in Cana, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, was attending the feast. Jesus and His disciples, having also been invited, were in attendance. And when the wine was all gone, the mother of Jesus said to Him, The hosts have no more wine. Jesus replied, Woman, what have you to say about My work? This is not the proper hour for My public manifestation. His mother then said to the servants, Whatever He may say to you, do it!

Summary

Jesus, His disciples and His mother all attend a wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. Mary is anxious for Jesus to declare Himself. Jesus warns His mother that she is not to lead Him but to follow Him.

Comment

Cana was a small village about three or four miles northeast of Nazareth. The place is now called Kefr Kenna. J. W. McGarvey, author of *Lands of the Bible*, visited there in 1879 and inspected an ancient building which had been converted into a chapel. This building was alleged to have been the very place where Jesus made the water into wine. They even pointed out to Brother McGarvey two stone mortars containing water which were used to immerse infants. They were supposed to be the very jars used by the Lord in His miracle. The caretakers of this chapel seemed to be unaware that these two jars could hold only about six gallons apiece, whereas the scriptural water jars held approximately 20 gallons each.

By "the third day" John probably means it was the third day after Jesus "decided to go into Galilee" (1:43) that He finally arrived in Galilee. He went directly to Cana of Galilee where he had been invited to a wedding. Cana would be about 60 or 70 miles north of Bethany beyond Jordan (as located on Map 1, pp. 17). Contrary to the contention of some commentators, it would be possible for Jesus and His disciples to walk 70 miles in two full days and a part of a third. Besides, He could have been advancing north toward Galilee day by day as He gathered His first disciples.

Mary was probably there as one invited to assist, much as certain ones are invited today to attend to the festivities of the wedding reception of a relative or a friend. It is not certain why Jesus was invited. Perhaps the newlyweds were personal friends or relatives of His mother; maybe the invitation came through Nathanael whose home was here in Cana.

The point is that Jesus took His disciples to Cana that they might see His glory. There is also the possibility that He took this opportunity to show these former disciples of John the Baptist the contrast between His type of ministry and that of their former teacher. The Baptist's disciples came later and asked Jesus why His disciples did not fast (Mt. 9:14ff), i.e., why His ministry differed from that of John the Baptist. Jesus was not eccentric and ascetic like John the Baptist, but neither was He a "glutton and a wine-bibber" (Mt. 11:19). As Trench points out, Jesus had a "harder and a higher task" than the Baptist. Jesus mingled with men in their daily living and sought to sanctify and purify their everyday activities (cf. Lk. 14:7-14), while John withdrew from the common activities of men. Jesus gives divine sanction to the joyous activities of human existence — profitable activities such as marriage, family life and etc. Our Lord never countenanced revelry or sensual gratification. His paramount emphasis was that of the Spirit (Mt. 6:33; Jn. 6:63). Jesus gives sanction to the wholesome activities of this world only insofar as they constantly lead us to a higher and holier walk with God.

If Mary was there as one assisting in the affairs of the festivities, her concern was only natural when the wine began to "fail". This would be very embarrassing according to the Eastern customs of hospitality. Just what Mary expected Jesus to do we are not expressly told. It may be safely inferred, however, from Jesus' answer (v. 4) that she desired something extraordinary from Him. For years Mary had observed such things as the astounding miracles surrounding her Son's birth — the prophecies of Simeon and Anna, Jesus confounding the teachers in Jerusalem — and she "kept all these sayings in her heart" (cf. Lk. 2:51). She had probably been informed of the miracles surrounding His baptism. Now Jesus appears with six disciples, and it seems to her that He is ready to announce Himself to the world and make some drastic changes in the present social order. Mary has decided that this is His opportunity to do so, and she hints

that He should avail Himself of this moment. Mary felt that the Lord needed some "motherly advice" on how to carry out His work.

In verse 4 we see that Jesus understood Mary to be dictating the course of His ministry. A literal translation of His answer would read "Woman, what to me and thee?" As Lenski puts it, Jesus was saying, "Woman, what is there in common for us in this matter?" or, "This is my affair, not thine." In the word "Woman" there is no rebuke or insult for He used the same word tenderly remanding her to the care of the beloved John (cf. Jn. 19:26). But in the phrase "what have I to do with thee" there is a rebuke. He cannot allow even His mother to dictate His affairs. It was necessary for the Lord later to remind His family that they must not interfere with His ministry. When His friends thought Him "beside Himself" they seem to have reported to Mary and her sons (Mk. 3:21). His family came seeking Him apparently to take Him home for a forced rest. But Jesus would not even walk through the crowds to talk to them. They came, it appears, to interrupt His work, and He was very explicit in showing that He was subject to the influence of no human, not even His mother (cf. Mk. 3:31-35). Jesus is Lord of *all!* Everyone must depend upon Him as the *only* mediator (I Tim. 2:5). Much earlier than the Cana incident, we remember, Jesus as a lad of twelve indicated to His mother and Joseph that he was not to be restricted by parental interference because "he must be about his Father's business" (Lk. 2:48-50).

He informs His mother that His "hour is not yet come." He has an hour set in the Father's economy for each task which has been given Him. When that hour comes, He acts, and not until then. Jesus never allows anyone to rush or hurry Him (cf. Jn. 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20; 12:23; 13:1; 17:1).

It is inspiring to witness such immediate submission as was evinced in Mary's directions to the servants. Her decision to simply trust Jesus has now prepared her for a manifestation of His glory. It is not inconsistent, therefore, for Jesus to perform the miracle when He had previously rebuked Mary's impertinence. Mary's lesson can be applied to our lives today. James writes, "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in your pleasures" (Jas. 4:3). When we seek the Lord's blessings for carnal pleasure or vanity we "receive not." But when we resign ourselves to His will (I Jn. 5:14-15) we receive "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

Quiz

1. Where is Cana?
2. Explain how Jesus could have made the journey to Cana in three days.
3. How did Jesus' ministry differ from that of John the Baptist?
4. Why do we think that Mary expected a miracle from Jesus?
5. Name two incidents where Jesus rejected the intervention of His family into His affairs.
6. What is the lesson for us in this section?

THE MIRACLE PERFORMED

Text 2:6-11

6 Now there were six waterpots of stone set there after the Jews' manner of purifying, containing two or three firkins apiece.

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

8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the ruler of the feast. And they bare it.

9 And when the ruler of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and knew not whence it was (but the servants that had drawn the water knew), the ruler of the feast calleth the bridegroom,

10 and saith unto him, Every man setteth on first the good wine; and when men have drunk freely, then that which is worse; thou hast kept the good wine until now.

11 This beginning of his signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

Queries

- a. What is "the Jews' manner of purifying"?
- b. Was this a drunken feast?
- c. Is this Jesus' *first* miracle?

Paraphrase

Now there were six stone water-jars which had been set there for purifying purposes (Jewish ceremonial purification) and they were capable of containing about 20 gallons apiece. Jesus commanded the servants, saying, Fill the water-jugs with water. The servants then filled the jars full to the brim. Jesus

next commanded the servants, saying, Draw out a portion and carry it to the ruler of the feast. The servants carried a portion to the ruler and when he tasted the water which had been made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants that had drawn the water knew), the ruler of the feast called the bridegroom and said, You know the proverb that says, "A man sets his good wine out first then when the taste is blunted, he sets out the poor wine," but you have kept the good wine until last. This is the first sign that Jesus did and He did it in Cana of Galilee, and He manifested His glory and His disciples believed on Him.

Summary

Jesus miraculously changes water into wine, primarily to manifest His divine glory. His disciples believed on Him as a result.

Comment

Six 20-gallon water-jugs, set aside for purification rites, indicates a large crowd. John, writing for Gentile readers, feels it necessary to note that the jars were there "according to the Jews' manner of purifying." The Jews washed their hands and their pots and pans before and after eating to cleanse themselves ceremonially, (Mt. 15:1-11). This was one of their traditions added to the law of Moses (cf. Mk. 7:1-9; Lk. 11:37-41). The Jews were very careful to wash before meals in case they had touched a Gentile, or rubbed against a publican or a harlot in the marketplace.

What would be the thoughts of the servants and Mary when Jesus commanded that the jars be filled with water? It would be fruitless to speculate. Just as it is pointless to speculate about the extent of the miracle, i.e., whether the water became wine only when they drew it out of the jars, or, whether all the water in each jar became wine and remained so. The point is, Jesus performed a miracle! The radical critics claim this miracle runs counter to the laws of nature; therefore, they attack the credibility of the account.

Trench, in his *Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord*, page 116, explains it this way: "He who each year prepares the wine in the grape, causing it to absorb, and swell with, the moisture of earth and heaven, to transmute this into nobler juices of its own, did now concentrate all those slower processes into a single moment, and accomplish in an instant what usually He takes many months

to accomplish . . . He was working in the line of His more ordinary operations, the unnoticed miracles of everyday nature.”

We cannot doubt the miracle of the grape as it grows through the “slower processes” before our very eyes though we cannot explain it. We ought not to doubt the same result attained in an instant by your Lord when the record rests upon irrefutable testimony of eyewitnesses.

The skeptics and the sensualists consider this miracle to be ammunition for their attacks upon the Bible along another line. They charge Jesus with immoral action, and claim that He made intoxicating wine. The burden of proving that Jesus did make intoxicating wine is with those who make the accusations. They are the ones who say the wine was intoxicating. John does not say so! It is a prejudiced and unscholarly determination that says the Greek word *oinos* (the word used here) must always mean intoxicating wine wherever the word is used. In fact, New Testament and classical usage show that the word may mean a number of things. Thayer shows that *oinos* is even used of the vine itself (cf. Rev. 6:6) rather than the juice. In classical Greek, usage may be cited to show *oinos* designating the grape itself, the juice still within the grape, the fresh pressed juice, and un-intoxicating drinks. A corresponding word in the Hebrew language is *yayin*. When Hebrew scholars translated the Hebrew Old Testament into the Greek language (known as the *Septuagint*), they used the Greek word *oinos* to express the meaning of their word *yayin*. The word *oinos* is used in the Septuagint as a generic term for wine — fresh, cooked, fermented juices alike. (Cf. Num. 6:4; Judges 13:4 where “wine” is used for the grape itself).

Aristotle, Pliny and Nicander speak of *oinos* that does not intoxicate. Classical writings could be cited to show that the ancients knew of five ways of keeping grape juice from fermentation, and they called such preserved juice *oinos*. No one should use this instance to justify drinking today unless he can prove absolutely that the wine Jesus made is *just like* the wine they propose to drink!

Of course, the question is always posed as to what the ruler of the feast meant by his speech in verse 10. The ruler seems to be chiding his host in verse 10 by reminding the bridegroom of a well known custom. It was, and is, a common practice to pass off an inferior wine when men’s taste becomes blunted by even a small amount of drinking. It is obvious that the ruler was not drunk. He recognized the difference in the juice instantly. It is

only the perverse mind that could imagine Jesus condoning drunken revellry, let alone using His power to furnish men something destructive to their physical and spiritual well-being.

Modern man cannot possibly use the Cana miracle to justify indulgence in any of the detestable liquor of today (cf. ICor. 8:13; 10:31-33; Rom. 14:15-17, 21). Those who buy from liquor manufacturers today are supporting an industry which has contributed to the loss of thousands of lives physically, and the eternal damnation of thousands of souls spiritually.

In verse 11 we learn that this is the first miracle Jesus performed. His second was the cure of the nobleman's son (cf. Jn. 4:54). One commentator defines "sign" as "a miracle viewed as proof of divine authority and majesty." A "sign" points to the divine Doer instead of the deed. This seems to be the very purpose of the miracle — to point His disciples to the divine Son. Note how John, one of the eyewitnesses of this miracle, puts everything else secondary to the manifestation of Jesus' deity.

It would be well to here define the word disciple. Disciple comes from the word *manthano*, which means "I learn." A disciple then is one who learns, a pupil, a follower. It is best defined as a learner, one who accepts the instruction of his teacher and makes it his way of life. The miracle at Cana shows us that Jesus did not require His disciples to have perfect knowledge or perfect faith in order to begin following Him. What the Lord wants is a disciple with a willing mind and an honest heart — willing to learn and honest enough to apply the lesson to his own life!

Quiz

1. Why did the Jews purify themselves before meals? Was this a law of Moses?
2. Why should we believe miracles recorded in the Bible when we cannot understand them or explain them?
3. Name three things that the Greek word *oinos* (wine) may mean other than intoxicating wine.
4. Give two reasons why men today may not use this miracle to justify drinking intoxicating beverages.
5. Is this Jesus' first miracle? Explain.
6. Give a good definition of the word disciple.
7. What was the primary purpose of this miracle?

JESUS MOVES HIS HEADQUARTERS TO CAPERNAUM

Text 2:12

12 After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples; and they abode there not many days.

Queries

- a. Where is Capernaum?
- b. Why did He go there and what did He do?
- c. Who are "his brethren"?

Paraphrase

After the wedding feast at Cana was over, Jesus went down from the hills of Galilee unto the city of Capernaum on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. And He remained there a few days, He, and His mother, and His brothers and His disciples.

Summary

Jesus moves to Capernaum, abiding there a few days with His entourage as He awaits the time of the Passover.

Comment

We have entitled this part of the outline, "Jesus Moves His Headquarters to Capernaum" because He ever after makes this city a pivotal point for the larger portion of His ministry. One must, of course, study the Synoptics to realize this, since nearly all of His Galilean ministry is recorded in those accounts. One thing seems evident—He never returns to Nazareth to live, only to preach and be rejected. After John the Baptist was delivered up to prison, Jesus "withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea . . ." (Mt. 4:12-13). The Gospel of Luke tells us that Jesus did not own a residence (Lk. 9:58). He probably made Peter's home His headquarters here in Capernaum (cf. Mk. 1:31). Whatever the case, Capernaum seems to be the headquarters for all His activities until He finally ends His public ministry in Galilee and comes to the Feast of Tabernacles (Jn. 7:2, 3, 10). Once He arrives in Judea at this feast, He never again returns to Galilee except for a few days preaching "in the borders of Galilee" (cf. Lk. 17:11 and Map 6, p., Vol. 2).

There is a great deal of controversy among commentators as to the most probable location of Capernaum. The two most likely places are the ruins of modern Tell Hum or Khan Minyeh. Most scholars prefer Tell Hum. For extended discussion on this subject consult any good Bible dictionary (cf. also Andrews, *Life of Our Lord*, pp. 224-230). Capernaum was located on the north side of the Sea of Galilee, west of the Jordan River entrance into the sea. The ruins of Tell Hum are very interesting. Most of its buildings were built of black basalt with the exception of a white synagogue. This synagogue probably dates back to about 200 A.D. but it was built on still more ancient ruins which date back to the very time of Christ. These ancient ruins may be those of the same synagogue that the centurion erected for the Jews (cf. Lk. 7:5) and the one in which Jesus healed the withered hand (Mk. 3:1-6). Capernaum was the home of the four fishermen; it was a customs station (Mt. 9:9), and a residence of a high officer of the king (Jn. 4:46). A Roman garrison was probably stationed there under the command of the centurion mentioned above. So completely has this city perished, as was prophesied by the Lord (Mt. 11:23), that the very site is a matter of much dispute today.

This verse (12) affords an opportunity to discuss the question of the Lord's brethren. The question would probably never have been raised had not the Roman church made the perpetual virginity of Mary a dogma. First consideration must be given to what the New Testament reveals on the subject of the Lord's brothers and sisters. They are mentioned in Mt. 12:46-50; 13:55-56; Mk. 3:31; 6:3; Lk. 8:19; Jn. 2:12; 7:3; Acts 1:14; I Cor. 9:5; Gal. 1:9. There were four brothers, James, Joseph, Simon and Judas. None of the accounts tell us how many sisters He had or what their names were. The Greek is very precise concerning this matter. His brothers and sisters are always called *adelphoi* (brothers and sisters) — not *anepsioi* (cousins) or *sungeneis* (kinsmen). Notice also they are always called His brothers and sisters, not sons and daughters of Mary. Further, they are always

connected with Mary in the particular relationship of being her very own children; members of her household and under her direction — not merely her nieces and nephews.

Amazingly enough, the theory of the perpetual virginity is even held by many Protestant writers. There is strong inference against this theory in the Scriptures. First is the inference that there were later sons born to Mary because Jesus is called the "firstborn son" in Luke 2:7. Secondly, there is the inference that Joseph later "knew" Mary in the husband-wife sexual relationship after the virgin birth of Jesus — "he knew her not until she brought forth a son" (Mt. 1:25).

The number of days Jesus stayed in Capernaum is not certain. We are told that it was "not many days." The couple in Cana had a spring wedding, probably sometime in April. Jesus attended this wedding, spent a few days in Capernaum then joined the thousands of pilgrims going to Jerusalem for the Passover, which was also in April.

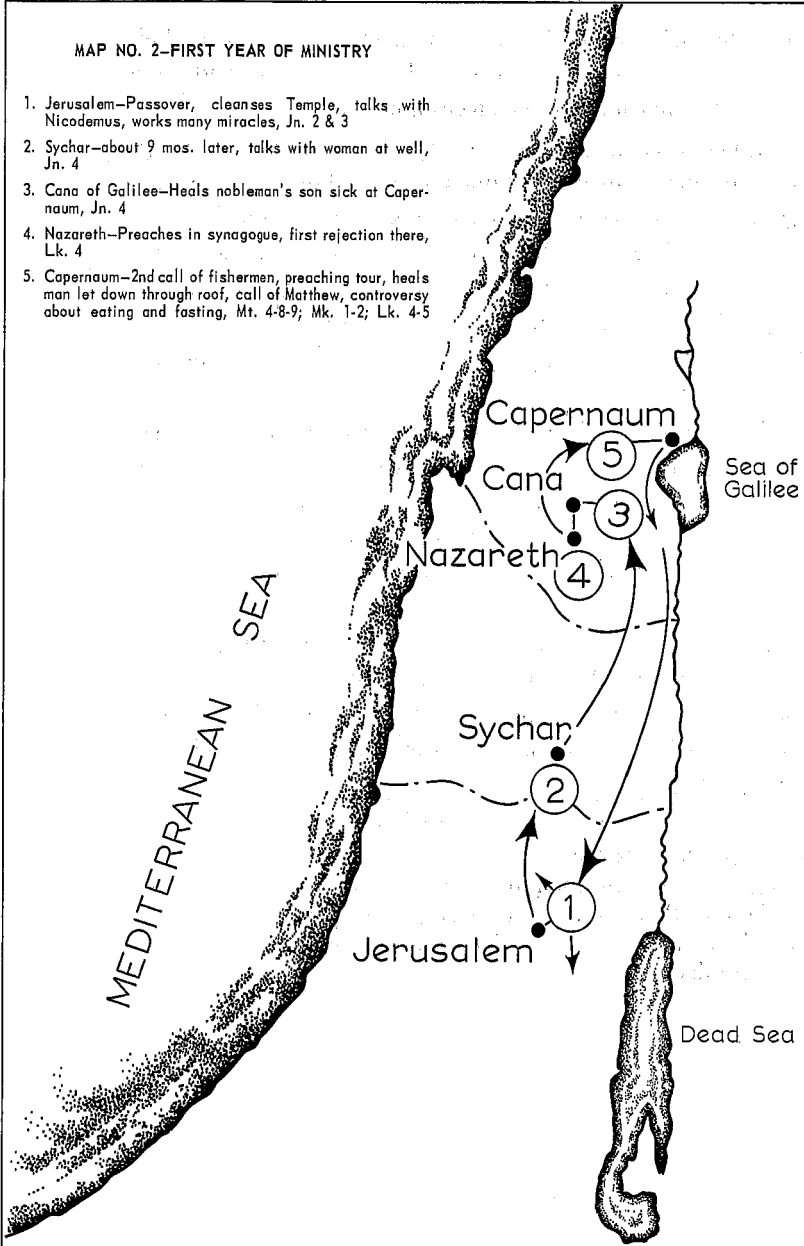
And so we come to the end of the period of preparation. When Jesus arrives at the Passover He will declare Himself to the rulers in no uncertain terms. There He will begin His public ministry — His open manifestation to the multitudes and the Jewish rulers.

Quiz

1. Describe Capernaum.
2. Why does John mention that Jesus went to Capernaum?
3. Tell all that the Scriptures say about Jesus' brethren.
4. What does the New Testament say about the "perpetual virginity" of Mary?

MAP NO. 2—FIRST YEAR OF MINISTRY

1. Jerusalem—Passover, cleanses Temple, talks with Nicodemus, works many miracles, Jn. 2 & 3
2. Sychar—about 9 mos. later, talks with woman at well, Jn. 4
3. Cana of Galilee—Heals nobleman's son sick at Capernaum, Jn. 4
4. Nazareth—Preaches in synagogue, first rejection there, Lk. 4
5. Capernaum—2nd call of fishermen, preaching tour, heals man let down through roof, call of Matthew, controversy about eating and fasting, Mt. 4-8-9; Mk. 1-2; Lk. 4-5



In our outline we are still under the second main division of the Fourth Gospel. We come now to the next point under that main division, namely, The Public Ministry — First Year. A primary purpose of John in writing his account was to supplement the other three gospel accounts. Therefore, many of the incidents of His public ministry will have to be obtained from the Synoptics. We shall endeavor to mention these omitted incidents from time to time as we connect the events of the Fourth Gospel. It is suggested that the reader frequently consult the maps in this commentary to get a comprehensive view of Jesus' public ministry as the text is being studied.

II The Word Manifested to the Jews and their Rejection of Him. 1:19-12:50 (cont.)

B. The Public Ministry — First Year 2:13 - 4:54

1. Early Judean Ministry 2:13-35

a. Cleansing of the Temple 2:13-17

b. Results of the Cleansing 2:18-22

c. General Judean Ministry 2:23-25

CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

Text 2:13-17

13 And the passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

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

15 and he made a scourge of cords, and cast all out of the temple, both the sheep and the oxen; and he poured out the changer's money, and overthrew their tables;

16 and to them that sold the doves he said, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house a house of merchandise.

17 His disciples remembered that it was written, Zeal for thy house shall eat me up.

Queries

- a. What is the "passover of the Jews"?
- b. Why were oxen, sheep and doves being sold in the Temple? Why were money changers there?
- c. How was Jesus able to cleanse the Temple unresisted?

Paraphrase

Now the time for the passover of the Jews was near and Jesus left Capernaum and went up to Jerusalem. There, in the temple courts, He found some who were selling, for sacrificial purposes, oxen, sheep and doves. He also found some who had set up their change-making enterprise in the temple and were sitting, conducting their business there. Jesus made a whip of ropes and drove the sheep and the oxen out of the temple courts. Then he scattered the money of the money-changers, turned over their tables, and said to the ones who were selling the doves, Carry these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a market place! His disciples then remembered what had been written in the Scriptures, "Zeal for thy house will consume me."

Summary

Jesus goes up to the Passover to worship. He finds the Temple being desecrated, and he manifests His wrath at such hypocrisy. His disciples interpret it as a fulfillment of messianic prophecy.

Comment

The majority of commentators agree that this cleansing of the Temple is the first of two such incidents in the ministry of Jesus. The very nature of John's gospel would indicate this. (a) John writes to fill in what the other Gospel writers have omitted. He omits some events of greater significance than the cleansing of the Temple, i.e., the transfiguration, the birth of Jesus, etc. Would it fit John's pattern then to repeat what all three of the other writers record (cf. Mt. 21:12-13; Mk. 11:15-18; Lk. 19:45-46)? (b) John is the most chronological of the four. Why would he violate all of his chronology and insert here at the beginning of Jesus' ministry an event which the other three definitely place at the last Passover of His ministry? (c) John gives the most detailed account of the last Passover of the four writers. If John is merely repeating the Synoptical cleansing, why did he not put it in his detailed account of the last Passover? (d) Again, in all three accounts of the second cleansing the Jewish rulers are represented as seeking to destroy Jesus. There is no mention of such an intensified animosity here in John's account of the first cleansing of the Temple.

Jesus left Capernaum, some 680 feet below normal sea level, and traveled "up" to Jerusalem, some 2500 feet above sea level. When people are said to be going "up" and "down" by the Gospel writers, it is meant that the people are going "up" and "down" in altitude — not in a north-south map-wise manner. The Lord's reason for going to Jerusalem was that the time for the Passover was near. We shall deal with the details of this feast in later chapters. Here it will be sufficient to notice only a few significant things connected with the Passover: (a) it was one of three feasts which every male Jew above the age of twelve must attend — the other two being the Feast of Tabernacles and the Feast of Pentecost; (b) Passover was the most important of all the feasts; (c) it commemorated the Israelite deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and more specifically the passing over of the death angel (cf. Ex. 12 and 13); (d) the feast was to be held on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan (corresponding to our April); and, (e) many sacrifices were required for those who worshipped at the feast (Num. 28:16-25).

Great multitudes of Jews attended the Passover. Jews from all over the civilized world made pilgrimages to Jerusalem for this feast. Josephus, in his account of the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., tells us that there were approximately 3 million Jews in the city when Titus the Roman general besieged it at Passover time. This Jewish historian adds that some 260,000 lambs were slain that year during the one week of the Passover celebration. Remember, also, that a great number of oxen would be sacrificed that week.

We begin now to get a picture of the magnitude of the scene which greeted Jesus as He entered the city of David. Some three million people there for the "Independence Day" celebration of the Jews — all crowded into Jerusalem until her very walls were groaning. People slept on the housetops and in the courtyards — anywhere they could find a place that was reasonably safe from robbers. The Law of Moses provided for the people to bring their own animals (if they had any) to the Passover. They were to present them to the priests for approval and subsequent sacrifice on the worshipper's behalf. Most of the worshippers preferred to purchase a suitable animal (one without spot or blemish) at the feast. This was much more convenient than bringing their own animal. Money-hungry priests had taken advantage of this attitude and they abused their authority to

approve or disapprove the sacrificial animal until they had cornered the market! It is probable that had the worshippers gone to the trouble to present a lamb of his own flock the priests would have rejected it as unfit for sacrifice. The people's only recourse then was to purchase an animal from the vending stalls of these racketeers. Of course, with such a complete control of the market, the racketeers would be able to coerce exorbitant prices from the starving populace. One commentator says the Sadducees made a profit of about \$300,000 each year from this market. It is also said that, at one time, the price of a pair of doves was about four dollars when they were really worth only about a nickle a pair. The people were being fleeced in the name of religion.

The changers of money also had a racket. Every male Jew above 20 was required to pay a Temple tax (cf. Ex. 30:11-16; Mt. 17:24-27) of a half-shekel. Only Jewish coinage was acceptable for the tax — Gentile money was polluted. Everyone who did not have Jewish money was obliged to get it changed. This afforded another means of extortion for the Jewish rulers.

There are two Greek words used in the New Testament which are translated "temple." One word (*hieron*) signifies "the entire building with its precincts, or some part thereof"; the other word (*naos*) usually means the inner sanctuary of the Temple. John uses the former word (*hieron*) here. Most scholars think that the animal markets were in the court of the Gentiles. This was the outermost precinct of the Temple. The rulers would most likely set up their markets here, not wishing to desecrate the courts where only Jews were allowed. Jewish pride shows its haughty contempt for the Gentiles by bringing the stench and filth of the animals into the court of the Gentiles. One writer describes the scene thusly: "And this was the entrance court of the Most High! The court which was a witness that that house should be a House of Prayer for all nations had been degraded into a place which for foulness was more like shambles and for bustling commerce more like a densely crowded bazaar; while the lowing of oxen, the bleating of sheep, the babel of many languages, the huckstering and wrangling, the clinking of money and of balances (perhaps not always just) might be heard in the adjoining courts, disturbing the chant of the Levites and the prayers of the priests!" (Farrar, *The Life of Christ*, pp. 445ff). It was not merely the presence of the animals that was offensive

to the Lord. His righteous ire was aroused because of the dishonest merchandizing and the desecration of the only place the Gentiles might seek the presence of God. Men seeking God (cf. Jn. 12:20) were denied His presence! We would do well to search our own practices as the people of God today. Is there anything in our lives — pride, carelessness, irreverence — that keeps the seeking stranger from the presence of God? Remember the wrath of the Lord as he displays it here against such action. Compare also Matthew 23:13.

Zealous for His Father's house and His Father's children, Jesus deliberately fashioned a whip from some rope-like pieces of twisted reeds. Then He quickly and decisively drove the animals out as the traders were fleeing from His countenance. In almost the same motion He turned and began upsetting the tables of the money-changers. It was a scene of bedlam; the animal traders trying to control and protect their property — sheep and oxen running helter-skelter — men shouting and swearing — bankers on their hands and knees greedily scurrying after the tinkling coins as Jesus went from table to table overturning them. The Lord then issued two thundering commands: "Take these things out of here! . . . Stop making my Father's house a market place!" The word translated "house of merchandise" is the Greek word *emporion*, from which we have the English word emporium. The Jews were literally making God's holy Temple an animal emporium. It was a scene so suddenly violent that the disciples were fearing for the Lord's safety, and they remembered an appropriate prophecy of Scripture, "Zeal for thy house will eat me up." Another interpretation is that the disciples saw further manifestation of the Deity of Jesus in this incident and remembered the Messianic prophecy of Psalms 69:9. Why not apply both interpretations to the utterance of the disciples? They recognized His fulfillment of the Messianic prophecy, but on the other hand they feared that His fanatic zeal would eventually bring about His death. The Greek word for zeal is *zelos* from which we also get the word jealous. Christ was very jealous for His Father's house — that it not be made a shelter for unrighteousness.

There are those who would have us believe that Jesus struck the men with His "scourge of cords." It is true that the Lord revealed holy anger at the conduct of these men, but striking them with a whip would not be in keeping with the character

of His teaching. His answer to Pilate would seem to preclude such physical combat on His part . . . "if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight . . . but now is my kingdom not from hence." (Jn. 18:36). Compare also His instruction to Peter concerning "taking up the sword" (Mt. 26:51-56). His only use for the whip was to drive out the dumb beasts, for they could not respond as He would have them to His spoken commands. In the second cleansing of the Temple the hucksters fled before His righteous countenance—He brandished no scourge there. The awesome manifestation of His glory drove the men out—just as it was manifested to the officers who could not arrest Him because "never man so spake" (cf. Jn. 7:45-46).

The public ministry of our Lord begins with explosive suddenness. No doubt the multitudes, along with the disciples, were electrified. Some of the multitude might even have recalled the prophecy, "Behold I send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: *and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple . . .* But who can abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? . . . and he will purify the sons of Levi . . ." (Malachi 3:1-3). The rulers were probably so surprised and so shamed that they were not able to grasp immediately the significance of this manifestation. Nevertheless, they counterattacked at once, touching off a controversy that grew and increased in fierceness until they were satisfied with nothing less than His death. This was the beginning of a struggle that continued for three years. The rulers would hardly let it rest for a moment. They followed Jesus wherever they could, seeking ever to ensnare Him . . . to destroy Him. The world hated Him because He "testified of it, that its works were evil" (Jn. 7:7).

Quiz

1. Give three reasons for believing that this is the first of two recorded instances where Jesus cleansed the Temple.
2. What was the Passover feast to commemorate?
3. About how many people attended the feast in Christ's day?
4. How were the animal traders taking advantage of the worshippers?
5. Why were the money-changers there?
6. Where was this merchandizing probably taking place?
7. Do you think Jesus struck the men with His scourge? Explain.
8. Give two Old Testament prophecies connected with this incident.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN
RESULTS OF THE CLEANSING

2:18-22

Text 2:18-22

18 The Jews therefore answered and said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

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

20 The Jews therefore said, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou raise it up in three days?

21 But he spake of the temple of his body.

22 When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he spake this; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

Queries

- a. Why did the Jews ask the question (v. 20)?
- b. What is the meaning of Jesus' answer in verse 19?

Paraphrase

The Jews said therefore to Jesus, What Messianic sign do you show us? do you have any credentials for these presumptuous actions in our temple? Jesus answered them, saying, Destroy this Sanctuary of God, the place where God's Presence dwells, and I will raise it up in three days. The Jews therefore said, It has taken forty-six years to erect this Sanctuary, and do you claim to be able to re-erect it in three days? But Jesus was speaking of the Sanctuary of His body, and when He was raised from the dead His disciples remembered these words of Jesus and applied them to His resurrection. When the disciples had witnessed the Resurrection and had seen this prophecy fulfilled, they believed more firmly that the Old Testament Scriptures were fulfilled in Jesus, and that His Word was the Word of God.

Summary

Jesus' authority to reform their Temple is challenged. The rulers demand from Him a wonderful sign of Messianic proportions. Jesus predicts a future sign. They are now destroying God's typical Sanctuary by evil practices and will eventually seek to destroy the Incarnate Sanctuary of God by crucifying Him. But in three days He will raise the new Sanctuary up!

Comment

At every manifestation of Jesus' glory the "wheat" is separated from the "chaff." The cleansing of the Temple is no exception. Those of honest heart find spiritual nourishment for their faith ((vv. 17, 22). Those concerned with satisfying the vanities of life become more hardened in their carnality (v. 20). Here Jesus gave an answer at which the Jews scoffed and used to reject His authority. The disciples, however, laid His answer up in their hearts and later their faith was strengthened! Jesus often clothed His greatest spiritual lessons in enigma for the very purpose of separating the spiritual followers from the carnal followers (cf. Mt. 13:10-16; Jn. 6:60-65).

When they regained their composure, the Temple traders turned on this presumptuous Galilean (v. 18) and demanded that He show proper credentials for His reformatory actions. Undoubtedly some of the rulers of the Temple were among those asking for His authority. There seems to have been a general expectation that a prophet (Elijah or Jeremiah) would come to prepare for the Messiah by confirming present religious practices or changing them. Perhaps they even recognized that this Galilean might possibly be the Messiah Himself!! If so, they must have some amazing and extraordinary signs to confirm their suspicions. According to Jewish tradition, the arrival of the Messiah was to be heralded by great wonders and upheavals. These rulers are like the great multitudes of followers in Galilee (Jn. 6). Jesus told them that they were only following Him because He had filled their hungry stomachs. When He told the multitudes that He came to feed them on His Word (Jn. 6:63), they turned away from Him. These rulers in Jerusalem refused all the signs of His deity because He would not conform to their carnal ideas concerning the Messiah of the Jews. Christianity is not primarily concerned with relieving hunger or suffering. The New Testament church is not primarily concerned with national or international politics. Christianity IS concerned primarily with saving men's souls by bringing them to trustful obedience to the doctrines of Christ (Jn. 14:15, 21, 23; 15:1-6, 14; Heb. 5:9, etc.).

There is a tendency on the part of some interpreters to apply the answer of Jesus (v. 19) exclusively to His physical body. However, the context demands that a certain amount of literal application to the Jewish temple be included in His answer. As Wescott sees it, "there are two distinct ideas which have to be

brought into harmony here." Jesus is referring to both the actual Temple and the Sanctuary of His body. The Jews were at that very moment destroying God's Temple, the place where the presence of God dwelt, by their unholy desecration of it. But this Sanctuary of stone was only a figure of the Person of Jesus Christ — the Incarnate Presence of God dwelling among men (Jn. 1:14). They are now desecrating the typical Sanctuary and will eventually destroy the fulfillment, even Jesus.

When they shall have rejected and put to death the Christ — the fulfillment of the type — what further use will there be for the type (the Sanctuary of stone)? The crucifixion of Jesus, in Whom dwelt the fulness of God, brought with it necessarily the destruction of the Temple. Why should God allow a rebellious Israel to keep the type when they spurn the Antitype? Thus the Jews brought about the destruction of their Temple and the judgment of God upon themselves (cf. Mt. 27:25). When the Lord expired upon the cross, the veil of the Temple was torn in two, signifying that it was all over with Israel and their typical Sanctuary (Mt. 27:51). Henceforth God may be worshipped anywhere if the worship is "in spirit and in truth" (cf. Jn. 4:23).

Jesus warned that the unfaithfulness of the Jews and their rejection of Him would end in terrible judgment upon the nation and complete destruction of their Temple (Mt. 23:37; 24:1-28). He intimated that these very rulers of the Jews would see such judgment come upon their nation (Mt. 26:64). As Lenski so aptly puts it, "Thus the sign the Jews demanded will be theirs indeed . . . a sign of final judgment."

The Messiah perishes — the Temple and the Jewish economy falls — the Presence of God is withdrawn from His people. The Messiah lives again — the true Sanctuary of God rises — the Presence of God is restored among His new people. God's presence among men was restored by the glorification of Christ and the giving of the Holy Spirit to believers (Jn. 7:37-39; Acts 2). God does not dwell in temples made with hands (Acts. 7:48; 17:24), but the church (the universal body of Christ) is the temple of God. Every Spirit-filled believer is a living stone in God's spiritual house (I Pet. 2:5; cf. also I Cor. 3:16; II Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:21-22). Every Christian's body is individually a "temple of the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 6:19-20).

The Jews scoffingly interpreted His words literally. It had taken them forty-six years to partially reconstruct the temple.

Would this Galilean rebuild it in three days? Preposterous! The reconstruction of the Temple was begun by Herod the Great in about 20 B.C. This is forty-six years later, and it is still unfinished. It was not completed until 64 A.D., thirty years after the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus. And then, only six years after its completion (70 A.D.) it is so levelled by the Roman destruction that, according to the Jewish historian Josephus, "one stone was not found upon another."

The Jews, their carnal minds closed to any spiritual comprehension of Christ's words, scoff at Him for predicting that He will do in three days what they have not even finished in half a lifetime. When Jesus was on trial for His life, bribed witnesses brought lying testimony against Him by perverting these words of prophecy (cf. Mk. 14:57-58; 15:29-30).

Even the disciples did not then realize the significance of His words. John, writing years after His death and resurrection, records that the disciples remembered this prophecy after they had witnessed the resurrection. Their retrospective look at a fulfilled prophecy was spiritual food—nourishment for their faith.

Quiz

1. Why did Jesus clothe His answer in enigma?
2. What kind of sign did the Jews demand of Jesus?
3. Is there any reference to the literal Temple of the Jews in Jesus' answer? Explain!
4. Give three Scripture references which show that the Jews brought about judgment upon themselves.
5. Where is the Sanctuary of God today? Cite Scripture references to prove your answer.
6. How long did it take to complete the Jewish temple? When was it destroyed?
7. Was this prediction of Jesus ever repeated? Where?

GENERAL JUDEAN MINISTRY

Text 2:23-25

23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, during the feast, many believed on his name, beholding his signs which he did.

24 But Jesus did not trust himself unto them, for that he knew all men,

25 and because he needed not that any one should bear witness concerning man; for he himself knew what was in man.

Queries

- a. Why did Jesus "not trust himself unto them"?

Paraphrase

Now when Jesus was in Jerusalem, He did many signs during the seven days of the feast. Many of the people at the feast marvelled at these signs which they beheld Him doing and believed Him to be a prophet sent from God. But Jesus did not entrust them with the essence of His message and cause, for He knew the heart of every one of them. Jesus did not need that anyone should tell Him of the nature of man, for He was able to search their hearts and know what was in their very thoughts.

Summary

Jesus knows who His true believers are by looking on their hearts.

Comment

In John 2:23 through 3:36 we have recorded a rather general Judean ministry. There is one exception — the specific conversation with Nicodemus (3:1-21). The Judean ministry begins, of course, in Jerusalem, in the Temple, and continues for at least the duration of the Passover in the city. This ministry branches out into the land of Judea (3:22) and it lasts for about eight or nine months. We are able to calculate the length of time from the fact that Jesus began the Judean ministry at Passover time, and He is next found in Samaria about four months before the harvest (Jn. 4:35). Harvest time and Passover time are identical and the Jews count their religious year from Passover to Passover. Thus Jesus was in Samaria about four months before the end of the year, or about eight months after the beginning of the year.

During the Passover feast (also called the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and which lasts seven days) Jesus performed many marvelous signs. What they were, we are not told. One of the Jewish rulers was convinced by these signs that Jesus was "a teacher sent from God" (3:1-2). The multitudes also beheld these signs and many are said to have "believed on his name." Just how sincere their faith was seems to be debatable,

considering the attitude the Lord had toward them (v. 24). Jesus had very little success in Judea throughout His entire ministry. It appears that those who believed on him here were interpreting His signs as harbingers of an impending militant Messiah who would spark a revolution and throw off all their oppressions. The serious student of the life of Jesus must familiarize himself with the situations and the expectations of the times in which Jesus lived, or he cannot appreciate the attitude of the multitudes toward Christ's marvelous signs.

The average Jew was poverty-stricken. He suffered at the hands of the Roman overlords, at the hands of the tax-collectors (publicans), and under the heavy yoke of the religious bigots in Jerusalem (cf. Lk. 11:46). The Jewish nation had a proud heritage. It had enjoyed pre-eminence under David and Solomon, but during the hundreds of years since Solomon, this nation had suffered oppression and slavery at the hands of her conquerors. Israel had become the byword (Deut. 28:37; I Ki. 9:6-7) and the laughing stock of the heathen and the barbarian. It had been some four hundred years since God's last direct communication with His chosen nation. The people had doubtless heard and repeated rumors of the miraculous signs attending the birth of the son of a priest down in Jerusalem (John the Baptist). The multitudes would tell over and over again the story which had been started by some shepherds, of a babe born some thirty years ago in the city of David, and of the signs surrounding His birth. Suddenly, the one who came "in the spirit and power of Elijah" burst on the scene with his soul-searching preaching. Josephus says of him that "he had great influence over the people who seemed ready to do anything that he should advise." One day when the crowds had come out to hear him, he pointed to a Galilean and cried, "Behold, the Lamb of God." A few days later this same Galilean appeared suddenly in the Temple at Passover time and challenged the very throne of religious authority. And so this multitude of Judeans who were beholding His signs were anticipating these signs as omens that He was about to declare Himself the long awaited King, the One who would forever relieve their poverty, their political oppression and their religious burdens.

This is what Jesus saw when He looked on their hearts, and this is why He would not entrust them with His cause. He could not trust such carnally minded people with the full revelation of His teachings. Many would follow Him only as long as He would produce miracles and signs, but when He began to talk

about their making His Word their spiritual food — about self-denial and surrender — they would “go back and walk with him no more” (Jn. 6:66). Men were never able to deceive Jesus by outward appearance — He knew just what was in the heart of anyone with whom He came in contact (cf. Jn. 1:42, 47-48). He later read the thoughts of His disciples, of Nicodemus, and of the woman of Samaria (cf. Mk. 9:33-35; 14:30; Jn. 3; Jn. 4). Enthroned in heaven, He still sees the motives and schemes of men’s hearts (cf. Acts 5 and 9; Rev. 1-3).

There is a second possible interpretation of Jesus’ refusal to trust Himself to them. Some commentators believed that Jesus avoided a situation where He must trust His physical person to them because of the enmity He had aroused in attacking the merchandizers of the Temple courts.

These three verses offer an excellent study of the meaning of the word believer. The English words believe and faith are derived from the Greek word *pisteuo*. It generally means “believe, trust, be persuaded, adhere to and have faith.” The Greek noun *pistis* (faith, belief) is used in the New Testament in a number of ways. It may be used to mean obedience (cf. Rom. 4:12), or it may be used to mean the enlightened conscience of the individual Christian (cf. Rom. 14:22-23). But in the context before us we have two other clear definitions of the word. In verse 23 many believed on his name without really surrendering their wills to Him. Although they beheld the miraculous signs which He did, their belief was probably a carnal hope in a worldly Messiah. It is possible to accept the miracles of Jesus as actual facts and still not trust Jesus with one’s soul to the point of surrender and obedience. The brethren of Jesus accepted the fact that He was doing miraculous works (Jn. 7:3-4), but since He did not fit their ideal as the materialistic type of Messiah, they would not believe on Him. In verse 24, the same word, *pisteuo*, is used, and the translators translated it trust. Trust is the best definition of *pisteuo*. There can be no faith and belief without trust. When we trust someone, we have confidence in his person and in his word — confidence that his word is true. When the Lord invites us to believe in Him, He invites us to have confidence in His Word. When He promises us eternal life, it is always conditioned upon our confidence and trust in His Word as the Truth. How can one completely confide in and trust His Word without obeying its commands? It is impossible — faith without obedience is dead!

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Jesus had no confidence in these Judeans, and would not trust them because their belief was only superficial and carnally motivated. Their faith was one of accepting the factual evidence but refusing to surrender their hearts in trusting obedience to His Word. How do *you* believe in Jesus? Do you trust Him with a confidence that loves to obey?

Quiz

1. How long was Jesus' first Judean ministry? How do we know this?
2. Considering the expectations of the people in Jesus' time, what would they believe, having beheld His signs?
3. What is meant by "he knew all men"?
4. What does the word believe (*pisteuo*) mean?

EXPOSITORY SERMON NO. 2

John 1, 2

JESUS MANIFESTS HIS GLORY

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- I. PROLOGUE
 - A. A condensed version of the entire Gospel of John.
 1. Pre-existence of the Word
 2. The Word manifested to Jews; their rejection
 3. The Word manifested to others; their acceptance
 - B. The Prologue summarized in 1:14
- II. JOHN THE BAPTIST'S WITNESS TO THE LAMB OF GOD
 - A. Jesus' glory evidenced to John
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 2. God's voice heard by John
 - B. John taking second place to Jesus
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 2. Beginning to get a glimpse of His glory

Discussion

- I. HIS GLORY SHOWN IN SEARCHING HEARTS OF DISCIPLES
 - A. Peter nicknamed "Rock": Peter's future known (Lk. 22:31-32; Acts 4:19; 5:29)