

Portraits of Jesus in the Gospel of John

Date: AD 85-90

Author: John, the apostle

John, Jewish, the "disciple whom Jesus loved" (21:20, 24)

Said of 2 men: Daniel in OT 9Dan 9:23) & John in NT (John 21:20, 24).

Both men received sweeping revelations concerning the End Times events.

Author of 5 New Testament books: Gospel of John, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Revelation

John's authorship is confirmed:

John disciplined POLYCARP (69-155)

Polycarp disciplined IRENAUS (130-202)

Irenaus stated that John wrote near the END of his life. (95-100)

Clement of Alexandria (150-215) affirmed John's authorship.

NOTE: The Bible is rooted in real history with real people. Not myths or fables.

Purpose of John's Gospel:

"Therefore many other signs Jesus also did in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." (John 20:30–31, LSB)

Interesting Facts about John's Gospel:

John is different from the other 3 Gospels: Matthew, Mark, & Luke.

They are called SYNOPTIC GOSPELS, meaning they "see together" with a "common view".

John's Gospel covers only 21 days of Jesus's 3 ½ year public ministry.

10 of 21 chapters covers one week.

1/3 of the verses (237 of 879) cover a single 24 hour period of time in Jesus's ministry.

John's Gospel is built around 7 key miracles of Jesus:

1. Changing water into wine (2:1-11)
2. Healing an official's son (4:46-54)
3. Healing the paralytic (5:1-18)
4. Feeding the Multitude of 5000 men (6:5-14)
5. Walking on the water (6:16-21)
6. Giving sight to the blind man (9:1-7)
7. Raising dead Lazarus (11:1-45)

John features the 7 I AM Statements of Jesus:

1. I AM Bread of Life (6:35)
2. I AM Light of the World (8:12)
3. I AM the Gate (10:7,9)
4. I AM the Good Shepherd (10:11,14)
5. I AM Resurrection and the Life (11:25)
6. I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life (14:6)
7. I AM the True Vine (15:1,5)

The full I AM disclosure appears in John 8:58.

“Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.”” (John 8:58)

Here, Jesus clearly uses the divine name (YHWH) in reference to Himself.

John 8:59 assures us that this is the intent, as the Jews clearly understood this to be a blasphemous claim to deity. They intended to stone Jesus to death for blasphemy.

In John chapter 1, the author establishes Jesus' identity through a series of profound titles and descriptions that highlight both His divine nature and His human nature.

(1-18)

The WORD (1,2,14) - described as existing "in the beginning", being "with God", and actually being God.

The CREATOR (3) John explicitly states that Jesus is creator and that nothing exists without His creative work.

The LIGHT and the LIFE (4-5,7-9) - Jesus is the Source of all life and the “true light” that enlightens every person and cannot be overcome by darkness.

This connects Jesus to Israel's Messiah as foretold by the prophets...

Isaiah 9:2. Isaiah 49:6; 60:1-2

(see also Hebrews 1:3)

[John 1:9) - enlightens “every man” (Pas Anthropos) everyone...

every person has enough light to be saved and is therefore, without excuse.

The Only Begotten Son (1:14)- Jesus is the unique Son from the Father, the only one who has ever seen God the Father and can fully reveal Him to humanity.

Full of Grace and Truth (1:14) – unlike the law given through Moses, Jesus is described as the embodiment and source of God's Grace & Truth.

(19-51)

Lamb of God (1:29, 36) – Jesus is the One “who takes away the sin of the world”.

John likely draws upon 4 Old Testament images here:

1. The Passover **Lamb**. Exodus 12:3
 - a. Had to be without blemish (Ex 12:5; 1 Peter 1:19)
 - b. Had to be killed (Ex 12:6; John 12:24, 27)
 - c. Blood had to be applied (12:7; Hebrews 9:22)
2. The Suffering **Servant**. Isaiah 53
 - a. Jesus was a silent sacrifice (Isaiah 53:7) that bore our sin.
 - b. Isaiah 53 outlines the Ministry of the Suffering Servant:
 - i. The Person of the Servant (53:1-3)
 - ii. The Passion of the Servant (53:4-6)
 - iii. The Passivity of the Servant (53:7-9)
 - iv. The Portion of the Servant (53:10-12)
3. The **Scapegoat**. Leviticus 16
 - a. While a Goat, not a Lamb was used for the Scapegoat, the language of “taking away” (airon) sin directly mirrors this concept.
 - b. Removal (airon) means to “lift up and carry away” or “remove completely”.
 - c. Complete Cleansing – the animal sacrifices could only cover sin temporarily.
 - d. Jesus as the Lamb of God is described as removing the very state and power of sin forever.
 - e. Scapegoat (Azazel) in 16:10 is compound word uniting “goat” & “depart”
4. Abraham and Isaac. Genesis 22
 - a. John’s declaration also recalls the “Aqedah” (Binding of Isaac) where God provided a ram as a substitute for Abraham’s Son. Note the wording of Gen 22:8, “God will provide Himself...”
 - b. The Lamb’s mission is extended here is John’s view from a Lamb for Israel to the Lamb for the World.
 - c. Universal scope...all nations. Does not mean universal salvation for every individual.
 - d. Finality...Jesus is presented as the Perfect Sacrifice for Sin. Animal sacrifices could never suffice. They were a temporary covering for sin. Jesus’s blood perfectly and sufficiently and perpetually covers sin. See Hebrews 10:12-14. Jesus offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, enabling him to sit down at the right hand of God, signaling the completion of the work.

The Son of God (1:34, 49)

The Messiah or the Christ (1:41)

The King of Israel (1:49)

The Son of Man (51) – the link between heaven & earth.

See Daniel 7:13-14; John 3:13-15; John 12:23

All the Son of Man References in John (1:51; 3:13; 3:14; 5:27; 6:27; 6:53; 6:62; 8:28; 9:35; 12:23; 12:34; 13:31)