

1/19/25

John 1:19-51

Having looked at the prologue which took us from the eternal existence of God to the Incarnation in order to reveal the Father to every person, we come to the starting point of the gospel of John.

1:19-28 **The witness of John the Baptist to the Jewish leaders.**

1:19 The faithful witness of John.

* “Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?”

- 1) The word testimony “marturia”, means a person giving a truthful witness of the facts of what they know about a person or an account.
- 2) The word “Jews” refers to the Sanhedrin, which was the supreme court of the Jews made up of chief priests, elders and scribes, 70 to be exact after number of the the Old Testament under Moses. Num. 11:16
 - a) The term “Jews” is very significant to John for he uses it 70 times to identify the Jewish leaders who opposed Jesus, the majority of the time.
 - b) The significance is only obvious when you see that Matthew uses the term only

5 times and 4 of the 5 are in the title “King of the Jews”, Mark uses it 7 times and 5 are with the title also and Luke uses it 5 times 3 again with the title “King of the Jews”.

- 3) John was of the priestly family through his father and was asked, “Who are you?”
 - a) Zacharias was a priest and as he was serving according to his course the angel Gabriel appeared to him and told him his prayer had been answered. Lk. 1:1-25
 - b) His barren wife Elizebeth would bear a son in her old age, he was to be named John.

1:20 The witness of John that he was not the Messiah.

- * “He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.”
- 1) The words of John were emphatic in Greek, remember the wise men had come declaring the birth of the King of the Jews. Matt. 2:2

* The wise men from the east came to Jerusalem said said, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”
 - 2) There was an expectancy of the Messiah’s coming. Lk. 3:15

* “Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not.”

1:21 The witness of John that he was not Elijah not the prophet.

* “And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.”

1) The prophet Elijah will come during the Great Tribulation and oppose the Antichrist, along with another, which I believe is Enoch, the two witnesses that will be martyred by the Antichrist, they will lay in the streets of Jerusalem for three days, then raised up and taken to heaven prior to the Second Coming of Jesus. Deut. 18:15; Mal. 4:5; Rev. 11:1-8

2) The prophet refers to the prophecy of the prophet of all prophets, the Messiah that God would require His words of every person at His First Coming. Deut. 18:15-19

a) The article is present “the prophet”.

b) The disciples at Caesarea Philippi told Jesus some thought He was Elijah, Jeremiah or one of the prophets. Matt. 16:14

c) The birth of John was prophesied to be in the power and the spirit of Elijah. Lk. 1:17

d) Jesus declared John was the short-term fulfillment of Elijah if they could receive it, His messenger to prepare His way. Mal. 3:1; Matt. 11-9-14; Lk. 7:25-28

1:22 The delegation from the Sanhedrin were those who checked on false Messiah’s, but in the end would oppose the Messiah Himself.

* “Then they said to him, “Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?”

1) They desired an answer for the Sanhedrin.

2) They wanted him to identify himself and by what authority he was preaching and baptizing.

3) They had the responsibility to examine the words of false prophets. Deut. 18:21-22

1:23 The answer of John was the quote from Isaiah the prophet.

* “He said: “I am The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Make straight the way of the LORD,” ’ as the prophet Isaiah said.” Is. 40:3

1) The voice of John broke the 400 year silence, Malachi was the last prophet!

2) The focus is on his work and office of prophet not his person, John is “the voice”, “Voice of a crier” being fulfilled, Isaiah is John’s authority! Matt. 3:3; Mk. 1:3; Lk. 3:4

- 3) Remember that Jesus quoted Malichi for John came in the power and spirit of Elijah and Jesus told this plainly to His disciples. Mal. 3:1; Matt. 11:14; Lk. 1:17; 7:27

1:24-25 The identity of a second delegation of the Sanhedrin was sent from the sect of the Pharisees.

- * “Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees. And they asked him, saying, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?”
- 1) The Pharisees “pharisaioi” were the religious men, the word meant the separated ones, rulers who were the ritualist of the day that started after the Jewish exile.
 - 2) They were expecting the Messiah, but would end up being enemies of the Messiah and wanted to know the reason he was baptizing if he was not the Messiah, Elijah nor the prophet?
* Baptism was for proselytes, not Jews!
 - 3) Paul was a Pharisee that hated Christians and the church, “circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.” Phil. 3:5-6

1:26-27 The response of John to the Pharesees.

* “John answered them, saying, “I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose.”

- 1) John said, “I baptized with water” is emphatic, for repentance and remission of their sins and the other gospel tell us for all men, not only proselytes.
- 2) There was another among them who they did not know, Jesus the Messiah, He would baptize them in the Holy Spirit. Jn. 1:33
* The other gospels reveal the contrast more obvious!
- 3) This One was to come after John was ranked higher than John and considered himself not worthy to be His servant, this is humility!
* The lowest servant in the home would loosen the strap on the sandal and wash the dirty feet of the guest, if there was no guest the head of the home would do it.

1:28 The identity of the location John was baptizing.

- * “These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.”
- 1) Bathabara was Bethany beyond the Jordan distinct from the one near Jerusalem.
 - 2) John was baptizing in the wilderness of Judea, south of Jerusalem, west of the

Jordan River and north of the Dead Sea.
Matt. 3:1

1:29-34 The identity of Jesus by John.

1:29 The identity of Jesus is the Lamb of God.

* “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of **the world!**”

- 1) The next day that John saw Jesus coming towards him indicates the next day after the delegation from Jerusalem had come.
 - a) The word saw “blepo” means a momentary glance.
 - b) The phrase “the Lamb” has the article, indicating the particular Lamb of God.
 - c) The baptism of Jesus had already happened, this is 41 days or so after the baptism of Jesus. vs. 32-34
 - d) The return of Jesus from His temptation in the wilderness had already taken place.
- 2) The proclamation of John identified Jesus as the Lamb of God for the particular purpose of God, “who takes away the sins of the world.” Is. 53; 2Cor. 5:21; 1Pet. 2:24; 1Jn. 2:2; 3:5
 - a) The phrase is unique to John. Jn. 1:29, 36
 - b) The term “Lamb” used synonymous appears in Revelation 28 times and only two other times. Acts 8:32; 1Pet. 1:19

c) The word sin is in the singular, but used as a collective totality of all the sins of the world bundled up in the singular sin.

1:30 The repeated distinction between John and Jesus the Messiah.

* “This is He of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.’”

- 1) Once again John points out the coming of Jesus after him in His earthly ministry, “This is He of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man’”. Jn. 1:15
- 2) Once again John points out the higher rank of Jesus from him, “who is preferred before me”. Jn. 1:15
- 3) Once again John pointed out the pre-existence of Jesus, “for He was before me”. Jn. 1:15

* Remember John was 6 months older than Jesus, so he is not speak of age, but the preexistence and eternalness of Jesus, God Himself.

1:31 The confession of John about not knowing Jesus to be the Messiah.

* “I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water.”

- 1) John had not known that his cousin Jesus was the Messiah, as Linski says, “His Divine greatness”.
 - a) John all along in the past was without this knowledge, he says this twice. vs. 31, 33
 - b) John says emphatically “I” five times he was revealing the Divine greatness of Jesus, he was being a faithful witness.
 - 1) “I did not know Him.” vs. 31
 - 2) “I came baptizing with water.” vs. 31c
 - 3) “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and remained upon Him.” vs. 32
 - 4) “I did not know Him.” vs. 33a
 - 5) “I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.” vs. 34
- 2) John was baptizing in water with the purpose of identifying and revealing to Israel that Jesus was the Messiah.
 - a) John was the precursor, the human forrunner of the Messiah.
 - b) Jesus was the pre-existent One, the God-man Incarnate.

1:32-34 The testimony of John about the baptism of Jesus was to identify with sinful man that He was the Messiah. Matt. 3:16; Mk. 1:9:16; Lk. 3:21

* “And John bore witness, saying, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. I did not know

- Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.’”
- 1) The words, “And John bore witness”, express the faithful and true account as a witness on the stand in a courtroom of what he saw at the baptism of Jesus, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained upon Him.” vs. 32
 - a) The baptism of Jesus had already happened, this is 41 days or so after the baptism of Jesus. vs. 29
 - b) The return of Jesus from His temptation in the wilderness had also already taken place.
 - 2) The cousin of Jesus, John the Baptist was testifying the truth of his unawareness that Jesus was the Messiah, “I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said, to me, ‘Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’” vs. 33
 - 3) The truthful testimony of John is without doubt or question as to the person of Jesus, “And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.” vs. 34

- a) The pronound “I” is emphatic three the times. vs. 32-34
- b) John said, “I have seen” the Greek Scholar Lenski says that the two perfect tenses are extensive perfects as in vs. 32, “I have seen” and the vision is still before my eyes as though I were still seeing, giving his eye-witness testimony a witness who was present at the time.
- c) John was giving truthful and accurate testimony that Jesus was and is the Son of God, the divine and eternal One, Who existed from all eternity and Messiah of Israel. Dan. 3:25; Ps. 2:12

1:35-42 The faithfulness of John to direct his disciples to Jesus.

1:35-36 The identity of Jesus by John to be the Lamb of God.

- * “Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, “Behold the Lamb of God!”
- 1) John refers to himself indirectly in his book, he was standing with Andrew and John the beloved, two of his disciples on the third day. Jn. 13:23
- 2) John was a true and faithful witness to pointed to Jesus “The Lamb of God”, as Jesus walked away from him, John looked at Jesus with a penetrating gaze.

1:37 The mission of John the Baptist was accomplished.

- * “The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.”
- 1) John the Baptist rejoiced to see John the beloved and Andrew follow Jesus, he was not envious or jealous of Jesus, he was the friend of the bridegroom.
 - * John refers to himself mystically, without naming himself, the one who leaned on the breast of Jesus. Jn. 13:23
- 2) John the Baptist understood who he was and what he was called to do to baptize and prepare the way for the Messiah. Jn. 3:25-30

1:38 The response of Jesus to the two disciples of John.

- * “Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, “What do you seek They said to Him, “Rabbi” (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), “where are You staying?”
- 1) Jesus turned and noticed the two disciples, Andrew and John the beloved following Him and asked them, “what do you seek?”, not “who”. vs. 38a-d
 - a) The reason being because most people are interested in what they can get or how they can benefit.
 - b) Many would follow Jesus for what they could get.

3) The response of Andrew and John Rabbi was to enquire where he lodged, “They said to Him, “Rabbi” (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), “where are You staying?” vs. 38e-i

* John interpreted the word Rabbi for the gentile church as he is looking back, this being around 95 A.D., teacher.

1:39 The invitation by Jesus to the two disciples.

* “He said to them, “Come and see.” They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).”

- 1) The invitation is to come and see.
- 2) The accepted, the went and saw the house he was staying at.
- 3) The outcome is that they stayed with Jesus.
 - * They were the first two disciples of Jesus.
- 4) Every person will have an opportunity to respond to the invitation of Jesus, for He is not willing that any perish but that all come to repentance. 2Pet. 3:9
- 5) The tenth hours is probably Jewish time 4 P.M. that Romans also us at times, not 10 A. M.

1:40 The identity one of the two disciples of John the Baptist/

* “One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother.”

- 1) The man Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist, John the beloved is the other.
- 2) The man Andrew was the brother of Simon Peter.

1:41-42 The priority of Andrew was to tell his brother Peter about Jesus.

* “He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, “You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas” (which is translated, A Stone).”

- 1) The first thing Andrew did was to tell his brother Peter they had found the Messiah, the Christ. vs. 41
 - a) The word “first” means that the act of finding his brother Peter was the very first thing he did, like my brother Raul came and told me about Jesus.
 - 1)) Andrew demonstrates for us the priority of evangelism to our family members first.
 - 2)) He is always seen bringing people to Jesus. Jn. 6:8; 12:22
 - b) Some say it can be interpreted that Andrew found Peter before John found

James by implication, but that is reading into the text what is not there.

- 1)) John and James were the sons of Zebedee known as the Sons of thunder who had a fishing business and hired servants. Mk. 1:16-20.
 - 2)) Their mother was Salome the sister of Mary the mother of Jesus, therefore James and John the beloved were first cousins to Jesus, Matt. 4:21; 27:56; Mk. 15:40; Jn. 19:25
 - 3)) John the Baptist was a second cousin to Jesus.
- 2) The first words of Jesus to Peter were, “Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, “You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas” (which is translated, A Stone).” vs. 42
- a) Jesus identifies Peter by name and family, “Simon the son of Jonah”.
 - b) Jesus gives Peter his new name, You shall be called Cephas, which John translates it a stone.
 - c) Jesus alone knows all men’s hearts and therefore changed his name from hearing to a stone in Aramaic. Matt. 16:13-19

1:43-51 **The conversion of Philip and Nathanael.**

1:43 The call of Philip.

- * “The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, “Follow Me.”
- 1) This is the next day marking the chronological time of the events.
 - * Verse 29 was the first “next day”, then verse 35, now the third “the following day”.
 - 2) The ministry of Jesus moves towards Galilee and recorded by all for gospels. Matt. 4:15-16, 23; Mk. 1:14; Lk. 4:14
 - 3) The first thing Jesus does is to find Philip and commanded him, “Follow Me”.
 - a) God saves individuals all by Himself at times as Jesus saved Philip, even as Paul.
 - b) Jesus is the initiator and Philip the responder, this is the order always, God initiates, sinners respond.

1:44 The three men were from the same city, Bethsaida.

- * “Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.”
- 1) The name Bethsaida means house of fish.
 - 2) The city was near Capernaum.
 - 3) The city was upbraided by Jesus for their unbelief. Matt. 11:20; Lk. 10:13

1:45 The man Philip told Nathanael about Jesus being the Messiah.

* “Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”

1) Philip was a student of the word, Moses and the prophet. Jn. 5:39; Lk. 24:44

2) Philip found Nathanael and identified Jesus with the Messiah of the Old Testament.

* Another example of how God saves people, through another person.

3) Nathanael was from Cana of Galilee. Jn. 21:2

* Nathanael is identified with Bartholomew in the listings as the same man.

1:46 The response of Nathanael to Philip.

* “And Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

1) The man Nathaniel was incregulous and sarcastic, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”

a) He doubted that anything good could ever come out of Nazareth being undesirable.

b) But he probably meant that he did not know any prophecy about the Messiah out of Nazareth.

2) Philip invited Nathanael to go and decided for himself, “Philip said to him, “Come and see.”

a) That is always the invitation of Jeuss and his ambassadors, “Come and see”.

b) “Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!”
Ps. 34:8; 1Pet. 2:3

1:47 The call of Nathanael.

* “Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!”

1) The word guile means deceit, crookedness, literally bait to catch fish.

* This is a word of knowledge from the Father and Jesus knowing the heart of all men knew Nathanael’s response and spoke right to his heart.

2) Nathanael was not like Jacob, a conniver, but Israel, govern by God, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!”

1:48 The response of Nathanael.

* “Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?” Jesus answered and said to him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

1) Nathanael was amazed at the statement of Jesus, “Nathanael said to Him, “How do You know me?”

2) Jesus told Nattaneal, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.”

- a) This was a custom of Jews to pray and meditate and a mark of peace and prosperity in the Kingdom. Mic. 4:4;
Zech. 3:10
- b) The Talmud taught the practice.

1:49 The response of Nathanael was tow-fold.

- * “Nathanael answered and said to Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”
- 1) “Rabbi, You are the Son of God!” , having an open heart to see and hear Jesus by faith.
- 2) “You are the King of Israel” this was the expectation of every Jew. Ps. 2, 110
- * Nathanael is the second person who calls Jesus the Son of God and the first King of Israel, both are titles of Messiah.

1:50 The response of Jesus to Nathanael.

- * “Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree,’ do you believe? You will see greater things than these.”
- 1) Jesus asked Nathanael if he had believed simply because He said He saw him under the fig tree.
- 2) Jesus declared he would see greater things than what He told him.

1:51 This promise of Jesus to Nathanael.

* “And He said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”

- 1) The promise of Jesus is marked by the phrase “most assuredly” or “verily, verily”, it is the word “Amen”, when placed at the beginning of a sentence it mean pay attention what is about to be said is important and absolute truth, guaranteeing the certainty of the promise.
- 2) The promise is stated, “Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.”
 - a) Most believe that Jesus is referring to Jacob’s ladder as he fled to uncle Laban’s and God met him at Bethel, house of God. Gen. 28:1
 - * Perhaps Nathanael was reading this passage at the time under the fig tree, Jesus is the ladder to the Father?
 - b) Nathanael certainly saw Jesus ascend up to heaven from the Mount of Olives and the angels spoke to them. Acts 1:9-11
 - c) The phrase “Son of Man” is unique in that Jesus uses it for Himself to depict His humanity through the incarnation.
 - 1)) Matthew uses it 32 times.
 - 2)) Mark uses it 15 times.
 - 3)) Luke uses it 25 times.

- 4) John uses it 12 times.
* Only Stephen uses it at his death.
Acts 7:56