

# The Gospel of John

Chapter 1, Verses 19-28

# Review

- General Introduction
  - The Gospel According to John is:
    - one of the five books in the Bible grounded on the testimony and authority of John, the Apostle, Son of Zebedee; all of which were written, around the end of the First Century, and are therefore among the last books in the Bible to be written.
    - one of the four books in the Bible classified as “gospels” each of which is a biography and historical narrative of the life of Jesus as well as a proclamation of the good news concerning the salvation he brings to those who receive and believe him.

# Review

- General Introduction
  - The Gospel According to John is:
    - a single unified piece of literature behind which it is difficult to detect original “sources”
    - the eyewitness testimony of those who actually knew Jesus, especially John the Apostle, son of Zebedee.
    - probably written and edited by more than one hand.

# Review

- General Introduction
  - The Readers of the Gospel According to John:
    - were perhaps predominately Greek speaking, Jewish Christians in Asia, but would have included other Christian and non-Christian readers as well
    - would have been familiar with other early Christian writings and teachings, as well as Jewish Scripture (our Old Testament) and other Jewish and Greek religious and philosophical writings and teachings.

# Review

- Structure
  - Prologue (1:1-18) – And Introduction and summary of the work of the incarnate Word.
  - Body (1:19-20:31)
    - The Book of Signs (1:19-12:50) – The Word reveals himself to the world but they will not accept him.
    - The Book of Glory (13:1-20:31) – To those who accept him, the Word shows his glory and communicates the Spirit of life.
  - Epilogue (21:1-25) – A series of resurrection appearances in Galilee.

# Review

- Progress
  - Last week we finished discussing the prologue
  - Key points:
    - Jesus Christ is referred to in 1:14 as the Word become flesh.
    - “Flesh” emphasizes that Jesus was exactly what we are.
    - What Jesus was before becoming what we are is represented by the Greek word *logos*, translated Word
    - Verses 1:1 – 1:13 basically make it clear that the Word was what God was and did what God did, including creating the cosmos and everything in it.

# Review

- Progress
  - Key points from the prologue (continued)
    - The prologue introduces and summarizes main themes of the gospel, specifically that the world generally rejects Jesus but that Jesus is the savior of those who accept him.
    - The prologue also briefly introduces (verses 1:6,7,8, and 15) John the Baptist, as the one whose primary significance is to be the one who bears witness to Jesus.

# Review

- Progress
  - Key points from the prologue (continued)
    - The prologue makes it plain that no one except Jesus knows what God is truly like, so that only through Jesus can any one ever truly know God.
    - God is revealed in Jesus as being full of grace and truth, which is consistent with how God is revealed elsewhere, but only in Jesus is God's grace and truth revealed so clearly.



# Review

- Does anyone have any comments or question regarding the Gospel According to John generally or the specific content of the prologue found in the first 18 verses of Chapter 1?
- Let's read on.
- Tonight we will cover Verses 19-28 of Chapter 1

# John 1:19-28

**1:19** さて、ユダヤ人たちが、エルサレムから祭司たちやレビ人たちをヨハネのもとにつかわして、「あなたはどなたですか」と問わせたが、その時ヨハネが立てたあかしは、こうであった。

**1:20** すなわち、彼は告白して否まず、「わたしはキリストではない」と告白した。

# John 1:19-28

**1:21**そこで、彼らは問うた、「それでは、どなたなのですか、あなたはエリヤですか」。彼は「いや、そうではない」と言った。「では、あの預言者ですか」。彼は「いいえ」と答えた。

**1:22**そこで、彼らは言った、「あなたはどなたですか。わたしたちをつかわした人々に、答を持って行けるようにしていただきたい。あなた自身をだれだと考えるのですか

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**1:23**彼は言った、「わたしは、預言者イザヤが言ったように、『主の道をまっすぐにせよと荒野で呼ばれる者の声』である」。

**1:24**つかわされた人たちは、パリサイ人であった。

**1:25**彼らはヨハネに問うて言った、「では、あなたがキリストでもエリヤでもまたあの預言者でもないのなら、なぜバプテスマを授けるのですか」。

# John 1:19-28

**1:26** ヨハネは彼らに答えて言った、「わたしは水でバプテスマを授けるが、あなたがたの知らないかたが、あなたがたの中に立っておられる。

**1:27** それがわたしのあとにあとにおいでになる方であって、わたしはその人のくつのひもを解く値うちもない」。

**1:28** これらのことは、ヨハネがバプテスマを授けていたヨルダンの向こうのベタニヤであったのである。

# John 1:19-28

<sup>19</sup> And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"

<sup>20</sup> He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."

<sup>21</sup> And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No."

# John 1:19-28

<sup>22</sup> So they said to him, "Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

<sup>23</sup> He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as the prophet Isaiah said."

<sup>24</sup> (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.)

# John 1:19-28

<sup>25</sup> They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

<sup>26</sup> John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know,  
<sup>27</sup> even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie."

<sup>28</sup> These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.



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- John is .... John the Baptist, who has already been briefly introduced in the prologue.

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- In Verse 6 we were told that John was sent by God.
- From Verses 7, 8, and 14 we understand that John was not Christ but that he came to bear witness to Christ.

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- John and his testimony also appear in Matthew and Luke.

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- In addition to appearing in all four gospels, in the New Testament John the Baptist and his testimony also appear in Acts 1:5, 1:22, 10:37, 11:16, 13:24, 13:25, 18:25, 19:3, and 19:4

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- The Gospel according to John gives a great deal of attention to John the Baptist and his testimony.
- Today's reading focuses on testimony which John gave in response to certain people who asked him who he was.

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- This question, “who are you?” was put to John by certain priests and Levites.

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- Priests and Levites were responsible for the religious practices of the Jews, which took place at the Temple in Jerusalem.

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- Why would Jews from Jerusalem send some of their priests and Levites down to ask John who he was?



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    - Preaching repentance for the forgiveness of sins
    - Perhaps even that he bore witness to another yet to come
  - How people were responding



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  - Someone pretending to be one of the foregoing

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- Why would Jews from Jerusalem send some of their priests and Levites down to ask John who he was?
  - (For a variety of reasons perhaps) They were examining his Biblical authority.



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- That some of the Jews suspected that John was the Messiah, or someone pretending to be the Messiah, is clear from his denial.

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- This can be confirmed by secular history as well.

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- We also know from both Biblical and secular sources that among the Jews in those days there were several different expectations regarding the Messiah and other figures who might appear in the end times and/or to restore Israel.

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- One such expectation was the coming of the prophet Elijah, based on the testimony of the post-exilic prophet Malachi (4:5): "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes."

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- The expectation based on this prophecy was reinforced by the physical similarity between Elijah and John,
- and by the fact that the death of Elijah is not recorded in the Old Testament account.

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- Of course John flatly rejects this notion.

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- Please note that there is a different, figurative, sense in which we should view John the Baptist as the fulfillment of Malachi 4:5

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- Jesus does not have in mind any literal reincarnation.

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- As he had disclaimed the titles and authority of Messiah and Elijah he now also denies that he is “the Prophet.”
- Many see here the prophet “like himself” whom Moses said the Lord would one day send. (Deuteronomy 18:15)



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- And indeed John claims no prophetic office whatsoever.

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そこで、彼らは問うた、「それでは、どなたなのですか、あなたはエリヤですか」。彼は「いや、そうではない」と言った。「では、あの預言者ですか」。彼は「いいえ」と答えた。

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

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- John is in some sense the last and the greatest of the Old Testament prophets and the summary of all of them.
- And Jesus himself said that John was more than a prophet and the greatest of all men.

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- John is unique. He is an anomaly.



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- John was a Jewish phenomenon, one that could not be classified.
- The priests and Levites needed to know how to explain him to the Jews back in Jerusalem.

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- Here (only) John uses this passage to describe himself.

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- John says, in effect, if you want to identify me in scripture, then please identify me with the disembodied voice crying in the wilderness in this passage of Isaiah.

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- John literally was working in the wilderness (i.e. desert)
- He was likewise working in a Jewish spiritual wasteland.
- The content of his proclamation--- preparing the way of the Lord --- was aptly expressed by the Isaian voice.

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- In the original passage, the prophet foresees the clearing of a way for return of Israel from exile, which proceeds, through the passion and triumph of the obedient servant of the Lord, to the promise of a new Heaven and earth.

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- The New Testament writers understand these glad tidings to Zion to refer to the Christian gospel.
- John is a voice announcing that all of these things will soon be brought to pass through the ministry of Jesus.

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つかわされた人たちは、パリサイ人であった。

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- Or do Pharisees comprise a part of this delegation?

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- The Pharisees were best known for their careful adherence to a detailed moral and religious code.

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  - But since you are not, what right have you to baptize?

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- This may be a very reasonable question.
  - Suppose we became aware that a strange man had started baptizing members of our church on the edge of town.
  - Would we not send our pastors to check it out?

## John 1:26

ヨハネは彼らに答えて言った、「わたしは水でバプテスマを授けるが、あなたがたの知らないかたが、あなたがたの中に立っておられる。

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- John's answer is deeply interesting but unlikely to help the priests and Levites or reassure their pharisaic constituents
- He says, in effect, you are talking to the wrong guy.
- My authority comes from someone else!

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- My authority comes from someone who is:
  - already here
  - not know by you
  - infinitely greater than myself

## John 1:27

それがわたしのあとにあとにおいでになる方であって、わたしはその人のくつのひもを解く値うちもない」。

even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.”

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- The priests and the Levites with or at the behest of the Pharisees among them have undertaken to examine the Biblical authority of John, precisely because of the big splash he is making in the world of the Jews.

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- Now John says, in effect, I am much lower than a slave to the one from whom I claim the authority for my ministry.

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- This statement, coupled with John’s previous allusion to the passage from Isaiah implies that the authority behind John’s ministry is very great indeed!

## John 1:28

これらのことは、ヨハネがバプテスマを授けていたヨルダンの向こうのベタニヤであったのである。

These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.



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- There is some uncertainty regarding where this Bethany across the Jordan actually was.
- But I don't think that matters very much.

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- What matters here is that these discussions took place amidst the crowds that John was baptizing.
- And that he was baptizing on the other side of the Jordan evokes certain Old Testament imagery.

# Next Week's Reading

- John, Chapter 1, Verses 29-39