

H O U S E o f W I S D O M

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John 1 - Part II, The Lamb of God

It is believed that the books of John were written 20-30 years after Matthew, Mark and Luke. It may be the reason that John did not cover the birth and lineage of Jesus, as it was generally accepted of believers by that time. Of the 21 chapter divisions of the book of John, almost half focus on the night before his death up through some of the appearances to the disciples and others, after his resurrection. Also, from John the approximate length of Jesus' ministry is ascertained. The book of 1 John indicates disagreements which were causing divisions in the Church, which likely is the main reason John emphasizes the divinity of Jesus as the literal Son of God and the expected Messiah. His writings are a key source for correctly understanding the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

John 1:6-8: *1. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. 8. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.* John the Baptist was cousin to Jesus and born six months before him (Lk 1:7, 13, 24, 26, 31, 36). His special calling (Lk 1:76-77) was to turn the hearts of the people to toward the coming Messiah and their salvation. It is indicative of the spirit of Elijah in the last days. **John 1:15-18:** *15. John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, [the One coming] after me [came to be] before me: for he was before me. 16. And [out of] his fulness have all we received, [even] grace [because of] ^(g473) (His) grace. 17. [Because] the law was given [through] Moses, [the] grace and [the] truth came [through] Jesus Christ. 18. No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him.* This rendering is more accurate and up to date. (Greek, *Anti* ^{g473} as a stand-alone word = *for that, because, 1Pt 3:9*)

In the first 18 verses, John dives right into the issue of Jesus' pre-existence, and continues to make other points that establish him as the only birthed Son of the eternal God, indicated by the phrase *came to be*, used three times in this chapter. Verse 15 for instance, indicates that Jesus had a beginning before coming to this world. He was not created, but birthed, a very important topic covered in other studies concerning the Godhead. Just as Christ came to be in the fullness of his Father (Col 1:19; 2:9), we are to grow up into the same fullness in Christ (Eph 4:13). From Christ's "fullness" comes the "grace" to humanity because of the Father's grace in Christ. Grace is described in Luke as *agape* ^(g25), or the principle of **love** - see Luke 6:32, 33, 34 (KJ put "thank" for the word "grace"). In verse 18 above, the Greek word rendered as *hath seen* implies clearly discerned - No human being has ever clearly discerned God. As the Son has the character of his Father, we are to look at Jesus and all that he did to understand clearly, the Father - *he hath declared him*.

John 1:19-28: *19 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? 20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. 21 And they asked him, Who then? Art thou Elijah? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. 22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What say you of thyself? 23 he said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah. 24 And they which were sent were [from] the Pharisees. 25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptize thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elijah, neither that prophet? 26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there stands one among you, whom ye know not; 27 He it is, who coming after me [came to be] before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose. 28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.* It was the fact that John was baptizing that raised questions

among the priests and Levites. Traditionally, baptisms were performed only by Jewish leaders. The Jews believed that they were born into a covenant relationship with God and did not need to be baptized. However, pagan proselytes were to be baptized as a sign that they had entered the covenant with God. Then, the children of these parents did not need to be baptized, as the Jews considered them to have been born into the covenant since the parents had been baptized. Several times Jesus chastised the religious leaders about their tradition, which made of none effect the commandments of God. He equated their traditions to the teaching of men (cf Col 2:8; 1Pt 1:18). Today, there is a least one denomination that admits to putting tradition above the Bible, and yet every church teaches traditional beliefs that are not Biblical. Do you know the difference between tradition versus what the Bible teaches?

Apparently, a rumor was already circulating that John might be the Christ (Hebrew = Messiah), which he denied right at the beginning (verse 20). The questions asked were based on prophecies in the Old Testament (cf Gen 3:15; Isa 7:13-16; Mic 5:2 - quoted to Herod, Mt 2:6). *Art thou Elijah? Malachi 4:5: Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:* It had been about 400 years since a prophet had been sent to Israel. **Matthew 17:10-13:** *10. And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first come? 11. And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elijah truly shall first come, and restore all things. 12. But I say unto you, That Elijah is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they chose. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them. 13. Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist* (cf also Mt 3:1-12). Not only did the Jews not recognize their Messiah, but neither the spirit of Elijah wherein John was the type called to prepare the hearts of the people to receive Christ. Elijah was taken to heaven without seeing death. The ultimate type is the spirit of Elijah in the 144,000 who give the message to the world in the last generation and take the message back to the Jews. Will the church today repeat the same mistake by not being prepare for the return of Jesus? Will they recognize the spirit of Elijah? And, will they recognize which group of Jews are walking in the light of the truth, the final sign that the end is at hand? (The spirit of Elijah will take the gospel back to the Jews at the end)

Art thou that prophet? Deuteronomy 18:15, 18: 15. The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken... 18. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. That prophet was Jesus Christ. The rejection of John's message caused them to misunderstand the most important event in this world's history. At the questioner's persistence, John quoted Isaiah 40:3 when he stated: *I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord.* John, is using a metaphor that describes the thinking of the Jews. In the wilderness the Jews literally ate manna, a symbol for the written word (law). Now here, 2000 years later they are eating spiritual manna instead of the bread of life (Jn 6:48), and do not understand the way of the Lord. **2Corinthians 3:15:** *But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.*

John 1:29-34: *29. The next day John sees Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, [the (one) taking away] the sin of the world. 30. This is [the One about] whom I said, After me comes a man [who came to be] before me: for he was before me. 31. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing [in] water. 32. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. 33. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize [in] water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he who baptizes [in] the Holy Spirit. 34. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.*

How did John recognize Jesus as the Anointed One (Christ)? He was told to watch for a sign - the spirit descending like a dove. Luke adds more information: **Luke 3:22:** *And the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape*

like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. In verse 33, above, it says of the Spirit *remaining on him*. Since a spirit cannot be seen, how would John know the Holy Spirit remained on Jesus? By what he said and the works he performed (cf Mt 11:1-5).

In verse 29, John used a metaphor to prophesy about how the Son of God will take away the sin of the world. Jesus died on the third Passover of his ministry. Paul wrote: *For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us* (1Cor 5:7). The Passover lamb was eaten in the evening at the beginning of Passover (Ex 12:6-8). Jesus told his disciples and the Jews, *Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, dwells in me, and I in him* (Jn 6:53-56). The communion bread and wine are also symbols of eating his flesh and drinking his blood.

What does it mean to eat the sacrificial lamb? It is the same thing as eating the book (Eze 3:1-2; Rv 10:9-10). We are to study the life of Christ and the cross, and God will cause us to understand. However, we must receive the truth and apply it in our lives. THIS is how we dwell in Christ and he in us. Many teach that when a person accepts Jesus, all their sins are removed and laid on him. However, a person's sins cannot be removed unless they let go of them. That means that the person has to make a decision to let go. However, a person must be able to see why the sin. If they do, then they can stop doing the sin. What does it mean to ask for forgiveness? You are asking for deliverance, and deliverance is not confessing your sin and continuing in it. Deliverance from sin is the reason Jesus came into the world (cf Lk 4:18). So, Jesus came to take away the sin of the world from YOU, by teaching you how to live a Godly life that will separate you from living according to the ways of the world.

In John 1:35-50 is an account of Jesus calling the disciples into the ministry. I will address only the naming of Peter: *Thou art Simon the son of Jonas (a dove^{h3124}): thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, a stone* (verse 42). Some teach that the church was built on Peter, according to their interpretation of Matthew 16:18. Cephas (Kephas) is from Chaldee, the language of Babylon. The word (h3710) means *a hollow rock*. The church is built on Jesus, a solid rock (1Cor 10:4), not on the hollow doctrines of men.

John 1:51: *Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the [messengers] of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.* This statement was part of the response to Nathanael and is likely an allusion to Jacob's ladder. **Genesis 28:12-13:** *12 And he (Jacob) dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the [messengers] of God ascending and descending on it. 13 And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, I am the LORD God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac...* A ladder is something climbed one step at a time. Here, it is a figure of a heavenly understanding of Jesus' life contained in messages sent from God via messengers. The messages are sections of truth, when received, will advance one toward heavenly understanding, or the way God understands (cf Dt 32:1-4; Isa 55:7-9).

Revelation 5:12: *... Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.* **Revelation 6:1:** *And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.* All the things the Lamb received in verse 12 becomes ours when we allow the Lamb to unseal our book, the record of who we are. Amen.