

Gamma – Gospel of John

Book	Gospel of John
Topic	
Reference	John 1:19-2:21
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1. THE BAPTISM OF JESUS:

John 1:19-23 (ESV) And this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" **20** He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ." **21** And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No." **22** 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?" **23** 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."

Cultural Background: Every time you read the Bible, you need to have some background story line in the Bible, so that you follow what has happened. If you don't have the background, then you don't know what they are talking about.

We start off with Abraham whom God promised to make a covenant with him, a promise that his family would be blessed and they will bless the whole world and they were actually taken into Egypt as slaves and God released them from Egypt and they formed the nation of Israel and Israel had many heroes going down the line, Moses and during Moses time he introduced the law and during the time of Moses he said that one day there will be a prophet just like me, and when he comes he will be just like me, whatever he says is what God says. It was in those days, Moses could meet God face to face, he was God's friend, he could converse, he could tell you what God said and there has never been a prophet like that. So everyone was waiting for **this prophet** coming just like Moses.

The Priest: All bunch of priest offering sacrifices for peoples' sin. The trouble is you offer sacrifice, tomorrow you sin again, offer another sacrifice and the chain goes on and there is an expectation of one day there will be one ultimate priest who comes, he will offer the sacrifice of all sacrifices and we don't have to offer anymore. So therefore we are looking forward to that.

Then you have got David who comes in, David is the king and you have got David has a covenant with God. One day David said I want to build a house for you God and God said

to David, I will build you a house which is a dynasty, which will last forever and ever and ever and out of your dynasty there will come one king which will come from your generation and he is called the **Davidic King**, who is basically the Messiah.

Israel rebels again and again and thrown into exile and then God says, it is not working out, you guys are always not obeying the law, you are rebelling against me. This law which I gave you, you cannot fulfill. You need a new deal. So the new deal is instead of relying on the law with their own strength to obey God, there will be a new covenant and in this new covenant, the spirit will be given. In those days, the Holy Spirit doesn't indwell anybody, everybody is on their own. The Holy spirit would indwell may be prophets or priests but only for a while, here we are talking about God is going to pour out his spirit, there will be a new deal. So the Israel doesn't have to continually rebel and get exile.

When will this happen?

Before the new deal comes there will be a prophet called Elijah. So if you are a Jew, you are looking to prophets coming, priest coming, new deal coming, spirit coming and a Davidic King is coming and just before all this happens Elijah is coming.

So now you have got the Levites who were basically musicians and temple police, they support the priest.

The prophet:

Deuteronomy 18:15 (ESV) The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen

Messiah-Christ: Messiah, anointed one, the king. So David became a king. They will pour oil on his head. So this called the Messiah and one day there will be a Davidic King, at the end of days the king of all kings is going to come. Isaiah prophesized about this

Isaiah 11:1-4 (ESV) There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. **2** And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. **3** And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear, **4** but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

So this is the prophecy that this Davidic King will come one day then you got Elijah. Elijah is famous because facedown the prophets, the priest of Baal, they challenge him.

Elijah was one of those who never died. He is going to come back again just before the end because it Malachi it says

Malachi 4:5-6 (ESV) Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. **6** And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction."

So this is expectation. Mark describes John

Mark 1:6 (ESV) Now John was clothed with camel's hair and wore a leather belt around his waist and ate locusts and wild honey.

2 Kings 1:8 (ESV) They answered him, "He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."

Jesus told them

Mark 9:13 (ESV) But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him."

So Jesus testifies that the one, Elijah, is actually John the Baptist. So the Jew is waiting for the prophet to come, waiting for the Messiah to come and waiting for the prophet Elijah. So when Jesus comes and John comes, telling people about this person coming, they ask him, are you the prophet, are you the Messiah, are you the Elijah. These are all the expectations.

Instead he answers

23 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."

Now this is taken from Isaiah. Isaiah actually prophesized during the time of the exile, so he is prophesizing here that God will bring these people back in from exile. He announced redemption, there will be new heaven and new earth, but it all starts off with this announcement that

Isaiah 40:3-5 (ESV) A voice cries: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. **4** Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. **5** And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

It is not literal, he is saying that when the Lord comes you must repent and make straight your path to welcome the Messiah when he comes. That's why they asked him all these things. Then John answered them,

John 1:24-32 (ESV) (Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.) 25 They asked him, "Then why are you baptizing, if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" 26 John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know, 27 even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." 28 These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing. 29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is he of whom I said, After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.' 31 I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." 32 And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. 33 I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' 34 And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

So baptism in those days is not common. In the Old Testament baptism is for those who become a Jew you get baptized. There was a sect and they actually baptize themselves to clean themselves if they get in contact with dead body or menstrual or something like that. So baptism isn't common. John used this baptism was for repentance. The purpose of baptism was to reveal Jesus Christ to Israel.

John 1:32-34 (ESV) And John bore witness: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. 33 I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' 34 And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

So John the Baptist was telling, this person whom he baptized is actually the son of God. Now if baptism is for the repentance of sin how come you have got perfect Jesus Christ getting baptized?

Jesus certainly does not have any sin. When Jesus got baptized, he gets baptized in solidarity with mankind. The baptism for Jesus was actually the beginning of his ministry. He baptized like Israel gets baptized, he repents on behalf of Israel. He will bear the sin of Israel. He will bear the sin of the world. Just as he goes in and dies and the sin gets washed out, he represents and takes everybody sin and he dies with them as it were for them. So this is why he got baptized. Now he is actually the last prophet, he is the ultimate priest, he is the Davidic king and he is the one who will give the spirit. So all the promises of the Old Testament, they all converge in only one person, instead of waiting for a priest, a king, it is all one person.

2. THE LAMB OF GOD:

John 1:29 (ESV) The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

Now this lamb of God issue is basically God speaks to us through pictures.

How do we understand God?

It is very simple, when you teach someone, you start off a basic familiar object and then after that you give him a more advance object which is less familiar but builds on this object and lastly we got the ultimate object which is unfamiliar but it is along the same tract. That is exactly what happens when Bible uses this technique called typology.

How do we start with lamb of God?

You have got Isaac who was supposed to be sacrificed to God, climbs out Mount Moria, obedient son and at the last minute God says to him, you don't have to kill your son, I have provided you a lamb and the ram was stuck in the bush and he caught him and he sacrificed. So therefore the lamb was offered to save the son of Abraham. When he came back to Sarah, he will be talking about the lamb, if it weren't for this lamb your son will be dead. So the next time a lamb appears is in Exodus when you have got all the first born in the land of Israel as well as Egypt will die. So therefore we kill one lamb, every family and that lamb you paint the blood, the angel of death won't come in. So here this lamb again killed for the firstborn of Israel. So lamb is very good, lamb saves lives.

How does lamb saves lives?

By dying. So this idea sticks in your brain and you are kind of use to that. So when John comes in and says behold the Lamb of God. It kind of make sense, but it only really makes sense at the end when Jesus dies on the cross, before Jesus died on the cross they had some idea but they don't really know. It is only at the end when all the bits and pieces fall in place. So that's how God teaches us through the Bible.

The lamb always saves and it always saves by dying. So we have got this idea. So you have got this typology, the Passover lamb is called the type. So this is how the Bible communicates. So he dies for you, atonement for your sin. Some people who are more liberal in Christianity say, he died for you to inspire you with his love, so you live a moral life. The other idea is the governmental theory, because he dies to impress upon you the importance of keeping the law which is actually stupid.

When Jesus dies as a lamb, because Jesus is the picture of lamb, the lamb actually saves you, instead of killing Isaac we kill the lamb, instead of killing the firstborn of Israel we kill

the lamb. This idea of atonement means substitution, instead of you it is me. So that's why Jesus came and called himself the lamb of God.

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

John says, I am not worthy to untie his sandals. Now students and slaves does everything for the master except take off his sandals. Nobody takes off your sandals, you are the worst of the worse and John calls himself he is so powerful that I am the one take off the straps of his sandals. So this is called extreme humility and yet if you look at the life of John he is extremely courageous man., he will go up to the king Herod and say, you have your brother's wife, in public. How can we have this guy who is so humble and yet so bold.

How do we get that kind of idea?

Alfred Adler, one of the most famous psychiatrist in the world and he started about the same time and a competitor of Sigmund Freud and his idea introduced that everybody has a deep seated inferiority complex, it is because of self-centeredness we are obsessed with the opinion of others.

It manifests in two ways; one is inferiority complex. So therefore you don't think you are good as other people and you try to pull yourself up, try to dress well. Other have superiority complex and they pull other people down. It is because they have a deep seated inferiority complex.

Oprah said, literally every one of her guests asked her the same question after being interviewed, **how did I do?**

Because we have a deep seated inferiority complex, we are always trying to overcome. The pressure of expectation crushes you. If we look at John the Baptist attitude, he has got two things, one, behold the Lamb of God that means he is always looking upwards; his entire focus is actually on the Lamb of God. Now we are always looking upwards

Now the whole idea of John the Baptist psyche is that when he goes around he is always saying behold the lamb of God. When the gospel comes we should be looking, behold the Lamb of God. A person like that will be resilient, nothing will attack him, all he cares about is what Jesus looks like, not what you look like.

John the Baptist and Steve Jobs are very bold; they will do whatever they need to do but for two different reasons. John the Baptist is bold because his eyes are focused on God. Steve says, I am going to die and become nothing, just follow my heart, just become bold. The Bible gives you a reason to be bold, because you have a savior, you have the lamb of God.

3. THE NATURE OF DISCIPLESHIP:

John 1:35-44 (ESV) The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, **36** and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" **37** The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. **38** Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, "What are you seeking?" And they said to him, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" **39** He said to them, "Come and you will see." So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. **40** One of the two who heard John speak and followed Jesus was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. **41** He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which means Christ). **42** He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Cephas" (which means Peter). **43** The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." **44** Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

Follow me is the crux of discipleship. Everywhere you see, Mark, you see in John, becoming a Christian is not saying the sinner's prayer and that's it. It is actually follow me. They ask Jesus where he comes from because in those days when you become a disciple of somebody, you don't just attend school and go home, you actually follow him to his house and you stay with him. So which means making Jesus number one goal in our entire lives. All of us are self-centered, we don't really have a center, the center is all over the place, it is like going to space. When you go to space, when you pour water it will just float as there is no center. When Jesus tells us, you follow me, he is saying to us that we are to reestablish our center of gravity.

When you relate to somebody you actually have to follow that person to a certain extent. When God steps into the room into your life, the only way that you could relate to somebody higher than yourself is actually to obey and follow. The only possible way you can relate to God is complete obedience and putting him as number one, that is the only way because anything less God will not be pleased. God is like a coach and the only way you relate to a coach is to obey.

John 1:51 (ESV) And he said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."

So here we actually have bethel, bethel is the house of God where God will reveal himself and Jesus is the ultimate revelation of God.

Now Jesus calls himself son of Man. He almost never calls himself Son of God. Everywhere he goes, he always calls himself Son of Man rather than Son of God. The problem is why he does choose this is because if you use the Son of God, the son of God means Messiah. Everybody will then make him king and there will be a rebellion, so he avoids this title and he usually uses the son of man, which only one reference in the Old Testament is basically

the Son of Man given universal authority by God itself. So Jesus takes this up and remolds this title after his own mission.

4. THE FIRST MIRACLE

In those days wedding festival is not like today. In those days the whole village comes, you don't have to get invitation, the whole village comes and they celebrate for one whole week and the highlight of it was wine. It was impossible for them to have a feast without wine. Wine is the joy of the feast. So halfway there is no wine and then

John 2:3-5 (ESV) When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." **4** And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." **5** His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

When Jesus mentioned about my hour has not arrived it means that, it is the time when he reveals himself and he will start on a cascading sequence of events that will ultimately lead to the death.

Why does Jesus start with wine?

Wine brings joy, celebration, happiness. What is every human being deepest desire in life? Joy, and so he starts of the first miracle with joy because the intent of God is to give us joy, endless joy.

CS Lewis says, "*Creatures are not born with desires unless satisfaction for those desires exist. A baby feels hunger there is such a thing as food. A duckling wants to swim there is such a thing as water. Men feels sexual desire there is such a thing as sex.*

And if I find myself within myself a desire which no experience in the world can satisfy the only probable explanation is that I was made for something in another world

If none of my earthly pleasures satisfy this desire that doesn't mean the universe is a fraud or that you have failed or the things have failed. Probably the earthly pleasures were never meant to satisfy it but only to arouse it, to suggest the real thing. There is a joy shortage and Jesus is the supply of that joy shortage.'

What CS Lewis is saying that all our desires are basically there to tell you that they will be satisfied and our lack of satisfaction in some of the things of the world actually point to the fact that there is something else that is missing that one day will be completely satisfied.

John Piper says, God is not a kill joy. He just opposes what kills joy

Wedding Feast of the Lamb?

Revelation 19:9 (ESV) And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God."

4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." **5** His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

The road to joy is to do whatever Jesus tells us. Because God has your best interest at heart.

5. THE CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

John 2:13-15 (ESV) The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. **14** In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. **15** And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. **16** And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade." **17** His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."

So Jesus is very-very zealous for the things of God. Why nobody did anything to Jesus?

The people at that time knew that they were wrong, the Jewish authorities did nothing, absolutely nothing, can't do anything, because they knew they were wrong. This is an absolute indictment on the Jews at that time.

John 2:18-21 (ESV) So the Jews said to him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" **19** Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." **20** The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" **21** But he was speaking about the temple of his body John. **22** When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

So he said, destroy this temple. You want to get to God, destroy this and I will give you a sign and I will raise this temple. The typology here is that in the olden days the tabernacle is where they worship God, God has his presence and dwelt with his people. This then became a temple where God's presence will be and his people will worship him there and in the last days there will be no tabernacle or temple, there will be Jesus. So Jesus in the end will be the locus of all worship. It is no longer a temple, it is not even a church building it will be focus on the person of Jesus. John chapter 4 we will learn what is true worship, how do you worship in the person of Jesus.

So they came to the temple to get close to God, now they just need Jesus.

6. THE NATURE OF THE HUMAN HEART:

John 2:23-25 (ESV) Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing. **24** But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people **25** and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.

All these people, they see the miracles, they see the wine, they drink all these things and they love it. At the Passover normally 320,000 people come and cramp into Jerusalem and after all these miracles many believe him, they believed him but he didn't believe them because he knows what is in the heart of man. He didn't entrust to them. these are the same people at the end who will say crucify him. At the end of his journey only a 120 people out of 320,000 people believed Jesus Christ and the problem that this poses to us today is a similar situation. We have got miracle rallies, we got churches that focus on signs and wonders, the kind of faith you will get from signs and wonders is a self-directed one. Only if I see a miracle then I will believe, even I experience this prophecy then I will believe. Now it is a I focus kind of thing, it doesn't come out of faith, it comes out of signs and wonders and if you continue in that, I am not saying it is wrong, Jesus doesn't trust himself to you because he knows you are not looking for his face, you for looking for his hands.

So this is an extremely important verse, it tells us that we ought to seek, because the greatest miracle has already been done which is Jesus rising from the dead. That's the way you actually relate to the King of Kings. The king of kings is not your slave or your son, the way you relate to the King of Kings is the way that demands pure faith, not that kind of faith that just depends on endless cycle of signs after signs after signs, it is an ungodly thing to ask for these signs, so therefore our church is not run on miracles and signs, simply because it doesn't engender true faith. True faith believes in the one lamb of God who gave himself for us.