

General Comments on the Gospel According to John

Overarching Themes

One of John's persistent themes is the Father has committed all things to the Son: judgment (5:22, 5:27), life (5:26), power over flesh (17:2), followers (6:37, 17:6), what to say (12:49, 17:8), the divine name (8:58, 17:11-12), glory (17:22). Despite this, note throughout the text Jesus is constantly deferring to the Father, acknowledging the original source.

Throughout this gospel there is also a recurring theme of hostility between Jesus and the Pharisees. It should be noted these Pharisees, particularly the Sanhedrin, are not natives of Jerusalem. They are Babylonian Pharisees. Herod had all of the local Sanhedrin and high priests killed early in his reign as king and had them replaced with Jewish religious leaders from Babylon. Thus, these leaders were favorably disposed towards Herod because they owed their high positions to him. Hence the obvious lack of regard the Jews in general have towards the present religious leaders.

Rhetorical Style

John uses a plain rhetorical pattern in his Gospel, one of real life incident (RLI) and then Jesus' discourse (D) on the related doctrinal topic. This pattern is used consistently from ch. 2-13, as follows:

- 2 RLI: Wine at wedding party and Temple cleansing (replacement themes)
D: Mine hour not yet come, destroy this temple (this one is obscure, it mixes replacement themes with messianic themes, but in both cases Jesus forestalls the fulfilment, he is delaying the sign they ask for in v. 18)
- 3 RLI: Nicodemus at night, John Baptist in day
D: Jesus is the light, men love darkness
- 4 RLI: Woman at well
D: Living water
- 5 RLI: Paralytic healed and judged
D: Resurrection and judgement
- 6 RLI: Throng demands manna and physical king
D: Living bread, a spiritual king

- 7 RLI: Jews (Sanhedrin) seek to kill him
D: If any man will do his will...none of you keep the Law (sinning and knowing the Father are contradictory)
- 8 This chapter is a unity with ch. 7 and continues the same theme only forwarding Abraham instead of Moses as the one they are offending, the woman taken in adultery is a later addition not in the most ancient texts
- 9 RLI: Healing of blind man
D: Seeing and not seeing
- 10 RLI: Pharisees hostile to Jesus attempt to coerce and then stone him
D: the good shepherd and the sheep versus the thieves, robbers, hirelings and wolves
- 11 RLI: Lazarus dies and is brought back to life, Sanhedrin counsels to kill Jesus and Lazarus
D: I am the resurrection and the life
- 12 RLI: Jesus anointed for death, Triumphal entry
D: Son of man glorified of the Father, not of man
- 13 RLI: Jesus washes their feet
D: Your lord and master washes your feet, you should do as I have done...new commandment...love one another

The subsequent ch. 14-17 all deal with doctrines centered around the immanent separation because of his death. The tenor of John's Gospel then changes completely for ch. 18-20 as Jesus submits to his enemies where he is elsewhere the one in control. Chapter 20 picks up the pattern of ch. 2-13 again with Jesus using the context of fishing to send the apostles back to the ministry.

General Comments on John 1

This chapter is a general theological introduction to the person of Jesus (v. 1-14), John Baptist the prophesied forerunner and witness of Jesus who sees his anointing/deification (v. 15-34), the collection of the disciples and John Beloved's introduction to Jesus (v. 35-50), and the introduction of the replacement theme which establishes the context of the entire religious and theological import of this gospel (v. 51).

Overall, this chapter serves as a summary of the synoptic gospels and introduction to John's gospel. After this chapter,

John treats very little of the same subject material the other gospel writers do until the crucifixion, and even then his presentation is quite different.

The same subjects of ch. 1 are addressed in D&C 93. In particular, the matter of Jesus' deification at the point of baptism and reception of the Holy Spirit is discussed at length in that section. Review of D&C 93 is recommended.

The Inspired Version (IV), also known as the Joseph Smith Translation (JST), has a considerable number of emendations to the text of ch. 1 over the KJV. Comments on the differences and their importance are treated below by verse in the specific comments. The verse numbering differs somewhat between the KJV and IV, specific comments are indexed against the KJV.

KJV

1 In the beginning was the Word,

and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
2 The same was
in the beginning with God.
3 All things were made by him;
and without him
was not any thing made
that was made.
4 In him was
life;
and the life was the light of men.
5 And the light shineth in darkness;
and the darkness comprehended it not.
6 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.
9 That was the true Light,
which lighteth every man
that cometh into the world.

10 He was in the world,
and the world was made by him,
and the world knew him not.
11 He came unto his own,
and his own received him not.
12 But as many as received him,

IV

1 In the beginning was the gospel
preached through the Son.
And the gospel was the word,
and the word was with the Son,
and the Son was with God,
and the Son was of God.
2 The same was
in the beginning with God.
3 All things were made by him;
and without him
was not anything made
which was made.
4 In him was the gospel,
and the gospel was the life,
and the life was the light of men;
5 And the light shineth in the world,
and the world perceiveth it not.
6 There was a man sent from God,
whose name was John.
7 The same came into the world
for a witness,
to bear witness of the light,
to bear record of the gospel
through the Son,
unto all,
that through him men might believe.
8 He was not that light,
but came to
bear witness of that light,
9 Which was the true light,
which lighteth every man
that cometh into the world;
10 Even the Son of God.
He who was in the world,
and the world was made by him,
and the world knew him not.
11 He came unto his own,
and his own received him not.
12 But as many as received him,

to them gave he power
to become the sons of God,
even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born,
not of blood,
nor of the will of the flesh,
nor of the will of man,
but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh,
and dwelt among us,
(and we beheld his glory,
the glory as of
the only begotten of the Father,)
full of grace and truth.

15 John bare witness of him,
and cried, saying,
This was he of whom I spake,
He that cometh after me
is preferred before me:
for he was before me.

16 And of his fulness
have all we received,

and grace for grace.

17 For the law
was given by Moses,
but grace and truth
came by Jesus Christ.

18 No man hath seen God
at any time;

the only begotten Son,
which is in the bosom of the Father,
he hath declared him

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,
What then?

to them gave he power
to become the sons of God;
only to them who believe on his name.

13 He was born,
not of blood,
nor of the will of the flesh,
nor of the will of man,
but of God.

14 And the same word was made flesh,
and dwelt among us,
and we beheld his glory,
the glory as of
the Only Begotten of the Father,
full of grace and truth.

15 John bear witness of him,
and cried, saying,
This was he of whom I spake;
He who cometh after me,
is preferred before me;
for he was before me.

16 For in the beginning was the Word,
even the Son,
who is made flesh,
and sent unto us
by the will of the Father.

And as many as believe on his name
shall receive of his fullness.

And of his fullness
have all we received,
even immortality and eternal life,
through his grace.

17 For the law
was given through Moses,
but life and truth
came through Jesus Christ.

18 For the law was
after a carnal commandment,
to the administration of death;
but the gospel was after
the power of an endless life,
through Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son,
who is in the bosom of the Father.

19 And no man hath seen God
at any time,
except he hath borne record of
the Son;

for except it is through him
no man can be saved.

20 And this is the record of John,
when the Jews sent
priests and Levites from Jerusalem,
to ask him; Who art thou?

21 And he confessed,
and denied not that he was Elias;
but confessed, saying;

I am not the Christ.

22 And they asked him,
saying;

Art thou Elias?
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 sayest thou 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 Esaias.
24 And they which were sent
were of the Pharisees.
25 And they asked him,
and said unto him,
Why baptizest thou then,
if thou be not that Christ,
nor Elias,

neither that prophet?
26 John answered them,
saying,
I baptize with water:
but there standeth one among you,
whom ye know not;
27 He it is,

who coming after me
is preferred before me,
whose shoe's latchet
I am not worthy to unloose.

29 The next day John seeth Jesus
coming unto him,
and saith,
Behold the Lamb of God,
which taketh away
the sin of the world.

30 This is he of whom I said,
After me cometh a man
which is preferred before me:
for he was before me.
31 And I knew him not:
but that he should be

How then art thou Elias?
And he said,
I am not

that Elias who was
to restore all things.
And they asked him,
saying,
Art thou that prophet?
And he answered,
No.

23 Then said they unto him,
Who art thou?
that we may give an answer
to them that sent us.
What sayest thou of thyself?
24 He said,
I am the voice of one
crying in the wilderness,
Make straight the way of the Lord,
as saith the prophet Esaias.

25 And they who were sent
were of the Pharisees.
26 And they asked him,
and said unto him,
Why baptizest thou then,
if thou be not the Christ,
nor Elias

who was to restore all things,
neither that prophet?
27 John answered them,
saying,
I baptize with water,
but there standeth one among you,
whom ye know not;

28 He it is of whom I bear record.
He is that prophet,
even Elias,
who, coming after me,
is preferred before me,
whose shoe's latchet
I am not worthy to unloose,
or whose place I am not able to fill;
for he shall baptize,
not only with water,
but with fire,
and with the Holy Ghost.

29 The next day John seeth Jesus
coming unto him,
and said;
Behold the Lamb of God,
who taketh away
the sin of the world!

30 And John bare record of him
unto the people,
saying,
This is he of whom I said;
After me cometh a man
who is preferred before me;
for he was before me,
and I knew him,
and that he should be

made manifest to Israel,
therefore am I come
baptizing with 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 with water,
the same said unto me,
Upon whom thou shalt see
the Spirit descending,
and remaining on him,
the same is he which
baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.
34 And I saw,
and bare record that
this is the Son of God.

35 Again the next day after
John stood,
and two of his disciples;
36 And looking upon Jesus
as he walked,
he saith,
Behold the Lamb of God!
37 And the two disciples
heard him speak,
and they followed Jesus.
38 Then Jesus turned,
and saw them following,
and saith unto them,
What seek ye?
They said unto him,
Rabbi,
(which is to say,
being interpreted,
Master,)
where dwellest thou?
39 He saith unto them,
Come and see.
They came and saw where he dwelt,
and abode with him that day:
for it was about the tenth hour.
40 One of the two
which heard John speak,
and followed him,
was Andrew,
Simon Peter's brother.
41 He first findeth
his own brother Simon,
and saith unto him,
We have found the Messias,
which is,
being interpreted,

made manifest to Israel;
therefore am I come
baptizing with water.
31 And John bare record,
saying;
When he was baptized of me,
I saw the Spirit descending
from heaven like a dove,
and it abode upon him.
32 And I knew him;
for he who sent me
to baptize with water,
the same said unto me;
Upon whom thou shalt see
the Spirit descending,
and remaining on him,
the same is he who
baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.
33 And I saw,
and bare record that
this is the Son of God.
34 These things were done
in Bethabara,
beyond Jordan,
where John was baptizing.
35 Again, the next day after,
John stood,
and two of his disciples,
36 And looking upon Jesus
as he walked,
he said;
Behold the Lamb of God!
37 And the two disciples
heard him speak,
and they followed Jesus.
38 Then Jesus turned,
and saw them following him,
and said unto them,
What seek ye?
They say unto him,
Rabbi,
(which is to say,
being interpreted,
Master;)
Where dwellest thou?
39 He said unto them,
Come and see.
And they came and saw where he dwelt,
and abode with him that day;
for it was about the tenth hour.
40 One of the two
who heard John,
and followed Jesus,
was Andrew,
Simon Peter's brother.
41 He first findeth
his own brother Simon,
and saith unto him,
We have found the Messias,
which is,
being interpreted,

the Christ.
42 And he brought him to Jesus.
And when Jesus beheld him,
he said,
Thou art Simon the son of Jona:
thou shalt be called Cephas,
which is by interpretation,

A stone.

43 The day following
Jesus would go forth into Galilee,
and findeth Philip,
and saith unto him,
Follow me.

44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida,
the city of Andrew and Peter.

45 Philip findeth Nathanael,
and saith unto him,
We have found him,
of whom Moses in the law,
and the prophets,
did write,

Jesus of Nazareth,
the son of Joseph.

46 And Nathanael said unto him,
Can there any good thing
come out of Nazareth?
Philip saith unto him,
Come and see.

47 Jesus saw Nathanael
coming to him,
and saith of him,
Behold an Israelite indeed,
in whom is no guile!

48 Nathanael saith unto him,
Whence knowest thou me?
Jesus answered and said unto him,
Before that Philip called thee,
when thou wast under the fig tree,
I saw thee.

49 Nathanael answered
and saith unto him
Rabbi,
thou art the Son of God;
thou art the King of Israel.

50 Jesus answered and said unto him,
Because I said unto thee,
I saw thee under the fig tree,
believest thou?

thou shalt see
greater things than these.

51 And he saith unto him,
Verily, verily,
I say unto you,
Hereafter ye shall see heaven open,
and the angels of God
ascending and descending
upon the Son of man.

the Christ.
42 And he brought him to Jesus.
And when Jesus beheld him,
he said,

Thou art Simon, the son of Jona,
thou shalt be called Cephas,
which is, by interpretation,
a seer,
or a stone.

And they were fishermen.
And they straightway left all,
and followed Jesus.

43 The day following,
Jesus would go forth into Galilee,
and findeth Philip,
and saith unto him,
Follow me.

44 Now Philip was at Bethsaida,
the city of Andrew and Peter.

45 Philip findeth Nathanael,
and saith unto him,
We have found him,
of whom Moses in the law,
and the prophets,
did write,

Jesus of Nazareth,
the son of Joseph.

46 And Nathanael said unto him,
Can there any good thing
come out of Nazareth?
Philip said unto him,
Come and see.

47 Jesus saw Nathanael
coming unto him,
and said of him,
Behold an Israelite indeed,
in whom is no guile!

48 Nathanael said unto him,
Whence knowest thou me?
Jesus answering said unto him,
Before Philip called thee,
when thou wast under the fig tree,
I saw thee.

49 Nathanael answered
and said unto him
Rabbi,
thou art the Son of God;
thou art the King of Israel.

50 Jesus answered and said unto him,
Because I said unto thee,
I saw thee under the fig tree,
believest thou?

Thou shalt see
greater things than these.

51 And he said unto him,
Verily, verily,
I say unto you,
Hereafter ye shall see heaven open,
and the angels of God
ascending and descending
upon the Son of man.

Specific Comments on John 1

1 IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

v1-14 These verses can be arranged as an inverted parallelism peaking on v. 7. The subject of the parallelism is largely derivative of Isa. 40-47, esp. Isa. 42.

v1-4 The Son was with the Father (v. 1) in the beginning (v. 2), even before the Creation (v. 3). Not only was the Creation by the Son, but eternal life comes from the Son as well (v. 4). The light of eternal life was shown to the world, and the world chose to remain in spiritual darkness (v. 5).

v1-2 "In the beginning", John draws on Gen. 1 to invoke the Creation theme employed in subsequent verses. Especially compare the separation of the light and dark of the first day of creation and with v. 5-7.

v1 Jesus is the incarnation of the various OT covenants with Adam, Abraham, Moses, and all of the writings of the Prophets, he is the ends and the intent of the Law and therefore is the personification of the Law, cp. 3 Ne. 15:9.

The IV fleshes out the more enigmatic KJV by explaining the "word" connection to the Son. The Greek term "logos", here translated to "word", has an entire theological/philosophical meaning and lore entirely its own drawn from Greek philosophy.

The general concept associated with logos is that of independence, in the philosophical sense of not relying on anything else for existence. Things such as natural laws, math, ideas, and so forth, were considered independently true. Their truth or existence is not contingent upon anyone or anything to determine their correctness or reality. They simply exist regardless of what we think of them.

This philosophical usage has led various commentators to equate the philosophical implications of logos with the eternal and transcendent nature of the Son. John makes no equation between the explicit theme of the incarnation of the Law and the implicit theme of philosophical logos. The IV is hostile to the philosophical reading as it emphasizes the gospel, the good news of the Messiah, and ignores philosophical implications. The gospel oriented theme is additionally emphasized by the IV with the additions in v. 4 and 7.

v3 Compare v. 10, Isa. 17:8, 40:22, 44:21, Col. 1:16, 2 Ne. 2:15. The Creatorship of the Son is made explicit. This concurs with the PofGP creation accounts.

v5 The IV emends "darkness" to "world", something one could intuitively draw from context as the Light was come into the world but rejected by it. The emendation also serves to equate the two terms.

Overall, the verse implies mankind generally rejects light and truth, and the Messiah. Compare Isa. 6:9-10.

6 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. 9 [That] was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. 11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, [even] to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

v6-14 The predicted forerunner of the Messiah appears (v. 6-7) to testify of the incarnation of the Lord (v. 9-14). The subject of v. 1-5 is repeated and explained.

v6-7 In fulfilment of Mal. 3:1.

v8-9 With respect to the "light", cf. Gen. 1:1-4, 2 Sam. 23:2-4, Mal. 4:2, D&C 93:29.

v10-14 The IV inserts the line "Even the Son of God" at the beginning of v. 10 and then carries the subject through v. 14. This is important because in the KJV the subject of v. 13 is obscure. The KJV on v. 13 suggests the ones being addressed are the "sons of God" from the preceding verse. The IV makes it clear v. 13 is in fact referring to the Son. This emendation makes v. 13 more palatable as it is clear the Son's physical origin was quite different from the rest of us.

v10 Even though the world and all that was in it was created by the Son, still mankind does not know their maker.

v11-12 The Lord came to fulfill the Abrahamic Covenant, and the children of Abraham in general did not accept him (v. 11).

However, those who do accept the Messiah are granted to be God's sons and daughters (v. 12).

v14 The incarnation of the gospel. The Lord premortally administered the gospel to mankind, and now comes to fulfill it in the flesh Himself.

15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. 16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. 17 For the law was given by Moses, [but] grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. 18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared [him].

v15-34 The witness and testimony of John Baptist, cp. D&C 93. This is the first of Jesus' witnesses whom he will later refer to in his dialogue with the Pharisees (cf. 5:31-35).

Three portions of John's testimony are recounted. First, his general witness to all that Jesus is the Messiah (v. 15-18), second his testimony to the Pharisees (v. 19-28), third his testimony to his own disciples (v. 29-36).

The events detailed herein (v. 29-36) present the anointing and deification of the Son in the flesh (i.e., the investiture of all of the Father's power and authority and thus exaltation, esp. see D&C 93).

v15-18 John's general testimony concerning the imminent arrival of the foreordained Messiah (v. 15). The Messiah comes with mercy and grace (v. 16), the Atonement. Where judgement comes from the Law of Moses, mercy comes by the grace of the Messiah (v. 17). Any who have truly testified of God, have done so because of their knowledge of the Messiah (v. 18).

v15 "for he was before me", this phrase is explained by the IV insertion in v. 16.

v16 "And of his fullness", this phrase is explained by the IV insertion later in the same verse, "even immortality and eternal life".

v17-18 The IV has substantial changes over the KJV, which contrast the deadness of the works of the Law with the life granted by the Gospel.

It is important to note the intent of the Law was to teach Israel the Gospel, but instead they largely focused on the works and performances, which in and of themselves had no saving or spiritual effect. Thus, the Law was death to them because they failed to embrace the Gospel through it.

v18 The KJV translation is poor. The IV in fact is a good paraphrase of the Greek. Here is a literal translation from Greek to English, supplied by the Concordant Literal NT (CLNT):

God not one has ever seen. The only-begotten God,
Who is in the bosom of the Father, He unfolds Him.

The intention of the text is to say none may see the Father unless the Son is revealing Him to them, which is what the IV paraphrases.

Note the doctrine that it is impossible to see God is expelled here, yet many continue to adhere to it.

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, What then? Art thou Elias? 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 sayest thou 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 Esaias.

24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. 25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? 26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; 27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred 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.

v19-28 John's testimony to the religious authorities of the time. John testifies that he is neither the Messiah nor Elijah (v. 20-21), but is the predicted forerunner of the Messiah (v. 22-23). The religious authorities do not want competition, so they attempt to prevent John from baptizing (v. 24-25, 28), John ignores them and indicates it is part of his calling as forerunner to baptize with water (v. 26-27), because when the Messiah comes he will baptize with the Spirit.

This conflict foreshadows the greater conflict Jesus will face when squaring off against the religious authorities of the time.

v19 "priests and levites", the priests and Levites were the local authorities in tevillah (i.e., Jewish "baptism", or ritual immersion in a mikvah). They were sent to question John concerning his authority to practice such acts outside the realm of the local recognized authorities. Why did John include this detail? Because it is in fulfilment of the hostilities predicted

in Mal. 3 between the messenger and the religious leaders, also cp. D&C 84:27-28.

Note the priests and Levites do not question John's authority to baptize, only his right to baptize. They know John is the firstborn son of a priest, and therefore of the lineage of Aaron with the authority of the Priesthood, cf. D&C 68:15-20. They cannot question him on his authority, so they attack his right to baptize outside of the confines of their jurisdiction, namely the Temple. John's reply in v. 26-27 is effectively a statement of deference to the authority of the Messiah, and he insinuates the priests and Levites are contradicting this higher authority because they refuse to acknowledge it. The priests and Levites realize what he is saying, and this effectively terminates the questioning.

v20-21 The IV clarifies the matter over who is and who isn't "Elias" and what John Baptist is talking about in his denial.

v21 "that prophet", the examiners are well aware of the messianic implications of Deut. 18:15-19 as well as the more obvious OT prophecies concerning the arrival of the Messiah.

v23 Note the KJV quote of Isaiah 40:3 is based on the KJV rendering of that passage:

A voice cries out in the wilderness, "Prepare..."

All modern translations render the phrase something like:

A voice cries out, "In the wilderness, prepare..."

The latter is the better translation as it draws on Isaiah's various statements that Israel will be gathered from the four corners of the earth and the impediments to her gathering will be eliminated, cf. Isa. 35:8, Isa. 51:10. The importance of John's quotation is the fulfilment of the covenants with Israel are imminent.

v25 This verse suggests the Pharisees saw the Messiah, Elias, and "that prophet" as three different characters, but John explains to them in the IV on v. 27 that they are in fact one and the same and he is bearing witness of this Messiah-prophet-Elias. Also note Philip in v. 45 knows they are one and the same character.

v27 Unbuckling one's shoes was a slave's task. Under Pharisaic custom it was expressly forbidden for a teacher to allow his student to perform such a task as it was considered too

degrading. Thus, John Baptist is emphasizing his relative unimportance compared to the imminent manifestation of the Messiah.

29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. 30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred 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 with 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 with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. 34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God. 35 Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples; 36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

v29-36 John's testimony to his own disciples. John defers to Jesus in front of his own disciples, telling them he is the one which he has been telling them should come (v. 29-31). He tells them that when he baptized Jesus the Holy Spirit rested upon him, and by this he knew Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God (v. 32-34). Then again, the next day, John points out Jesus to two of his own disciples (v. 35) and tells them he is the Lamb of God (v. 36).

Unlike any self-promoter would do, John Baptist publicly and unequivocally defers to Jesus when he recognizes him as Messiah. John defers to Jesus in front of his disciples so the transfer will be without confusion.

v29 John Baptist quotes Isaiah as "Behold the lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" paraphrases the sacrificial and expiatory themes of Isa. 43:23-24, Isa. 53:10-11.

v32-33 "abode upon him...remaining upon him", both of these phrases emphasize the anointing of the Spirit in such a way as to indicate it was no transient anointing, but a permanent one. This anointing was not with physical oil as had Israel's previous leaders been anointed, but his anointing was with the Holy Spirit. This is Israel's spiritual King and Deliverer as opposed to previous physical kings and deliverers.

v33 The IV omits the "not" in "I knew him not".

37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. 38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to

say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? 39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour. 40 One of the two which heard John [speak], and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. 41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. 42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.

v37-42 The two disciples (v. 35) listen to John Baptist and start following Jesus (v. 37). Jesus asks them what they are looking for. They call him "Teacher" and ask to become his disciples (v. 38), and he agrees (v. 39). One of the two disciples goes and gets his brother (v. 40-41), whom Jesus also accepts (v. 42).

The second disciple referred to in these verses is generally regarded to be John Beloved, the author. This is based upon the oblique manner in which he refers to himself throughout the subsequent text (cf. 13:23, 19:26, 20:2, 21:7, 21:20-24), and his intimate familiarity with the events at hand.

v42 The IV adds "a seer" to the interpretation for the name applied to Peter. "Cephas" is a transliteration of the Aramaic "kephas", which is apparently related to the Hebrew "keph" (English: rock) which translates to the Greek "petros" (English: rock, stone).

The Hebrew "keph" is used only twice in the OT, once each in Job and Jeremiah in reference to natural types of rock. In the NT, "kephas" appears six times and is used only in reference to Peter. One would assume Smith's intent in the IV is to equate the Urim and Thummin concept of a seer stone with the calling extended to Peter, but there is no explicit connection between kephas and a seer stone outside of the one at hand.

43 The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. 44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. 46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! 48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. 49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. 51 And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

v43-51 Jesus continues to gather disciples, including a man named Philip, from the same city as some of the other disciples (v. 43-44). Philip then recruits a man named Nathaniel (v. 45), who is somewhat skeptical (v. 46), but who is quickly won over by Jesus (v. 47-49). Jesus informs him he will see great and heavenly things (v. 50-51), if he follows him.

v45 "Moses in the law", cf. Deut. 18:15-18.

"the prophets", making reference to the various messianic passages in the OT prophets.

v46 Nathaniel is implicitly referring to the well-established tradition the Messiah would come out of Bethlehem, cf. Micah 5:2. Nathaniel is saying "How can the Messiah come out of Nazareth?" Contrast Nathaniel's willingness to discount his own learning with the Pharisees in 7:52.

v47-50 Jesus reveals a seemingly mundane miracle to Nathaniel and he is duly impressed, resulting in him pronouncing him the Messiah. Jesus' response is he will see much more impressive things than these. The implication is he will have to follow Jesus in order to see these more impressive miracles. Thus, Jesus is implicitly extending a calling to Nathaniel, as he did to the others previously, only it is evident Nathaniel is already willing to follow.

v51 The introduction of the replacement theme, which is pivotal to the gospel of John. Jesus has come to overthrow and replace the corrupt physical rulers, cf. Mal. 3. See also Matt. 12:6 and Mark 2:28 for additional replacement theme statements, with Matthew's account explicitly referencing the Temple.

The imagery used in the passage is based on Gen. 28:17, Jacob's ladder. There Jacob sees angels ascending and descending on Bethel, the house of God. Now, Jesus informs them angels will be ascending and descending on him. The obvious symbolism is one greater than the Temple is now among them. The more obscure symbolism is that God (i.e., The Lord of the OT) is now housed in a temple of flesh.

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