

## 17/01/2021 — Introduction to the Gospel of John: John 1:1-18.

John 20:30-31, considered by most commentators to be the key verse of the whole book, clearly states the reason why John wrote as he did.

*Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God; and that believing you may have life in his name.*

The author of John's Gospel most agree to be the Apostle John.

John generally refers to him-self throughout the book as 'the disciple whom Jesus loved'.

John's Gospel, often referred to as The Fourth Gospel, is a gospel apart.

Over 90% of John is not found in any of the other gospel; unlike the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark & Luke)

There are only 4 major events recorded in all 4 Gospels.

- Jesus' Feeding of the Five Thousand (Ch. 6);
- Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem (Ch. 12);
- Jesus' identification of a traitor – Judas(Ch. 13)
- and several aspects of Jesus' Arrest, Trial, Death and Resurrection (Ch. 18 – 20)

Jesus is depicted in Matthew as The Kingly Messiah, in Mark as The Wonder / Miracle Worker and in Luke as The Friend of Sinners and Outcasts.

Each of John's 21 chapters portrays peculiar aspect of Jesus;

He is:

- |                             |                                  |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. the Son of God           | 12. the King                     |
| 2. the Son of Man           | 13. the Servant                  |
| 3. the Divine Teacher       | 14. the Councillor               |
| 4. the Soul-Winner          | 15. the True Vine                |
| 5. the Great Physician      | 16. the Giver of the Holy Spirit |
| 6. the Bread of Life        | 17. the Great Intercessor        |
| 7. the Water of Life        | 18. the Model Sufferer           |
| 8. the Defender of the Weak | 19. the Uplifted Saviour         |
| 9. the Light of the World   | 20. the Conquer of Death         |
| 10. the Good Shepherd       | 21. the Restorer of the Penitent |
| 11. the Prince of Life      |                                  |

All the Gospels start Jesus Ministry in relation to John the Baptist, but John provides a time-line to this ministry which encompasses three Passovers (a three year ministry).

John says nothing of Jesus' Temptation, the appointment of His Disciples, His Transfiguration, His Parables, His Ascension, the Great Commandment or our Great Commission.

John takes Jesus' Messianic pedigree back to before the creation itself, to His pre-incarnate nature in which He is both God and with God.

John's Gospel is full of manifestations of the number 7, a number representative of Spiritual Perfection (with the number 8 denoting Superabundance).

- The Seven Signs to the Jews –

Water to wine (Jn. 2:1-11);	Feverish son (Jn. 4:46-54);
Lame man (Jn. 5:1-15);	Feeds 5,000 (Jn. 6:1-14);
Walks on water (Jn. 6:15-21);	Blind man (Jn. 9:1-12);
Raises Lazarus (Jn. 11:1-44).	

Followed by the ultimate eighth sign - His own resurrection (Jn. 20:1-9)

- The Seven I AM's of Jesus –

Bread of life (Jn. 6:35,48);	Light of world (Jn. 8:12);
Door of sheep (Jn. 10:7,9);	Good Shepherd (Jn. 10:11);
Resurrection & Life (Jn. 11:25);	Way, Truth & Life (Jn.14:6);
True vine (Jn.15:1,5);	

Followed by the ultimate eighth I AM – Beginning & End / Alpha & Omega

- The 'Last Days' is mentioned 7 Times – 6:39,40,44 & 54; 7:37; 11:24 & 12:48.

- The 7 named Disciples – Andrew - 1:40; Peter - 1:42; Philip - 1:43;  
Nathanael - 1:45; Thomas 20:24; Judas 12:4; and Judas (not  
Iscaiot)14:22;

- The 7 other Men named – John the Baptist - 1:6; Nicodemus - 3:1;  
Lazarus - 11:1; Annas 18:13; Caiphas - 18:24;  
Pilate - 19:19 and Joseph of Arimathea - 19:38;

- The 7 Women depicted – Mary Jesus' mum - 9:25; His Auntie Mary - 19:25;  
Mary Magdalene - 19:25; Mary Lazarus' sister -. 11:1; Martha - 11:1;  
the Samaritan woman Jn.4:7; and the Adulteress - 8:3;

- The other 7 I AM's addressed to – the Samaritan woman - 4:26;  
the disciples - 6:20; the Jews - 8:24; 8:28; & 8:58;  
the disciples - 13:19; the guards - 18:5,6,8;

John 1:1-18 is John's prologue, a kind of abstract or summary of the topics in the Gospel:

	Prologue	Gospel
• the pre-existence of the Logos or Son	1:1–2	17:5
• In him was life	1:4	5:26
• life is light	1:4	8:12
• light rejected by darkness	1:5	3:19
• yet not quenched by it	1:5	12:35
• light coming into the world	1:9	3:19; 12:46
• Christ not received by his own	1:11	4:44
• being born to God and not of flesh	1:13	3:6; 8:41–42
• seeing his glory	1:14	12:41
• the 'one and only' Son	1:14, 18	3:16
• truth in Jesus Christ	1:17	14:6
• no-one has seen God, except the one who comes from God's side	1:18	6:46

As well as introducing many of the key thematic elements such as Life; Light; Witness; Genuine / Ultimate Truth; Glory; Spiritual Birth etc. The Prologue also outlines how the divine Son of God came into the world, as the incarnate Jesus of history, so that the glory and grace of God could be uniquely and perfectly disclosed to it.

This is the central theme which is expanded throughout the rest of the book.

John 1:1-18 is structured, in the form of a large Chiasm that points directly at the overarching purpose of the book.

A Chiasm is where parallel or corresponding words, phrases or ideas within a piece of prose are arranged such that they mirror one another in reverse order, often around a central feature.

e.g. the statement "She has all my love; my heart belongs to her," is a Chiasm.

A     "She  
      B     has all  
          C     my love;  
          C'    my heart  
      B'    belongs to  
A'    her."

So is Matt 6:24

A     No one can serve two masters;  
      B     for either he will hate the one  
          C     and love the other,  
          C'    or he will be devoted to one  
      B'    and despise the other.  
A'    You cannot serve God and wealth.

The Chiasm in John's Prologue is large and complicated, but it points to a seminal truth that is central to Jesus Ministry and our Salvation. It points to verse 12:

*But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, (John 1:12)*

- A In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.
- B All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.
- C In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
- D There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to bear witness about the light.
- E The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.
- F He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him.
- G But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name,**
- G' he gave the right to become children of God,**
- F' who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.
- E' And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- D' (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.")
- C' For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.
- B' For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
- A' No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.