

From chapter 1, John transitions from the testimony of John the Baptist to the testimony of Jesus' words and works—in the first 11 verses, we have the first of 7 major sign miracles in Jesus changing the water into wine—in verses 13-22 we have Jesus first public (in cleansing the temple) and words (in prophesying His destruction and resurrection)...

Thus, as I mentioned last week, verses 13-22 have the common theme of the temple—in vv13-17, a passage we considered last week, we saw our Savior cleansing His temple—in vv18-22 we find Him prophesying its destruction and resurrection...

- I. The Question of the Jews—v18
- II. The Response of the Savior—vv19-21
- III. The Reflection of the Disciples—v22

I. The Question of the Jews—v18

1. That v18 begins with the English word "so" or "therefore" underscores its close relation to the following passage...
2. Having seen what our Savior did and having heard His words in v16—the Jews knew He claimed to be the Messiah...
3. V18—"So the Jews answered and said to Him, 'What sign do You show to us, since You do these things'..."
4. That is—what sign can you perform to verify your claim that you are the promised Messiah—the Son of God...
5. Now—I pointed out back in v11—that signs were miracles intending to point to Christ's person and work....
6. John records 7 signs within chapters 1-12—each selected to illustrate Christ's true character as the Messiah...
7. Now—while John doesn't specially identify these Jews—it's reasonable to assume they were leaders associated with the temple...
8. They had witnessed Him driving out the merchants, saying—"Take these things away! Do not make My father's house a house of merchandise..."
9. Because our Savior knew their motivation in wanting a sign was sinful—He refuses to comply with their request...
10. In fact—as we shall see in v19—He refuses to show them any sign—except His resurrection from the dead...
11. Now—since John puts such an emphasis upon signs—I want to digress and suggest three things about signs...
12. [1] Signs validated Christ as the Messiah—that is—they were intended to identify Christ as the promised Messiah...
13. The OT Scriptures described the coming Messiah as a miracle worker—healing the sick, blind, deaf, and dead...
14. Thus—it was never wrong to believe that Christ was the Messiah because of His miracles—these were their purpose...
15. Jn.2:23—"Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which he did..."
16. Jn.3:2—"Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him..."
17. Jn.7:31—"And many of the people believed in Him, and said, 'When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this *Man* has done..'"
18. Jn.20:30-31—"And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name..."

19. Now—this is beautifully shadowed in the OT by Moses, who like Christ, was also sent to liberate captive Israel...
20. Ex.4:1—"Then Moses answered and said, But suppose they will not believe me or listen to my voice; suppose they say, The LORD has not appeared to you..."
21. Ex.4:9—"And it shall be, if they do not believe even these two signs, or listen to your voice, that you shall take water from the river and pour it on the dry land. And the water which you take from the river will become blood on the dry land..."
22. [2] Signs validated the apostles as sent by Christ—that is—the signs validated both the messenger and message...
23. It's for this reason, the apostles and their immediate associates, had the unique ability to perform sign miracles...
24. Mk.16:19-20—"So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with *them* and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen..."
25. 2Cor.12:12—"Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds..."
26. Thus—it's important to understand the specific purpose of signs—they verified Christ and His word He gave through the apostles...
27. Accordingly—when that word was fully given—the need for the signs was fulfilled and they ceased being given...
28. Let me illustrate—let's say I was to visit my grandfather in Lansing, MI—on the way there we would see signs...
29. These signs would serve as means pointing or directing us to Lansing, and would not be our final destination...
30. Once we arrived at Lansing, the signs would have served their purpose—the thing the pointed to had come...
31. So too—the signs performed by Christ's apostles and their close associates—pointed to Christ and His word...
32. When Christ and His word came—the signs were no longer needed, and throughout the NT, they fade away...
33. [3] Signs were demanded by the Jews while disbelieving the word—the Jews refused to believe unless they had signs...
34. Thus—they fundamentally inverted their purpose—Christ, not the signs, was the ultimate goal of their faith...
35. 1Cor.1:22-23—"For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness..."
36. Matt.12:38-42—"Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered, saying, Teacher, we want to see a sign from You. But He answered and said to them, an evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah *is* here. The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon *is* here [Lk.16:27-31]..."

II. The Response of the Savior—vv19-21

1. Having asked Jesus for a sign to prove His Messianic identity—our Savior says there's one sign He'll give them—His resurrection...
2. Verses 19-21—"Jesus answered and said to them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Then the Jews said, It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days? But He was speaking of the temple of His body..."
3. Throughout Jesus earthly ministry—His hearers often failed to understand the spiritual meaning of His sayings...

4. Thus they misunderstood Him—as if He meant the physical temple—when in fact He meant His physical body...
5. This physical temple was renovated by Herod about 19 years before Christ was born and wasn't yet finished...
6. The point of the Jews is evident—if it's taken Herod this long to make the temple—how can you raise it in three days...
7. Now—while it's true that the Jews misunderstood Him—it's also true that many would later use these words against Him...
8. Matt.26:60-61—"two false witnesses came forward and said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days..."
9. Matt.27:39-40—"And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross..."
10. Thus—our Savior's response foretold two closely related events—the destruction and resurrection of His body...
11. [1] A destruction, v19—"Destroy this temple"—this Greek word means—"to loose, break down, do away with..."
12. It here refers to His death—the Jews would hand Him over to the Romans who would—tear Him down by death...
13. Thus—our Savior isn't here commanded them to destroy Him—but He's simply foretelling they will destroy Him...
14. John Hutcheson—"Destroy this temple, is not a command of Christ, but a prediction foretelling their malice, and a permission to them to do their uttermost..."
15. Barnes—"You have despised my authority, and been unmoved by the miracles which I have already performed. But your wickedness will not end here. You will oppose me more and more; you will reject and despise me, until in your wickedness you will take my life and *destroy* my body..."
16. [2] A resurrection—"and in three days I will raise it up"—though they will kill Him—He will be raised from the dead...
17. Now—the NT accredits the resurrection to each person of the Godhead—the Father, the Spirit, and the Son...
18. Thus—He not only foretells His crucifixion and resurrection—but claims to have the authority to raise Himself from the dead..
19. Jn.10:18—"No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father..."
20. Now—our Savior prophesies He will raise up His body in three days—which must be understood in Jewish manner of counting days...
21. It appears He was crucified on a Friday afternoon, rested in the grave all Saturday, and raised on a Sunday morning...
22. Thus—while He was not in the grave three 24 hour days—He was raised in three days—or on the third day...
23. Now—the importance of the resurrection is obvious—Christ rests all of His integrity upon this grand "sign"...
24. Thus—I want to digress for a few minutes—and point out the resurrection's relation to God, Christ, and the Church...
25. [a] God—the resurrection is the testimony of God—that nothing man does can hinder His eternal purposes...
26. Even though man attempts to tear down God's purposes—nothing he does will keep Him from His purposes...
27. Now—remember what we learned last week—that the temple was the place where God and man met together...
28. Thus—man is here portrayed as a very wicked and evil creature—to tear down the bridge that untied man with God...
29. This can be illustrated in the physical temple—in that—both times it was destroyed it was destroyed by man...

30. This destruction was symbolic of man's hatred for God—as well as his disinterest in having fellowship with God...
31. Thus—what man did to the two physical temples, they did to the true and living temple—they tore it down...
32. But—just like in the destruction of the two physical temples, by the Babylonians and Romans, this was in fulfilment to God's sovereign purpose...
33. Ps.2:4-6—"He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; the LORD shall hold them in derision then He shall speak to them in His wrath, and distress them in His deep displeasure: Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion..."
34. Acts 4:27-28—"For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done [Ps.118:22-24; Zech.6:12-13]..."
35. [b] Christ—the resurrection is obviously important to Christ—for it's the verification of His messianic identity...
36. Now—theologically we don't often speak of Christ's justification—but Christ was justified in and by His resurrection...
37. That is—He was declared to be righteous and without fault—as He was openly and publically raised from the dead...
38. Rom.1:4—"declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead..."
39. 1Tim.3:16—"Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifested in the flesh, justified by the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentles, beloved on in the world, received up in glory..."
40. Isa.50:8—"he is near who justifies Me; who will contend with Me? Let us stand together. Who is My adversary? Let him come near Me..."
41. Now—here we must remember that Christ's justification was similar and in a very important sense different from ours...
42. We are justified as ungodly sinners by the merits of another—Christ was declared publicly what He actually always was...
43. [c] The church—the resurrection is obviously central to the justification, regeneration, sanctification, and glorification of the church...
44. Thus—when Christ says—"I will raise it up"—He means not only His physical but also His mystical body...
45. That is—although man and Satan, who is the Destroyer, tears Him down—He will raise up His beloved temple...
46. So—while Christ refers to His physical and bodily resurrection—it is impossible to separate Him from His people...
47. Remember what we learned last week—the NT describes Christ, the collective church, and individual Christians as the temple...
48. Now—before I briefly examine each of these—I want to remind you that Christians share in a threefold union with Christ...
49. First—there is what we might call an ETERNAL UNION—which of course goes back to eternity past and election, Eph.1:4—"chosen in Christ..."
50. Secondly—there is what we might refer to as HISTORICAL UNION—which refers to Christ's historical life and death...
51. Thirdly—there is what we refer to as a VITAL UNION—which takes places at our conversion—or when we believe...
52. Thus—Christ came in time and history, lived, died, and rose again, with every elect stone in union with Him...
53. When He lived, died, and rose again—we lived, died, and rose again—all which are experienced in time by faith...
54. [i] Justification, Rom.8:33-34—"Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies. 34 Who *is* he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us..."

55. [ii] Regeneration, 1Pet.1:3—"Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead..."
56. [iii] Sanctification, Phil.3:10—"that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings..."
57. [iv] Glorification, Jn.11:25—"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live'..."

III. The Reflection of the Disciples—v22

1. V22—"Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said..."
2. Now—as I've said on previous occasions—the disciples were slow to understand much of what Jesus taught...
3. This doesn't mean they were unbelievers—but it simply underscores the best of Christians at best see dimly...
4. Mk.9:31-32—"For He taught His disciples and said to them, The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day. But they did not understand this saying, and were afraid to ask Him..."
5. [1] When they remembered—"Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them..."
6. That is—it wasn't until after His resurrection—the disciples remembered or understood what they were told...
7. Jn.14:25-26—"These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you [Jn.12:26]..."
8. [2] What they remembered—"and they believed the Scriptures and the word which Jesus had said"—this statement is amazing...
9. By "the Scriptures" is meant the OT Scriptures, and "the word Jesus had said"—refers to Jesus' prophecy (v19)...
10. In other words—the Spirit of God brought to their remembrance two things—Old and New Testament Scripture...
11. Now—this presupposes that the OT Scriptures foretold the resurrection of Christ as well as His crucifixion...
12. Lk.24:44-47—"Then He said to them, 'These *are* the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and *the* Prophets and *the* Psalms concerning Me.' And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, 'Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, 'and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem...'"
13. [a] Instruction to Pastors and Parents—sow the word of God—week after week, day after day—teach the word...
14. [b] Encouragement to Pastors and Parents—sow the word of God in faith—believing that it will be remembered...
15. Isa.55:11—"So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper *in the thing* for which I sent it" Prov.22:6—"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it"
16. J.C. Ryle—"The good seed sometimes springs up after he that sowed it has been long dead and gone. Let preachers go on preaching, and teachers go on teaching, and parents go on training up children in the way they should go. Let them sow the good seed of Bible truth in faith and patience. Their labour is not in vain in the Lord. Their words are remembered far more than they think, and will yet spring up 'after many days'..."