

BIB203 NT1 Life of Christ

Unit 6a Johannine Synoptic Example 1

Presented by the



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Hello. This is Unit 6 of NT1, BIB203, the Life of Christ. We are continuing our movement from the last time, from the last unit, Unit 5, dealing with the impact of John on the Synoptics. This is part two. Unit 5 was part one. And what we're going to be looking at today, again, is the correlation of the Gospel of John, the material in the Gospel of John with the material in the Synoptics. Now, the Gospel of John is a unique document all on its own, which is why it is usually not considered along with the Synoptic Gospels, except peripherally. The connection is acknowledged generally, but in practice, the Synoptics are lumped together and the fourth Gospel stands apart, as it were. It tends to be considered as being more theological than the Synoptic Gospels.

Today we're going to be looking at John 2:13-22. And following that, we will be looking at the entirety of John 6. Not in exhaustive detail, but with enough detail as it pertains to the Synoptic Gospels, with respect to parallel accounts. So we're looking at the parallels between John and the Synoptics in a word. We're going to start with John 2:13-22. If you would, please open your Bibles to that section. And it reads, "The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. 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. And he told those who sold the pigeons, 'Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade.' His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for your house will consume me.' So the Jews said to him, 'What sign do you show us for doing these things?' Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews then said, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking about the temple of his body. 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 what's happening here? This is, according to John's scheme, John's structure, this is the first year of Jesus' ministry. We're told in the first clause of verse 13 that the Passover of the Jews was near. And so Jesus goes to Jerusalem and we're told what he does. In the temple, he finds those who were selling oxen, sheep, and pigeons. He saw money-changers sitting there. He made a whip of cords, drove them out of the temple, overturned the money-changers' tables, poured out the coins, and he told those who were selling the pigeons to take the pigeons away. "Do not make my Father's house a house of trade." In other words, "Don't do this to my father's house." One might call it a violent exhortation because he does beat some of these folks. He drives them out of the temple, swinging that whip of cords. His disciples remembered at the time that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me," which is just a way of saying, looking at the material of verse 17, that they noticed that Jesus was quite zealous about the meaning and the purpose of the temple, that he was consumed with zeal with respect to the holiness of the temple in Jerusalem.

So the Jews respond. They say to Jesus, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" Shorthand for "What gives you the authority?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." And of course, that response provokes mockery on their part. The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you're going to raise it up in three days? Will you raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking about the temple of his body. The disciples did not realize that at the time, but when he was raised from the dead (verse 22), his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken. They believed after the

resurrection. So it's sort of a prospective comment, a proleptic comment on the part of the apostle John.

So we have Jesus here going in the first year of his ministry. The Passover of the Jews was near. Of course, that's not the only evidence that we have. We have to go backwards in the text to anchor that statement that I made about verse 13. Let's go back to verse 13 and we'll work backwards. "The Passover of the Jews was at hand." It was near. And Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now, the thing that I want you to see is that if you go to chapter 2 verse 1, it says, "On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee." Then I want you to go to verse 43 of chapter 1. We're working backwards. "The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee." Okay. And then I want you to go to verse 35. "The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples, and he looked at Jesus as he walked by (verse 36) and said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God!'" Go back even further. "The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!'"

And then of course, go back to verse 19. And that's where we'll stop for now because verses 1 to 18 of chapter 1 of the fourth Gospel is prologue. Verse 19, this is John's testimony. The Jews sent priests. They sent Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He denies that he is the Christ. He denies that he is Elijah. He denies that he is that prophet mentioned in Deuteronomy 18. And so they ask him, "Listen. Tell us about yourself because we need to give an answer to those who sent us." Then he cites Isaiah, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord.'" And of course, he talks about the one who is coming after him, as you can see in verse 24. They've been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, "Why are you baptizing, if you are neither of these personages: Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" Then John answered them, "I baptize with water, but among you stands one you do not know. He who comes after me. I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals."

These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing. The picture is rather remarkable. "The strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." Back in those days, people were peripatetic. They walked quite a bit. They had sandals on. The roads were dusty. And so when they walked from one place to another, especially if they walked over long distances, their feet would be dusty and dirty. So what John is saying is "I'm not worthy to loosen the thong of his sandals." And of course, one of the accepted cultural doings of the day was a visitor visited your house; you washed that person's feet, as you can see Jesus do in John 13. He washed their dusty feet. In Luke 7, a woman comes in and Jesus is sitting in the house of Simon the Pharisee, and she comes in there and she wets his feet with her tears, creating a bit of a muddy mess. Apparently, she was crying profusely and she wiped his dusty wet feet, wet with her tears, with her hair. And then she anointed his feet with ointment and kissed them. John is saying, "I'm not worthy to loosen the thong of his sandals. I'm not even worthy to touch his dirty feet, his dirty sandals," which is remarkable.

Of course, this would present an enigma of sorts to his hearers because they've got to go back to the Pharisees and they've got to deliver this message. Now, the term Pharisees that's used here in verse 24 in parentheses, probably a metonym, sort of a catchall term for the Sanhedrin, the council, possibly. Anyway, these things took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing. So John has this interaction, as we said in Unit 5, in the last unit. He has this interaction with representatives sent from the Pharisees. And then the very next day, verse 29, he sees Jesus coming towards him. Jesus is coming out of the Judean wilderness and he says, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" And he gives testimony as to God's word to him about the one who was coming after him. In

this, of course, he's talking about when Jesus came to him to be baptized and what happened and how the Lord had prepared him by telling him, verse 31, "I myself did not know him, but for this purpose I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel." Verse 32, "John bore witness: 'I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. 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.' And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

So John bears witness to the experience that he had with Jesus prior to Jesus' journey into the Judean wilderness for testing. Notice verse 29. Like we said in Unit 5, "The next day." The next day after John has this interaction with representatives from Jerusalem, Jesus walks out of the Judean wilderness. The 40 days of testing and trial are over. And so that's what happens, verse 29. Verse 35, the very next day. In fact, John amplifies it with the adverb "again." "The very next day again John was standing with two of his disciples and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God!'" So the long of the short of it, as we go through these temporal indicators, is that John the apostle earmarks the first few days after Jesus walks out of the Judean wilderness. That's basically John's timestamp on his Gospel. John is standing with two of those disciples. They follow Jesus. They get to meet him. He invites them to his place, and that is where these two disciples, one of them being Andrew, the other arguably John the apostle, they hang out with Jesus and that's the beginning of their association with him.

Look at verse 43, chapter 1. "The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee." Well, he is going to go to Galilee from Judea. That is, at the very least, a full day's journey, possibly two days' journey, which lends itself to 2:1. I'm setting this in context for us. John 2:1. "On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples." So if it takes at best a full day to at least get into the province of Galilee, perhaps two days walking by foot, for slower travelers, maybe three days, that means that John is simply telling this that on the third day, there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee in the sense that Jesus told him that the day they were going to leave to go to Galilee, on that third day, that's when the wedding began, right? And so Jesus has to journey there with these guys because he'd been invited to the wedding. So he's bringing some new friends to this wedding at Cana in Galilee. And of course, at the wedding, they run out of wine and Jesus performs his first sign, his first miracle.

These timestamps that we have in chapter 1 and in chapter 2, the single one that we had in chapter 2 in verse 1 basically work together with verse 13 of chapter 2. The Passover of the Jews was at hand, was near. This is why I said earlier on in this segment that this is Jesus' first year of ministry. So that's the setting and the context for chapter 1 and chapter 2. Jesus walks out in chapter 1. He walks out of the Judean wilderness and John says, "Lamb of God." The next day, John sees Jesus walking and he says, "That's the Lamb of God." And then of course, the very next day, Jesus decides to go to Galilee and he finds Philip and says, "Follow me." Philip finds Nathanael and they have a conversation about angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man. And the day after that, the wedding actually begins. Well, Jesus is going to take anywhere from one to three days to get there, so he's not actually there when the wedding begins. And then you have the next timestamp which is more ambiguous than the prior timestamps that we have in chapters 1 and 2. "The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went to Jerusalem." So that's the first year of ministry. He goes to Jerusalem. He sees sellers of oxen and sheep and pigeons. He sees money-changers and he drives them out. And he says, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade." (2:16)

So now we're ready to correlate with the Synoptics. So what we find is that we have seemingly parallel passages in Mark 11:15-19 and Matthew 21:12-17. There is no parallel in Luke. So we have two other passages to look at. So let's go to Mark 11:15-19. So in Mark 11 starting in verse 15, we read, "And they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. And he was teaching them and saying to them, 'Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of robbers.' And the chief priests and the scribes heard it and were seeking a way to destroy him, for they feared him, because all the crowd was astonished at his teaching. And when evening came they went out of the city."

Of course, in Mark and subsequently in Matthew, we're about to go into Matthew, but here in this context in Mark, this is after Jesus' triumphal entry. This is three and a half years later and Jesus does this thing. So it's as though the Gospels together, all four Gospels highlight this reality that at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, in the first year of his ministry, going up to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover Feast, he makes a whip of cords and he drives out merchandisers and he says, "Don't make my father's house a house of trade" at the very beginning. It's almost like bookends, if you would, right? Towards the end of his ministry, they come to Jerusalem after the triumphal entry. He enters the temple. He begins to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple. He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. He wouldn't allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. He was teaching as he was saying these things and doing these things. "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations. Is it not written? But you have made it (past tense) a den of robbers." Notice in John 2, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade." Here on this end, at the end of it, "You have made it a den of robbers." And of course, the religious authorities want to destroy him. The crowd is astonished at his teaching. They went out of the city. Those are two separate events, therefore: one at the beginning of his ministry and one at the end.

Let's look at Matthew 21 and see what Matthew adds to this. So Matthew 21:12-17. And as it turns out, we have a little bit of more information that basically rounds out the picture. So Matthew supplements Mark. He uses Mark, but then he supplements Mark. "And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons." So far, so good. Parallel. "He said to them, 'It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers.'" That's where the confusion is, right? It says, "You make it a den of robbers." (Verse 13) It sounds like "You're making it a den of robbers." So someone might want to advance the argument. Well, it's not past tense in Matthew, but in point of fact, if Matthew is using Mark, he just changes the tenses. That's significant enough. But the context is subsequent to the triumphal entry, which cannot be overturned by any linguistic strategy or argument. You're dealing with two separate contexts: the beginning of his ministry and the end of it.

He adds more detail, Matthew does. Verse 14. The blind and the lame came to him. He healed them. Verse 15. The chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did. The children were crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" And of course, the chief priests and scribes were indignant, and they said to him, "Do you hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read, 'Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise'?" "And leaving them (verse 17), he went out of the city to Bethany and lodged there."

So to summarize, we have two separate contexts. When you bring John into the picture, you're not looking at a straight line parallel between all of these contexts. John 2:13-22 is not to be seen as identical to the Mark 11 passage or the Matthew 21 passage. Those are two separate events. As it turns out, taking the total tradition together of all four Gospels, the fourth Gospel and Synoptics, you're dealing with Jesus driving out money-changers and people who sell sheep and oxen and pigeons at the beginning of his ministry, and you see him doing it at the end.