

I Will Raise

Jesus brought honor to the Father in word and deed.

JOHN 2:11-23



...with
...without
...as made.
...he was the
...darkness; and
...ed it not.
...from God, whose
...or a witness, to hear
...t, that all men through
...that Light, but was sent to
...of that Light.
...is the true Light, which lighteth
...that cometh into the world.
...as in the world, and the world was
...y him, and the world knew him not.
...he came unto his own, and his own
...eived 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.

JOHN'S WITNESS OF CHRIST

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.

The Greek word *monogenes* underlying only begotten means "only child" (Judg. 11:34; Matt. 23:17; John 1:14; 1 John 3:16). This is an allusion to God's relationship to Israelites in the tabernacle (Exod. 25:22; 33:7). In the past God's presence to His people in the wilderness and the temple. Now God has His presence among His people in the flesh, Jesus Christ (John 1:17). References to God's glory mark back to passages that describe the manifestation of God's presence and glory in theophanies (appearances of God), the tabernacle, or the temple (Exod. 33:22; Num. 14:10; Deut. 5:22).

03

What signs stand out to you when driving on a highway? How do those signs help you make decisions along the way?

While driving, we may see a sign that indicates what is on the next exit. That sign is not the entity it advertises but points beyond itself to the attraction we may want to visit. John wrote his Gospel so readers may believe in Jesus, and that by believing have life in his name (20:31). The signs in John's Gospel point to Jesus being the Messiah, the Son of God.

UNDERSTAND **THE CONTEXT**

The first of Jesus's signs was performed at a wedding in Cana of Galilee. This city was located near His hometown of Nazareth. Apparently, Jesus's mother was close to the family of the couple being married. Mary, Jesus, His disciples, and probably His entire family were invited. At some point in the festivities, the wedding party ran out of wine. It is curious that Mary came to Jesus with this need. It was not His problem. In fact, He asked His mother what the situation had to do with Him. Nevertheless, He quietly performed a miracle, turning water into wine. The headwaiter declared this wine to be superior to what had been served previously. In this simple act, Jesus displayed His glory and His disciples believed in Him (John 2:1-11).

John 2:13-17 describes the scene of Jesus expelling the money changers and merchants from the temple courtyard. The other Gospel writers place the cleansing of the temple after Jesus's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, less than a week before His crucifixion. Some scholars argue these narratives described two separate events—one at the beginning of His earthly ministry and one near the end.

Other commentators point out that John was not interested in presenting a chronological account of Jesus's activities. They contend the incident occurred only once and John included it earlier for theological reasons. Since John's primary purpose was to help readers believe in Jesus, we could understand this placement.

The temple scene ends with Jesus's prophesy that if the temple were destroyed, He would raise it in three days. He was speaking about the resurrection of His crucified body. After His resurrection, the disciples recalled His statement and believed in Him (2:18-23).

JOHN 2:11-23

11 Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in **Cana**^A of Galilee. He revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him. **12** After this, he went down to **Capernaum**,^B together with his mother, his brothers, and his disciples, and they stayed there only a few days. **13** The Jewish **Passover**^C was near, and so Jesus went up to Jerusalem. **14** In the temple he found people selling oxen, sheep, and doves, and he also found the money changers sitting there. **15** After making a whip out of cords, he drove everyone out of the temple with their sheep and oxen. He also poured out the money changers' coins and overturned the tables. **16** He told those who were selling doves, "Get these things out of here! Stop turning **my Father's house**^D into a marketplace!" **17** And his disciples remembered that it is written: Zeal for your house will consume me. **18** So the Jews replied to him, "What sign will you show us for doing these things?" **19** Jesus answered, "**Destroy this temple**,^E and I will raise it up in three days." **20** Therefore the Jews said, "This temple took forty-six years to build, and will you raise it up in three days?" **21** But he was speaking about the temple of his body. **22** So when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the statement Jesus had made. **23** While he was in Jerusalem during the Passover Festival, many believed in his name when they saw the signs he was doing.

Key Words

A. The specific location of Cana is unknown. One traditional site stands about four miles north of Nazareth, though the site preferred by archaeologists is a few miles further north.

B. Town on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. It was the home of several of Jesus's disciples and served as the base for His earthly ministry.

C. The Jewish feast recalling God's deliverance of the Jews from Egypt during the exodus. See also Exodus 12:1-51 and Deuteronomy 16:1-8.

D. In the Old Testament, this referred to an inheritance from a father or a specific people group. However, Jesus referred to the temple as His Father's house. This underscored His unique relationship with God the Father as God the Son.

E. Jesus was pointing to His death and resurrection (vv. 21-22). The people, however, interpreted His words in terms of the literal temple, which had been undergoing expansion work under Herod the Great and his successors since 20 BC.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

1. GLORY SHOWN

(JOHN 2:11-12)

Believers should see Jesus working even in the smaller things.

How does Jesus reveal His glory to us today?

2. WORSHIP EXPECTED

(JOHN 2:13-17)

Believers must worship God in Spirit and truth.

What are some ways people show disregard for worship today?

How does proper worship help us maintain a right relationship with God?

3. SIGN REMEMBERED

(JOHN 2:18-23)

Believers should worship Jesus as the Son of God.

What was the significance of Jesus's pointing to the temple as a metaphor for His resurrected body?

How does the resurrection serve as a sign of Jesus's glory and authority?

APPLY THE TEXT

As a group, discuss ways of honoring Jesus to a greater degree within the group.

What barriers need to be removed within the group so others can believe in Jesus as well?

KEY DOCTRINE: God the Son

He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. (See John 20:16,27.)

BIBLE SKILL: Examine Old Testament passages quoted in the New Testament.

John pointed to Psalm 69:9 when the disciples reflected on the removal of the merchants and money changers. Read Psalm 69 and note other places the Psalm is quoted in the New Testament. How do the other quotes relate to the point being made in John 2 if any? How does reading Psalm 69 give a deeper understanding of the events taking place in John 2?

DID YOU KNOW? The seven signs in John's Gospel that point to Jesus's identity are (1) turning water into wine (2:1-11); (2) healing an official's son (4:46-54); (3) healing the paralyzed man at the pool of Bethesda (5:1-15); (4) feeding the 5,000 (6:5-14); (5) walking on water (6:16-21); (6) healing the man born blind (9:1-7); and (7) raising Lazarus from the dead (11:1-45).

TALK IT OUT

Read John 2:19. How did the death and resurrection of Jesus bring honor and glory to God the Father?

From our vantage point in history, we can look back and understand what Jesus was saying in John 2:19. The religious leaders thought Jesus was talking about the physical temple in Jerusalem. It had taken many years to rebuild the temple after the Babylonians had destroyed the one Solomon built. The thought that Jesus could rebuild the temple in three days was unfathomable.

In what ways do people continue to misunderstand the teachings of Jesus today?

The specific word Jesus used for “temple” referred to the holy of holies or the place of God’s divine manifestation. Since the religious leaders had turned the temple into a place devoid of God’s presence, Jesus’s use of the word was a reference to Himself, the presence of God in their midst. When He said “raise it up,” He literally meant to rise from the dead. The Jewish religious leaders completely missed what Jesus said.

How can John 2:19 lead you to worship Jesus today?

Recite John 2:19 each day this week and praise God for His gift of salvation.

Prayer Requests



DAILY EXPLORATION

Day 1: JOHN 2:11-12

Circle the word “signs.”

Jesus and His family attended a wedding in Cana of Galilee (2:1). Mary told Jesus that the groom’s family had run out of wine, expecting Him to do something to remedy the situation. Nearby were six stone jars; each held twenty to thirty gallons. After Jesus had the servants fill the jars with water, He turned it to wine. Not knowing where the wine had come from, the headwaiter commended the groom for serving the better wine this late in the week-long celebration.

This, the first of Jesus’s signs, pointed to His superiority over Jewish law. For Jews, seven was the number of completion; six represented incompleteness. The six unfilled purification jars (2:6) symbolized the inadequacy of what had become essentially Jewish rituals. Turning the jars of water into wine indicated Jesus would be offering something new—and it would be better and more satisfying. The sign revealed Jesus’s glory, His ability to do the impossible, and His compassion for people in helpless situations. Because of what Jesus had done, his disciples believed in him. Too often, we want to see great miracles to bolster our faith. But God works even in the smaller things. He involves Himself in the ordinary aspects of our lives, yet with extraordinary results.

How does Jesus reveal His glory to us today?

Day 2: JOHN 2:13-14

Notice what was happening in the temple.

The number of people visiting Jerusalem for the Passover celebration would have been about half a million. Having animals available to offer as sacrifices was convenient for those who had traveled a long way. Jewish men were expected to pay a temple tax of a half-shekel each year (Ex. 30:13). This tax could not be paid in foreign currencies, which often had the images of pagan rulers. The money had to be exchanged for the appropriate temple currency. Thus, Jesus was not offended that money changers were exchanging currencies. He was enraged because people had turned His Father’s house into a marketplace. Rather than hearing the praises and prayers of sincere worshipers, those at the temple were forced to hear the constant bleating of sacrificial animals, coins clanging, and people haggling. This was anything but worshipful.

Amplifying the offense, the merchants set up their tables in the court of the Gentiles. This courtyard was as close as Gentiles were allowed to get to the altar and holy of holies. Merchants were thus prohibiting a whole group of people from having a genuine worship experience at the temple. Mark, in recording this event, stated that Jesus said, “Is it not written, my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations?” (Mark 11:17, emphasis added).

How have you seen people show disregard for worship today?

Day 3: John 2:15-17

Reflect on the proper focus of worship.

Jesus responded with righteous indignation. The term *drove* implies an element of force but not necessarily physical violence. Nor should the word *everyone* be taken to include the worshipers, since this term is associated with the phrase *their sheep and oxen*. Totally disrupting their business, Jesus forcefully ran off the beasts and birds, the merchants and money changers. Jesus wanted to remove all barriers that would keep people from experiencing genuine worship. Jesus's disciples did not participate in His actions against the sellers of animals or the money changers. Perhaps they were stunned into being silent spectators. Still, they *remembered* the Scripture about how *zeal* for God's *house* would *consume* Him (Ps. 69:9).

Believers must worship God in Spirit and truth. The purpose of the sacrificial system ended with the ultimate sacrifice of the Lamb of God who died for our sins. As we worship God, believers demonstrate sincerity by focusing on Jesus rather than trying to make worship conform to what pleases us.

How does proper worship help you maintain a right relationship with God?

Day 4: John 2:18-21

Highlight verse 19.

Wanting some validation of Jesus's authority to do what He had done, *the Jews* demanded to know what *sign* Jesus could offer to justify doing these things. The term *sign* did not mean they expected a miracle. Instead, they wanted validation for His authority to commandeer the courtyard and expel the merchants. The phrase *will you show us* implied their belief that they alone had the right to determine what went on in the temple.

Jesus responded with what Jews called a *mashal*, meaning a riddle or parable. The riddle confused those who heard His words. Those who read them in John's Gospel, though, understood what Jesus meant—especially since John clarified Jesus's response. Jesus said that if they, the Jews, would *destroy this temple*, He would *raise it up in three days*. They were bewildered by this statement because they took Jesus's words literally, as if He were speaking of the temple where they were standing. Jesus, though, was referring to his body, which would be raised from the dead. The Jews could not fathom either the destruction of the temple or its magical reconstruction in three days. Certainly, they were not considering His death and resurrection.

What was the significance of Jesus pointing to the temple as a metaphor for His resurrected body?

Day 5: John 2:21-23

Think about the connection between worship and the words of Jesus.

After Jesus's resurrection, the disciples remembered what Jesus said in this encounter and *believed* both His words and *the Scripture*. John did not specify which Scripture; many scholars think he was referring to Psalm 69:9, mentioned in verse 17. As a result, many believed in his name. To believe in Jesus's name meant much more than simply understanding that He was Jesus of Nazareth. The way He taught Scripture with authority and the power of His miraculous acts convinced them that He was the Christ, the Son of God (Mark 1:22,27).

At Cana, Jesus had turned water into wine. He replaced the old with the new and better. Similarly, Jesus highlighted the inadequacies of ancient Jewish rituals. He replaced these with a faith system based on grace. His sacrifice on the cross as the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29) rendered the old sacrificial system obsolete.

Believers should worship Jesus as the Son of God. His death and resurrection convince us that He alone is the Christ and is worthy of worship. If we truly have experienced saving faith, the natural response requires us to praise Him with our voices and glorify Him in our lives.

How does the resurrection serve as a sign of Jesus's glory and authority?

APPLY THE TEXT

Jesus's resurrection affirmed His authority. List ways you can recognize His identity and authority in your own life. How do the things you listed impact how you worship Jesus? With whom will you share what you are learning about the authority of Jesus?

