

John 2-4, Ep 189: CFM

John 2: Water into wine, Jesus goes to Jerusalem at Passover, His prophecy of his resurrection

1. The wedding of Cana – the first sign in John’s gospel (John 2.1-11).
 - a. Marriage in Cana of Galilee (John 2.1).¹
 - b. Six waterpots of stone (John 2.6).²
 - c. “Two or three firkins” (John 2.6).³
 - d. This is the beginning of signs/miracles that Jesus did in Cana of Galilee (John 2.11).⁴
 - e. What was the sign?
 - i. Six waterpots – mortality⁵
 - ii. Stone pots – The Old Law
 - iii. Water into wine – Jesus makes all things new (Rev. 21.5).⁶
 - iv. Jesus makes filthy water into something amazing⁷

¹ The wedding took place at Cana in Galilee— another link with the immediately preceding verses, since Nathanael was from Cana (21:2). Of the various sites proposed by archaeologists, the most likely is [Khirbet Qana](#), an uninhabited ruin about nine miles north of Nazareth, and lying in the Plain of Asochis (Jos., *Vita* 86, 207). D.A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, Eerdmans, 1991.

² ἦσαν δὲ ἐκεῖ ὑδρίαί λίθιναι ἕξ κείμεναι κατὰ τὸν καθαρισμὸν τῶν Ἰουδαίων χωροῦσαι ἀνὰ μετρητὰς δύο ἢ τρεῖς “And there were placed there six stone vessels according to the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three measures each” (John 2.6 my translation). The six water jars were made of stone, because stone, being more impervious than earthenware, did not itself contract uncleanness. They were therefore the more suitable for ceremonial washing. In the context of a wedding feast, perhaps the ritual washing of certain utensils and of guests’ hands is especially in view (cf. Mk. 7:3–4; for the regulations on washing cf. SB 1. 695–705), but if so John sees this as representative of the broader question of the place of all ceremonial washings (cf. 3:25). Their purpose provides a clue to one of the meanings of the story: the water represents the old order of Jewish law and custom, which Jesus was to replace with something better (cf. 1:16). Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, p. 136.

³ Each jar held two or three ‘measures’ (metrētēs), each measure the equal of eight or nine (imperial) gallons. The pots together held, roughly, between one hundred and one hundred and fifty gallons (between 500 and 750 litres). Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, p. 136 electronic version.

⁴ Ταύτην ἐποίησεν τὴν ἀρχὴν τῶν σημείων ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἐν Κανὰ τῆς Γαλιλαίας καὶ ἐφάνηρωσεν τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ. “This was the beginning of the signs which Jesus made in Cana of Galilee, and he showed forth his glory, and his disciples trusted in him” (John 2.11 my translation).

⁵ Alonzo Gaskill, *The Lost Language of Symbolism*, Deseret Book, 2003, p. 122. See also: Richard Draper, *Opening the Seven Seals: The Visions of John the Revelator*, Deseret Book, 1991, p. 121; Bullinger, *Number in Scripture: Its Supernatural Design and Spiritual Significance*, London, Eyre & Spottiswoode (Bible Warehouse) Ltd, 123, 150. Bullinger’s commentary is insightful. He mentions that Jesus is accused six times of having a devil, six words used for man in the Bible, as well as six names of Satan. You can read a copy of Bullinger’s book online [here](#).

⁶ At the same time, this shorter section (2:1–4:54) is bounded not only by paired references to Cana, but by a thematic wholeness. These three chapters are organized to convey what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:17: ‘the old has gone, the new has come!’ ‘The three chapters present the replacement of the old purifications by the wine of the kingdom of God, the old temple by the new in the risen Lord, an exposition of new birth for new creation, a contrast between the water of Jacob’s well and the living water from Christ, and the worship of Jerusalem and Gerizim with worship “in Spirit and in truth”’ (Dodd, IFG, p. 297). D.A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, Eerdmans, 1991.

⁷ See: [Day, John 2, Water into Wine](#)

- f. [Frederick Farrar](#) made this comment about this miracle: One is its divine unselfishness. His ministry is to be a ministry of joy and peace; His sanction is to be given not to a crushing asceticism, but to a genial innocence; His approval, not to a compulsory celibacy, but to a sacred union. ***He who, to appease His own sore hunger, would not turn the stones of the wilderness into bread, gladly exercises, for the sake of others, His transforming power;*** and but six or seven days afterwards, relieves the perplexity and sorrow of a humble wedding feast by turning water into wine. The first miracle of Moses was, in stern retribution, to turn the river of a guilty nation into blood; the first of Jesus to fill the water-jars of an innocent family with wine. And the other is its symbolic character. Like nearly all the miracles of Christ, it combines the characteristics of a work of mercy, an emblem, and a prophecy. The world gives its best first, and afterwards all the dregs and bitterness; but ***Christ came to turn the lower into the richer and sweeter***, the Mosaic law into the perfect law of liberty, the baptism of John into the baptism with the Holy Ghost and with fire, the self-denials of a painful isolation into the self-denials of a happy home, sorrow and sighing into hope and blessing, and water into wine. And thus the "holy estate" which Christ adorned and beautified with His presence and first miracle in Cana of Galilee, foreshadows the mystical union between Christ and His Church; and the common element which he thus miraculously changed becomes a type of our life on earth transfigured and ennobled by the anticipated joys of heaven -- a type of that wine which He shall drink new with us in the kingdom of God, at the marriage supper of the Lamb.⁸
2. Jesus went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples (John 2.12).
- a. "His brethren" (John 2.12). The most natural way of reading this is that Jesus had brothers, sons of Mary and Joseph.⁹

⁸ Frederic W. Farrar, [The Life of Christ](#), Cumorah Foundation, 2008, p. 122, emphasis added.

⁹ The expression, "his brethren" has been variously understood. The most natural way of taking it is to understand children of Joseph and Mary. This is called the "Helvidian" view (from Helvidius, a fourth century theologian who advocated it). The expression occurs several times in the Synoptic Gospels, and never with any qualification such as would be expected if the words were to bear any other meaning. The view is supported by appealing to the statements that Joseph "knew her not till she had brought forth a son" (Matt. 1 : 25) and that Jesus was Mary's "firstborn son" (Luke 2 : 7). The most natural interpretation of both these passages is that Joseph and Mary had children after the birth of Jesus. **However, in the second century of our era the idea of Mary's perpetual virginity appeared.** Where this was held the possibility of any other children was, of course, excluded. Two alternative explanations of "his brethren" were proposed. One saw them as the children of Joseph by a former marriage (the view of Epiphanius) and the other regarded them as Jesus' cousins (the view of Jerome). This last-mentioned view is almost universally rejected nowadays (except by some Roman Catholics). Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, Eerdmans, 1971, p. 187. The 2nd century Church fathers **Irenaeus** and **Justin Martyr**, though mentioning the virgin birth, **nowhere affirmed the view that Mary was a perpetual virgin.** The idea is first raised in an apocryphal text called the [Protoevangelium of James](#), composed in the second half of the 2nd century: here Mary remains a life-long virgin, Joseph is an old man who marries her without physical desire, and the brothers of Jesus mentioned

3. Jesus goes to Jerusalem and overthrows the moneychangers (John 2.13-17).
 - a. "The changers of money" (John 2.14).¹⁰
 - i. Tyrian coinage¹¹
 - b. "Make not my Father's house a house of merchandise!" (John 2.16).¹²
4. Jesus tells of his sign, his death and resurrection (John 2.18-22).
 - a. "Forty and six years¹³ was this temple in building, and will you rear it up in three days?" (John 2.20).¹⁴

in the canonical gospels are explained as Joseph's sons by an earlier marriage. See: Bernhard Lohse, [A Short History of Christian Doctrine](#), Fortress Press, 1966, p. 200-202.

¹⁰ The cattle, sheep and doves were used in the sacrificial worship of the temple. Especially for worshippers coming from a distance, it was a convenience and a service to be able to purchase them on site instead of having to bring them from afar. At one time the animal merchants set up their stalls across the Kidron Valley on the slopes of the Mount of Olives, but at this point they were in the temple courts, doubtless in the Court of the Gentiles (the outermost court). Others who were sitting at tables exchanging money were also providing a service. People from all over the Roman Empire gathered to Jerusalem for the high festivals, bringing many different coins with them; **but the temple tax, to be paid by every conscientious Jewish male of twenty years of age or over, had to be deposited in Tyrian coinage (because of the high purity of its silver).** This annual half-shekel (to use the language of the Old Testament) was equal to half a Tyrian stater or tetradrachm, and so two Jews often joined together to pay the tax in one coin (cf. Mt. 17:27; NBD, p.792). The money-changers converted money to the approved currency, charging a percentage for their service. The tables of the money-changers were not set up all year round, but only around the time when the temple tax was collected. In Jerusalem, this was from 25 Adar on (the lunar month before Nisan; cf. Mishnah *Shekalim* 1:1, 3)... **There is no evidence that the animal merchants and money-changers or the priestly authorities who allowed them to use the outer court were corrupt companions in graft.** Jesus' complaint is not that they are guilty of sharp business practices and should therefore reform their ethical life, **but that they should not be in the temple area at all.** How dare you turn my Father's house into a market! he exclaims. Instead of solemn dignity and the murmur of prayer, there is the bellowing of cattle and the bleating of sheep. Instead of brokenness and contrition, holy adoration and prolonged petition, there is noisy commerce. It is in this sense that Bauckham is right: what he calls 'Jesus' demonstration in the temple 'was an' attack on the whole of the financial arrangements for the sacrificial system', and thus an enormous threat to the priestly authorities. Carson, p. 139-140, emphasis added. Morris concurs, writing "In the Markan story the traders are stigmatized as making the temple "a den of robbers", but here the objection is not to their dishonesty, but to their presence. Jesus is objecting to the practice, and not merely to the way it is conducted." Morris, p. 195.

¹¹ The "changers of money" plied their trade because it was permitted to make money offerings in the temple only in the approved currency. Men from other countries would bring all sorts of coinage with them and this had to be changed into acceptable coinage. An astonishing number of commentators affirm that the reason for the unacceptability of other currencies was that the coins bore the Emperor's image or some heathen symbol. But, as Israel Abrahams long ago pointed out, [Tyrian coinage](#) was not only permitted but expressly prescribed (Mishnah, *Bekh.* 8:7), and this bore heathen symbols. He thinks that the reason for the prescription was that this coinage was "of so exact a weight and so good an alloy". Whatever the reason, men had to change their money before making their offerings and this required that money-changers should be at work somewhere. Leon Morris, [The Gospel According to John](#), Eerdmans, 1971, p. 194.

¹² Bernard says that Jesus uses "my Father" 27 times in John, 16 times in Matthew and 4 times in Luke. The temple is often called "the house of God" in the Old Testament. **Jesus' words are a claim to deity.** Morris, p. 195.

¹³ Josephus says that the work was begun in the eighteenth year of Herod's reign (*Ant.* xv, 380). This would be 20-19 B.C., and if the Jews' statement is accurate the date of this incident will be A.D. 27 or 28.

¹⁴ The Jews explode in an incredulous question. Their temple was a magnificent structure. Herod had commenced its rebuilding partly to satisfy his lust for building, and partly in an attempt to stand well with his Jewish subjects, among whom he was very unpopular. Work was still going on at his death, and for that matter, for long after. The temple was not completed until A.D. 64. The Jews accordingly mean here that work has been proceeding for forty-

- b. “But he spake of the temple of his body” (John 2.21).¹⁵
- 5. Many believe on his name (John 2.23-25).¹⁶

John 3: Jesus and Nicodemus, John the Baptist’s witness of Jesus continues

1. Jesus and Nicodemus (John 3.1-21).
 - a. “A man of the Pharisees... a ruler of the Jews” (John 3.1). Nicodemus was a ἄρχων τῶν Ἰουδαίων, a chief ruler among the Jews.¹⁷
 - b. Nicodemus comes to Jesus “by night” (John 3.2).¹⁸
 - c. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be **born again**,¹⁹ he cannot see the kingdom of God (John 3.3).²⁰

six years. The fact that it was still not complete would heighten their amazement at a statement which they understood to mean that Jesus claimed the power to erect its like in a mere three days. Morris, p. 200.

¹⁵ According to the testimony of John, all this was said near the beginning of Jesus’ ministry, which would make this declaration his first recorded prophecy of his death and resurrection. Jesus knew from the commencement of his ministry what the outcome would be. Kelly Ogden and Andrew Skinner, *Verse by Verse: The Four Gospels*, Deseret Book, 2006, p. 116.

¹⁶ These verses prepare the way for the discourse with Nicodemus, who will be presented as one of the many at Jerusalem who had come to believe in Jesus. Raymond Brown, *The Gospel According to John, I-XII*, Anchor Bible, 1966, p. 126.

¹⁷ Literally "a ruler." Nicodemus almost certainly belonged to the highest governing body of the Jewish people composed of priests (Sadducees), scribes (Pharisees), and lay elders of the aristocracy. Its seventy members were presided over by the high priest. Brown, p. 130.

¹⁸ Some take a dim view of Nicodemus here. John Taylor was one with this view. He said, “I see sometimes a disposition to try to ignore some of the laws which God has introduced...People want to slip round a corner, or creep out in some way. There is something very creepy about it. There was a man in former times we are told, came to Jesus by night. His name was Nicodemus. He was one of those persons who did not like the daylight. I have known some people who would want to be baptized in the evening, or get into some corner that they might not be seen. Well, there is not much to such folks. Jesus was very unpopular...in His day. Nicodemus was a prominent man among the Jews, and he thought it might injure his reputation if he was seen visiting that Nazarene, to get instruction from Him, so he crawled in at night. Jesus talked quite plainly to him, as you can read for yourselves; but we find some folks of a similar kind now creeping around. They have not the manhood to stand true to their colors and to their God.” John Taylor, *Journal of Discourses*, 25: 310. Raymond Brown notes that John uses this as a symbol. He says, “Darkness and night symbolize the realm of evil, untruth, and ignorance (see ix 4, xi 10). In xiii 30 Judas leaves the light to go out into the night of Satan; Nicodemus, on the other hand, comes out of the darkness into the light (v. 19-21). On a purely natural level, the nighttime visit may have been a stealthy expedient “for fear of the Jews (xix 38); or it may reflect the rabbinic custom of staying up at night to study the Law.” Raymond Brown, *The Gospel According to John, I-XII*, Anchor Bible, 1966, p. 130.

¹⁹ Read the fifth chapter of Alma for the recitation of the tests that tell a person whether he has been born again and how he knows. You know if you have been born again, or you know the degree to which you have been born again; it is the measure to which you keep the commandments and feed the Lord’s sheep and strengthen your brethren. In other words, it is the measure of your involvement in the things of the Spirit, in the things of the Church. Bruce R. McConkie, Bruce R. McConkie, “Be Ye Converted,” address given at the BYU First Stake Quarterly Conference (11 Feb 1968), as cited in Larry E. Dahl, “[The Doctrine of Christ: 2 Nephi 31–32](#),” in *Second Nephi, The Doctrinal Structure, Book of Mormon Symposium Series*, Volume 3, ed. Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr. (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1989), 367.

²⁰ ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι ἐὰν μὴ τις γεννηθῆ ἄνωθεν οὐ δύναται ἰδεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ “Jesus answered and he said to him, truly truly I say to you, except someone is born **from above**, he is unable to see the Kingdom of God” (my translation). The King James takes ἄνωθεν as “again,” which is appropriate, but the Greek can render this word as both “again” and as coming “from above.” Raymond Brown

- i. Being born from above or born again is an important aspect of living the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Many apostles have taught this in detail in our dispensation.²¹
- d. A change of heart is necessary to enter into God's kingdom – Joseph Smith.²²
- e. "Born of water and of the Spirit" (John 3.5).²³
- f. "The wind bloweth where it listeth" (John 3.8).²⁴ We have a pun here, as the Greek word for "wind" and "spirit" (*pneuma*) is interchangeable.²⁵

explains, "The Greek *anōthen* means both "again" and "from above," and the double meaning is used here as part of the technique of misunderstanding. Although in verse 4 Nicodemus takes Jesus to have meant "again," Jesus' primary meaning in verse 3 was "from above." This is indicated from the parallel in John 3.31, as well as from the two other Johannine uses of *anōthen* (see John 19.11, 23). **Such a misunderstanding is possible only in Greek; we know of no Hebrew or Aramaic word of similar meaning which would have this spatial and temporal ambiguity.**" Brown, p. 130, emphasis added. Bart Ehrman cites this as an instance where a later author used this conversation and inserted something Jesus never would have said, as he spoke Aramaic. Ehrman writes, "In the Gospel of John, chapter 3, Jesus has a famous conversation with Nicodemus in which he says, 'You must be born again.' The Greek word translated 'again' actual has two meanings: it can mean not only 'a second time' but also 'from above.' Whenever it is used elsewhere in John, it means 'from above' (John 19:11, 23). That is what Jesus appears to mean in John 3 when he speaks with Nicodemus: a person must be born from above in order to have eternal life in heaven above. Nicodemus misunderstands, though, and thinks Jesus intends the other meaning of the word, that he has to be born a second time. 'How can I crawl back into my mother's womb?' he asks, out of some frustration. Jesus corrects him: he is not talking about a second physical birth, but a heavenly birth, from above. This conversation with Nicodemus is predicated on the circumstance that a certain Greek word has two meanings (a double entendre). Absent the double entendre, the conversation makes little sense. The problem is this: Jesus and this Jewish leader in Jerusalem would not have been speaking Greek, but Aramaic. But the Aramaic word for 'from above' does not also mean 'second time.' This is a double entendre that works only in Greek. So it looks as though this conversation could not have happened—at least not as it is described in the Gospel of John." Bart Ehrman, *Jesus, Interrupted*, HarperOne, 2010, p. 155. A rebuttal to Ehrman's argument can be read [here](#).

²¹ Elder D. Todd Christofferson, "[Born Again](#)," *Ensign*, May 2008. See also: Elder James E. Faust, "[Born Again](#)," *Ensign*, May 2001.

²² "It is one thing to see the kingdom of God, and another thing to enter into it. We must have a change of heart to see the kingdom of God, and subscribe the articles of adoption to enter therein." Joseph Smith, *History of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 7 vols. 6:58.

²³ "This eternal truth settles the question of all men's religion. A man may be saved, after the judgment, in the terrestrial kingdom, or in the telestial kingdom, **but he can never see the celestial kingdom of God, without being born of water and the Spirit.** He may receive a glory like unto the moon, (i.e. of which the light of the moon is typical), or a star, (i.e. of which the light of the stars is typical), but he can never come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general assembly and Church of the Firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, unless he becomes as a little child, and is taught by the Spirit of God." Joseph Smith, *History of the Church* 1:283, emphasis added.

²⁴ τὸ πνεῦμα ὅπου θέλει πνεῖ καὶ τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ ἀκούεις ἀλλ' οὐκ οἶδας πόθεν ἔρχεται καὶ ποῦ ὑπάγει· οὕτως ἐστὶν πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος "The **wind/spirit** blows/breathes where it intends to, and you *can* hear the sound of it, but you cannot know from where it **comes** or where it **goes**. Thus in this manner is everyone that is born out of the **Spirit.**" (John 3.8, my translation).

²⁵ The interpretation of this verse is complicated by the fact that the word which has been uniformly translated "spirit" in its occurrences hitherto in this chapter **has more than one meaning**. In Greek (as, for that matter, in several other languages) the one word may mean "spirit" or "breath" or "wind." The spirit of a man is that immaterial principle of life within him. It was a matter of observation for men in early days that when the breath ceases the life ceases also. What more natural, then, than to apply the same word to both? And, since wind is

- i. The spirit and a testimony is like wind in many ways.²⁶
 - 1. We see the effects of wind.
 - 2. We can feel the wind.
 - 3. The wind itself is not perceived with the eye.
- g. And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven. (John 3.13).²⁷
- h. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up (John 3.14).²⁸ See also: Numbers 21.6-9; 1 Nephi 17.41; 2 Nephi 25.20; [Alma 33.19-20](#); [Alma 37.46](#).²⁹
- i. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. (John 3.16-17).³⁰

nothing more than a lot of breath moving in a hurry, it was equally natural to use the word of the wind. The word used here might then mean "wind" or it might mean "Spirit." Leon Morris, p. 220.

²⁶ "He who has a testimony does not know exactly of what it is made, or where it came from. He cannot measure it. He cannot weigh it. He cannot count it. He can only feel it. **That is the testimony, and it is like a breeze or the dew.** We were in Upper Galilee the other day...It is a warm day. You stand perspiring in the warmth and all at once there is a little cooling wind or breeze. You feel it, a pleasant cooling sensation. You do not know from where it comes, but all at once you are cooled and refreshed and that is like the Spirit when a man is born again. 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.' (John 3:8.)" President Kimball, *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, edited by Edward L. Kimball, Bookcraft, 1982, p. 67.

²⁷ E. M. Sidebottom, "The Ascent and Descent of the Son of Man in the Gospel of St. John," ATR 39 (1957), 115-22, points out that only in John is the Son of Man portrayed as descending. Enoch (e.g., xlviii 2--6) portrays the Son of Man as pre-existent in heaven (and this seems to be implied in John), but does not speak of his descent. Brown, p. 133. Morris writes, "No man has ever ascended into heaven (Prov. 30 : 4). But He has come down from there." Morris, p. 223. This passage can be an indication of John's knowledge of Jesus' pre-existent and exalted state.

²⁸ There are a couple of ways to read this passage. One is to read this as "just as the serpent was raised up, so shall Jesus be raised up (on the cross)." Another way to read this passage is that the serpent Moses raised up was a symbol of Jesus Christ. I like both readings, but know of some LDS commentators that disagree with me on the second interpretation. Here is Friedrich Weinreb on the serpent/messiah connection: "The serpent has something to offer man... It has been pointed out that the word for serpent in Hebrew *nachash*, spelled 50-8-300, has as its total 358. And that is also the sum-total of the components of the word Messiah, in Hebrew *mashiach*, spelled 40-300-10-8. So Serpent and Messiah have the same sum-total of components; they have, in a sense, the same value in essence." Friedrich Weinreb, *Roots of the Bible: An Ancient View for a New Outlook*, Merlin Books, 2013, p. 94.

²⁹ Note that in Alma 33 we see temple elements: a symbol of Christ requiring attention, the anastasis, or resurrection/standing in the presence of God (Alma 33.22), coming to the place of judgment (Alma 33.22), a tree springing up into everlasting life (Alma 33.23) that is "in you."

³⁰ This could be John's reflecting on the speech Jesus gave. This could also be Jesus' own words, it is difficult to tell due to the way Greek reflected quoted speech at this time. Morris explains, "All are agreed that from time to time in this Gospel we have the rneiciations of the Evangelist. **But it is difficult to know where these begin and end.** In the first century there were no devices such as inverted commas to show the precise limits of quoted speech. The result is that we are always left to the probabilities, and we must work out for ourselves where a speech or a quotation ends. In this passage Jesus begins to speak in v. 10, but John does not tel1 us where this speech ends. The dialogue form simply ceases. Most agree that somewhere we pass into the reflections of the Evangelist. Perhaps the dividing point comes at the end of verse 15. The sentence which ends there has a reference to "the Son of man", an expression used by Jesus only in all four Gospels. We are on fairly safe ground in maintaining that

- i. The Christian teaching of God's love.³¹
 - j. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. (John 3.21).
- 2. John testifies of Jesus (John 3.22-36).
 - a. Aenon near Salim (John 3.23). Where is this place?³²
 - b. Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. (John 3.25). What is this dispute?³³
 - c. He must increase, but I must decrease (John 3.26-30).³⁴

John 4: Jesus and the Samaritan Woman, Jesus heals the official's son

- 1. Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (John 4.1-42).

these are His words. But in verse 16 the death on the cross appears to be spoken of as past, and there are stylistic indications that John is speaking for himself. It would seem that the Evangelist, as he records Jesus' words about His death, is led to some reflections of his own on the same subject." Morris, p. 228.

³¹ Joseph Smith taught this concerning God's love: "While one portion of the human race is judging and condemning the other without mercy, the Great Parent of the universe looks upon the whole of the human family with a fatherly care and paternal regard; He views them as His offspring, and without any of those contracted feelings that influence the children of men, causes 'His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.'" Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, 4:595; from "Baptism for the Dead," an editorial published in *Times and Seasons*, Apr. 15, 1842, p. 759; Joseph Smith was the editor of the periodical. See: [Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith, chapter 2](#).

Jews believed that God loved Israel, but no passage appears to be cited in which any Jewish writer maintains that God loved the world. It is a distinctively Christian idea that God's love is wide enough to embrace all mankind. His love is not confined to any national group or any spiritual elite. It is a love which proceeds from the fact that He is love (I John 4 : 8, 16). It is His nature to love. He loves men because He is the kind of God He is. Morris, p. 229. I would disagree with Morris on this point by arguing that Jonah can be seen as God's love toward those outside of Israel. But others will disagree with me on this point.

³² The name is from the Aramaic plural of the word for "spring," while "Salim" reflects the Semitic root for "peace." There are three important traditions for localizing these sites. Brown, p. 151. Raymond Brown cites 3 possible locations: [Perea](#) in the Transjordan, in the northern Jordan valley, on the west bank some eight miles south of [Scythopolis](#) (Bethshan), and in Samaria, 4 miles east-southeast of Shechem.

³³ The particular incident which triggered off John's statement was a dispute his disciples had with a Jew about purifying. ***This verse is compressed to the point of obscurity.*** A little light may be shed on it however, by the Qumran scrolls. These show us that there were Essene-type sects with a deep interest in ceremonial purifications. If the suggestions that John the Baptist had had contacts with such a sect and had broken with it are well grounded, such a dispute as the one mentioned here would be very natural. It is also a natural touch that the dispute concerned John's disciples and not John himself. They would probably be more aggressive than their master, and possibly more accessible for such a dispute. Brown, p. 288.

³⁴ "John's supporters were concerned at the success of One whom they regarded in some measure as a rival to their beloved teacher...John's reply to his ardent followers constitutes a sublime instance of self-abnegation...In such a reply, under the existent conditions, is to be found the spirit of true greatness, and of a humility that could rest only on a conviction of divine assurance to the Baptist as to himself and the Christ. In more than one sense was John great among all who are born of women. He had entered upon his work when sent of God so to do; he realized that his work had been in a measure superseded, and he patiently awaited his release, in the meantime continuing in the ministry, directing souls to his Master. The beginning of the end was near. He was soon seized and thrown into a dungeon; where, as shall be shown, he was beheaded to sate the vengeance of a corrupt woman whose sins he had boldly denounced." James E. Talmage, [Jesus the Christ](#), p. 87.

- a. Going through Samaria (John 4.5).³⁵
- b. “Living Water” ὕδωρ ζῶν (John 4.10-11).
 - i. President Nelson taught the power of this living water when he said: “Saints can be happy under every circumstance. We can feel joy even while having a bad day, a bad week, or even a bad year! My dear brothers and sisters, **the joy we feel has little to do with the circumstances of our lives and everything to do with the focus of our lives.** When the focus of our lives is on God’s plan of salvation... and Jesus Christ and His gospel, we can feel joy regardless of what is happening—or not happening—in our lives. **Joy comes from and because of Him.** He is the source of all joy. We feel it at Christmastime when we sing, “Joy to the world, the Lord is come.” And we can feel it all year round. For Latter-day Saints, Jesus Christ is joy!”³⁶
 - ii. Elder Faust gives five suggestions for bringing the living water into our lives.³⁷
 1. Prayer
 2. Service
 3. Obedience
 4. An acknowledgment of God’s divinity
 5. Scripture study
- c. “The well is deep” (John 4.11). Farrar notes that Jacob’s well was 100 feet deep.³⁸
- d. The woman asks Jesus regarding the correct temple: Gerizim or Jerusalem? (John 4.20).³⁹

³⁵ "...**this 'road was proverbially unsafe for Jewish passengers,** either returning from Jerusalem or going to it, **for it passed through the border districts where the feuds of the two rival peoples raged most fiercely.** The paths among the hills... leading into Samaria, had often been wet with the blood of Jew or Samaritan, for they were the scene of constant raids and forays ... pilgrims from Galilee to the feasts were often molested, and sometimes even attacked and scattered, with more or less slaughter; each act of violence bringing speedy reprisals from the population of Jerusalem and Judea, on the one side, and of Galilee on the other; the villages of the border districts, as most easily reached, bearing the brunt of the feud, in smoking cottages, and indiscriminate massacre of young and old.' Why, then, did Jesus feel compelled to go through Samaria?... We must conclude, however, that Jesus, though merely en route to Galilee for a greater work, chose to utilize his time and to bear witness of his divinity to the Samaritans." Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 4 vols. Deseret Book, 1979-1981, 1: 494.

³⁶ Russell M. Nelson, “Joy and Spiritual Survival,” *Ensign*, October 2016.

³⁷ James E. Faust, That We Might Know Thee, *Ensign*, January 1999.

³⁸ Frederic W. Farrar, *The Life of Christ*, Cumorah Foundation, 2008, p. 142.

³⁹ She saw that a Prophet was before her, but from the facts of her own history -- on which she is naturally anxious to linger as little as possible -- **her eager mind flies to the one great question which was daily agitated with such fierce passion between her race and that of Him to whom she spake,** and which lay at the root of the savage animosity with which they treated each other. Chance had thrown her into the society of a great Teacher: was **it not a good opportunity to settle for ever the immense discussion between Jews and Samaritans as to whether Jerusalem or Gerizim was the holy place of Palestine** -- Jerusalem, where Solomon had built his temple; or

- e. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. (John 4.22).⁴⁰
- f. λέγει αὐτῇ ὁ Ἰησοῦς Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ λαλῶν σοι - Jesus says to her, the one speaking to you, "I AM." (John 4.26, my translation).⁴¹
 - i. Here Jesus is privately informing this woman of his divinity.⁴²
- g. The disciples were amazed that Jesus was talking with a woman (John 4.27).⁴³
 - i. No Rabbi would have carried on a conversation with a woman. Jesus is showing his followers another way.⁴⁴
 - ii. Jesus had a view of women that went against the grain of his cultural environment.⁴⁵
- h. The progression of the woman's statements regarding Jesus (John 4.9-29).
 - i. "Thou, being a Jew" (John 4.9).⁴⁶

Gerizim, the immemorial sanctuary, where Joshua had uttered the blessings, and where Abraham had been ready to offer up his son? Pointing to the summit of the mountain towering eight hundred feet above them, and crowned by the ruins of the ancient temple of Manasseh, which Hyrcanus had destroyed, she put her dubious question, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain, and ye say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship?" Farrar, *Life of Christ*, p. 143-144, emphasis added.

⁴⁰ Elder McConkie takes this to mean that the Jews of Jesus' day were "still legal administrators." See: Bruce R. McConkie, *The Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, 4 vols. Deseret Book Co., 1979-1981, 1: 499.

⁴¹ By using *ego eimi*, John is portraying Jesus proclaiming his divinity, essentially saying "I AM!" (See Exodus 3.14).

⁴² Thus the Lord of the universe, early in His ministry, disclosed **His true identity to an audience of one**. He knows each and all of us, too. And as in the instance of the woman of Samaria, He knows all things we have ever done, and He knows what lies ahead of us. And He loves us. He can steady us individually even in the midst of general commotion." Elder, Maxwell, *If Thou Endure It Well*, Bookcraft, 1996, p. 27, emphasis added.

⁴³ Καὶ ἐπὶ τούτῳ ἦλθον οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐθαύμασαν ὅτι μετὰ γυναικὸς ἐλάλει· οὐδεὶς μὲντοι εἶπεν Τί ζητεῖς ἢ τί λαλεῖς μετ' αὐτῆς "And Jesus' disciples came upon this (*Jesus talking with a woman*) and they were amazed that Jesus was talking with a woman. **However** no one said, what are you looking for, or why are you talking with her?" (John 4.27, my translation).

⁴⁴ Farrar notes, "**To talk with a woman in public was one of the six things which a Rabbi might not do** (*Berachôth*, fol. 43 b; Schwab, p. 404); even, adds R. Hisda, with his own wife. Here we have a curious accidental analogy between Pharisaim and Buddhism. In the *Vinaya* a *Bhikshu* is not only forbidden to look at or speak to a woman, but he may not hold out his hand to his own mother if she be drowning! (Wilson, *Essays on the Rel. of the Hindus*, i. 360." Farrar, *The Life of Christ*, p. 145. Morris concurs, stating, "No Rabbi would have carried on a conversation with a woman. One of their sayings ran: "A man shall not be alone with a woman in an inn, not even with his sister or his daughter, on account of what men may think. A man shall not talk with a woman in the street, not even with his own wife, and especially not with another woman, on account of what men may say." Morris, p. 274.

⁴⁵ Perhaps the greatest blot on the Rabbinic attitude to women was that, though the Rabbis held the study of the Law to be the greatest good in life, they discouraged women from studying it at all. When Ben Azzai suggested that women be taught the Law for certain purposes R. Eliezer replied: "If any man gives his daughter a knowledge of the Law it is as though he taught her lechery" (*Sot.* 3 : 4). The Rabbis regarded women as inferior to men in every way. A very ancient prayer (still found in the Jewish prayer book) runs, "Blessed art thou, O Lord ... who hast not made me a woman." The equivalent prayer for a woman was "Blessed art thou, O Lord, who hast fashioned me according to thy will." Temple comments, "If we now feel that the women had the best of the exchange, that is a Christian and not an ancient Jewish sentiment!" Morris, p. 274.

⁴⁶ Πῶς σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ὢν "How is it that you being a Jew" (John 4.9 my translation).

- ii. "Sir" (John 4.11, 15).⁴⁷
- iii. "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet" (John 4.19).⁴⁸
- iv. "I know that the Messiah cometh" (John 4.25).⁴⁹
- v. "Is not this the Christ?" (John 4.29).⁵⁰
- i. And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. (John 4.39).⁵¹
- 2. Jesus departs, a prophet has no honor in his own country (John 4.43-45).
- 3. Jesus heals the official's son (John 4.46-54).
 - a. This is an example of a "healing at a distance," as Jesus speaks the words in Cana and they are fulfilled in Capernaum.
 - b. Some see this as a variant of the healing of a Centurion's servant in Matt. 8.5-13 and Luke 7.2-10.⁵²
 - c. Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house. (John 4.52-53).
 - i. Elder Maxwell may have had a similar miraculous experience where at his very moment of anguish, his mother cried out in prayer to God for his deliverance.⁵³

⁴⁷ In this instance I would say the woman is being more respectful than calling Jesus "Sir," but rather "Lord," or "Master." The word in question is Κύριε, the vocative of κύριος. Raymond Brown notes that Κύριε can mean both, and that John most likely meant this as a progression towards greater respect by this woman. Brown, p. 170.

⁴⁸ λέγει αὐτῷ ἡ γυνὴ Κύριε θεωρῶ ὅτι προφήτης εἶ σύ "The woman said to him, Lord, I behold that you are a prophet" (John 4.19 my translation).

⁴⁹ Μεσσίας is a Greek form of Messiah, or anointed one, equivalent to the Greek Χριστός.

⁵⁰ Δεῦτε ἴδετε ἄνθρωπον ὃς εἶπέν μοι **πάντα ὅσα ἐποίησα** μήτι οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ Χριστός "Come and see a man who has told me **all of what I have ever done!** Is not this the Christ?" (John 4.29, my translation).

⁵¹ Many of the Samaritans believed on Christ, at first on the strength of the woman's testimony, then because of their own conviction; and they said to the woman at whose behest they had at first gone to meet Him: "Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." Graciously He acceded to their request to remain, and tarried with them two days. ***It is beyond question that Jesus did not share in the national prejudice of the Jews against the people of Samaria;*** an honest soul was acceptable to Him come whence he may. Probably the seed sown during this brief stay of our Lord among the despised people of Samaria was that from which so rich a harvest was reaped by the apostles in after years. James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, p. 91.

⁵² About the only things in common are some interesting verbal parallels, and the healing at a distance. There it is a centurion (probably a heathen), here an officer of Herod (probably a Jew); there a slave, here a son. There Jesus speaks His word of power in Capernaum, here in Cana; there the centurion's faith evokes Jesus' praise, here the father's faith is weak; there the centurion asks Jesus not to come to his home, here the father begs Him to come. There the illness is paralysis, here a fever. There the elders plead for the man, here he pleads in person. This story takes place just after Jesus' return from Judea, that is evidently much later. Despite the verbal parallels the two stories are distinct. Morris, p. 288.

⁵³ **During the middle of the battle for Okinawa, Neal had the most transforming experience of all.** He was part of a mortar squad that fired at Japanese positions hidden in the hills. His own mortar position created an obvious invitation for the enemy to locate and eliminate his firing capacity and him. They needed only to direct their own

- d. John depicts this healing of the nobleman's⁵⁴ son as the "second miracle" (John 4.54), or the δεύτερον σημεῖον "second sign."

artillery and mortar fire at the place where Neal's squad sent up its shells. By identifying his position and comparing where their shells hit, they could direct their fire closer and closer until they had done their deadly job.

One night in late May, the shrieking noise of artillery fire caught Neal's attention with a frightening realization. **Three shells in a row had exploded in a sequence that sent a dreadful message the enemy had completely triangulated his mortar position, and the next series of shots would hit home. Suddenly a shell exploded no more than five feet away from him.** Terribly shaken, Neal jumped from his foxhole and moved down a little knoll seeking protection, and then, uncertain what to do, he crawled back to the foxhole. There he knelt, trembling, and spoke the deepest prayer he had ever uttered, pleading for protection and dedicating the rest of his life to the Lord's service.

Neal later called this "one of those selfish, honest prayers" that many people offer in times of great stress. He didn't feel entitled to anything in particular, and he knew many of his combat buddies prayed that night as fervently as he did. Yet he did have very personal reasons for looking to heaven for protection. He was carrying in his pocket a smudged carbon copy of the patriarchal blessing he had received before leaving home. He had read the blessing frequently enough to know this part especially well:

I bless you that as the agencies of destruction are manifest . . . you may be preserved in body and in mind and your intellect be quickened by the spirit of truth . . . that you may rejoice in the power, the love and the mercies of the Redeemer. I seal you up against the power of the destroyer that your life may not be shortened and that you may not be deprived of fulfilling every assignment that was given unto you in the pre-existent state.

After the prayer, Neal turned his attention again to watching the night sky, which was earlier ablaze with flashing, fiery noises. His body spontaneously tensed up as he waited, searching the darkness for sounds and clues. But no more shells came near him.

Later he wrote:

After that triangulation occurred, the shelling stopped at the very time they were [about] to finish what they had been trying to do for days. I am sure the Lord answered my prayers. . . . The following night they began to pour [more] shells in [on our position], but almost all of them were duds either the ammunition had gotten wet or they were not exploding in the very thick, oozing mud. . . . ***I felt preserved, and unworthily so, but have tried to be somewhat faithful to that promise that was given at the time...***

Finally, almost a year after the Okinawa ordeal, he gave his family the most explicit description:

May 2, 1946: About eleven months and twenty days ago I knelt in a foxhole and asked for the seemingly impossible, that the shelling that had just [driven] me from my foxhole would cease. The last round was zeroed in. There was no reason in the world for them to stop now, but they did. No one can tell me it was a coincidence.

Decades after the war, Neal learned from his aunt Arlene what Emma had told her during May of 1945. Emma said that one evening (we don't know the exact date), she and Clarence had knelt by their bed to pray, as they did together each night, for Neal and his sisters. As they got into bed, Emma said, "Clarence, we must get up and pray again. Neal is in grave danger." They knelt and prayed once more, believing the Lord would extend special protection. When he first heard this story in 1996, **Neal simply said he did not doubt his mother knew it.** Bruce C. Hafen, [*A Disciple's Life: The Biography of Neal A. Maxwell*](#), chapter 13: Okinawa, Deseret Book, 2010, emphasis added.

⁵⁴ The word in the Greek here is βασιλικός – denoting belonging to a king, or being royal.