



SESSION 14 | JOHN 3:14-26

JOHN 3:1-21 | THE FIRST PASSOVER: JESUS AND NICODEMUS

- *Verses 1-4 – See session 12*
- *Verses 5-12 – See session 13*
- *Verse 13 – (also included on session 13)*
 - When this verse is taken as “post-game commentary,” the words make the most sense.
 - If spoken by Jesus, they must be spoken prophetically, for He had not yet **ascended up to heaven**.
 - Taken as commentary, the author is speaking to the reader and springboards from the **heavenly things** of verse 12 to explain how Jesus knew these things: He had come **down from heaven** and was now (at the time of the writing) **in heaven**.
- *Verse 14 –*
 - The lifting of the Son of Man *included* His ascension and being seated at the right hand of the Father. This was not just a reference to the cross, as the word **ascended** of verse 13 implies.
 - The word **must** is δεῖ [dei], which is not “necessity resulting from time and circumstances” but need “which arises from divine appointment” (Strong’s Concordance #5829).
- *Verses 15-16 -*
 - The **Son of man** (v. 14) was **lifted up** (including the crucifixion, followed by His resurrection and ascension) in order that **eternal life** (v. 15) could be given to **whosoever believeth in him** (v. 15, 16).
 - However you interpret these verses, they are clearly a grace gospel.
 - They only include belief, they are not mentioned in the synoptic Gospels, they do not limit the Gospel to the Jews, nor do they include obedience to the law or the commandments.
 - Therefore, the only way to harmonize this with Paul’s insistence that his Gospel was only later given by revelation and was previously **hid in God** (Eph. 3:9) is to recognize these verses as after-the-fact commentary.
- *Verse 17 –*
 - Continuing the commentary, the author adds an important word about God’s purpose in sending His Son: it was not **to condemn the world** but to provide salvation for the world.
 - If one makes “Christ as Judge” to be the major emphasis in the sending of Jesus into the world, he misses the point of the incarnation.

- Verse 18 –
 - There was no need for God to send His Son to condemn the world (v. 17) because the world was condemned already. Only belief **in the name of the only begotten Son of God** can rescue from this existing condemnation.
 - Belief **in the name of** is a Hebraism in which the name substitutes for the person himself, as in Psalm 20:1, 5, 7, etc.
- Verse 19 –
 - Those who do not believe are **condemned already** (v. 19). What is that condemnation? It is that **light is come** but the unbeliever **loved darkness**. They did this because **their deeds were evil**, and evil deeds need the cover of darkness.
 - This commentary serves as a reminder that humility is something that should be taught to every person, societally, creating a seedbed for acceptance of the Gospel. Why humility? Because it is an humble spirit that says, **Search me, O God, and know my heart: Try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me...** (Ps. 139:23-24).
- Verses 20-21 –
 - Be *very careful* not to read these two verses as a *doctrine of salvation*. These verses have *nothing whatsoever* to do with salvation.
 - Rather, they are supporting evidence for the author’s commentary of verse 19 that *love of darkness* hinders belief. Darkness is loved when it hides evil deeds, light is loved when those it exposes good deeds.
 - These verses state *human nature* and not *salvation doctrine*.

JOHN 3:22-4:3 | JESUS IN JUDEA

- Verse 22 –
 - The phrase **after these things** is not specific but is frequent in John.
 - Because we learn in John 4:3 that the next stop is Galilee, we can presume that Jesus went from Jerusalem into **the land of Judaea** (i.e.: the countryside), and then later back home to Galilee.
 - We learn in John 4:2 that Jesus was not performing the baptisms.
- Verses 23-26 –
 - The location is in modern-day Judea (under control of the Palestinian Authority), and the timing is before John the Baptist was **cast into prison**. When comparing John 4:2 to Matthew 4:12, we discover that it would not be long before John was imprisoned.
 - The KJV says the question that arose was between **John’s disciples and the Jews**. The modern versions show it as a single Jew. We do not know the question, but it was **about purifying**. This was likely a question about the Jewish traditions of purification (compare Lk. 11:38, Mark 7:3-4, etc).
 - It is not clear whether the questions of purification elicited the comment about baptisms by Jesus’ disciples (v. 26) or if these are unrelated. However, it is clear that John’s disciples were concerned that they might be losing some of their crowd to Jesus.
- Verses 27-36 – John’s Answer: *stay tuned!*