



JOHN 2:12 | A SHORT TIME IN CAPERNAUM

- By both tradition and a fair degree of “triangulation” of dates, we believe that the gathering of the disciples in John 1:35-51 took place in late December, approx. 30AD.
- The traditional date for the baptism of Jesus (or, in some instances, the wedding at Cana) is January 6, called the Feast of Epiphany. If we go with an early January date for the wedding, then we have two - three months’ time in Capernaum, the city which will later become the “headquarters” of Jesus’ ministry.
- At this point it *appears* that the relationship with His brothers is good. Later that will change.

JOHN 2:13-22 | THE FIRST PASSOVER: CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

- Verse 13 –
 - In John 1:19 we found the first reference to **the Jews**, a term that is common in the Gospel of John. Bullinger teaches that the phrase is in opposition to “Israel,” and that “Jews” is a phrase used when they are *Lo Ammi* “not my people” while “Israel” is used when the people are in corporate unity with their God.
 - Jesus always went to Passover in Jerusalem, as would any good Jew. See Luke 2:41.
 - This is the first of three Passovers that are mentioned in this Gospel, giving us key information for a chronology of Jesus’ ministry, which is typically considered to be a little over three years.
- Verses 14-16 –
 - There were both money changers and sacrifice-sellers in the Temple (a reference to the entire Temple complex).
 - These trades had arisen because of the sickness of the Judaism at the time, as described under the prophet Malachi.
 - Rather than the people bringing their own animals, an industry had arisen that exchanged Roman money (unacceptable because it had a “graven image”) for Temple coins, and a secondary industry that sold sacrifices with the “Priests seal of approval.”
 - No doubt, both of these issues came about “by design,” and equally by design there were those who profited from the shenanigans.
 - One should notice that there were *two* cleansings of the Temple, not one. This is the first, the second took place in the last week of ministry.
 - It is also notable that here Jesus speaks of **my Father’s house** and later he will say, **your house is left unto you desolate** (Matt. 23:38).

- Verse 17 –
 - Presumably as this was taking place **his disciples remembered** the words of Psalm 69:9, quoted here. Interestingly, the second half of the verse is here left out. Did the disciples have questions about the **reproaches of them that reproached thee**? We do not know. The insertion of this verse into the narrative does seem to indicate that the disciples were making a Messianic conclusion (or, better, affirmation of their previous conclusion).
- Verse 18 –
 - This question implies that the Jews understood this action (and the words **my Father's house**) to be a claim to be the Messiah. Therefore, they asked for a sign.
 - At this point, such a request was not *out of order*, because the Messiah indeed should have more proof than simply a claim.
- Verse 19 –
 - For the **temple**, Jesus used the word ναός [naos], different from verse 14 where the text uses ἱερός [ieros].
 - The *ieros* included the entire complex, the *naos* was the temple building itself.
 - Note: *The Companion Bible* distinguishes between the two by capitalizing “Temple” when the word *naos* is used.
 - Jesus was clearly speaking in allegory (as seen in v 21.) He commanded the people to **destroy this temple** and promised to **raise it up**. Most likely, allegorically He was referring to Himself as the Temple. Potentially, however, He was saying, “if you want a sign, destroy the temple and watch for your sign.
 - At the end of his ministry these words were remembered and twisted to be used against Jesus - compare Matthew 26:61.
Kipling -- “If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools...”
- Verses 21-22 –
 - The Gospel of John often inserts “after the fact” parenthetical statements like this one.
 - The writer has the benefit of hindsight and inserts that hindsight as running commentary throughout the Gospel. While the disciples believed from an early date, they comprehended at a later date.