

## Dr. Dave Turner, John, Session 4, John's Testimony and Jesus' First Sign in Galilee – John 1:19-2:12

### Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

#### 1. Abstract of Turner, John, Session 4, John 1:19-2:12, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

**Dr. David Turner's fourth session on the Gospel of John** examines the narrative flow from John 1:19 to 2:12, covering **John the Baptist's testimony** as he points his followers to Jesus and Jesus' selection of his **first disciples**. The session analyzes **John's responses to questioning Jewish leaders**, his identification of Jesus as the **Lamb of God**, and the calling of figures like Peter, Philip, and Nathanael. It culminates in the account of **Jesus' first sign at the wedding in Cana**, where he turned water into wine, revealing his glory and initiating his disciples' faith. **Turner also considers the symbolic significance of this miracle** in relation to Old Testament prophecies of future blessing for Israel and discusses Jesus' reference to his "hour not yet come."

**2. 20 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of  
Dr. Turner, John, Session 4 – Double click icon to play in  
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL]  
Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament →  
Gospels → John).**



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### 3. Briefing Document: Turner, John, Session 4, John 1:19-2:12

#### Briefing Document: John 1:19 - 2:12 - John's Testimony and Jesus' First Sign in Galilee

**Overview:** This briefing document summarizes the main themes and important ideas discussed by Dr. David Turner in his fourth session on the Gospel of John, specifically focusing on John 1:19 through John 2:12. The session covers John the Baptist's testimony about Jesus, the calling of Jesus' first disciples, and Jesus' first miracle at the wedding in Cana. Dr. Turner emphasizes understanding the narrative flow, structural elements, and theological significance of these passages, while cautioning against decontextualizing verses for personal application before proper interpretation.

#### Main Themes and Important Ideas:

##### 1. John the Baptist's Testimony (John 1:19-34):

- **Purpose of John's Ministry:** John's primary mission was to point people towards Jesus. This is evident as his own disciples begin to follow Jesus, illustrating the principle of "he must increase, and I must decrease" (John 3:30, alluded to here).
- "So, when we begin to look at the narrative flow of John 1:19 to chapter 2:12, we're looking at how John the Baptist, who has been mentioned in the prologue to the book, is now sort of beginning to point people to Jesus."
- **Encounter with Jewish Leaders:** Representatives from Jerusalem (priests and Levites) interrogate John about his identity. He clearly denies being the Messiah, Elijah, or "the prophet."
- "This is the testimony of John when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem, the priests, and Levites, asked him who he was. So, he says I am not the Messiah..."
- **John's Self-Identification:** John identifies himself using the words of Isaiah 40:3: "I am the one of the voice calling in the wilderness. Make straight the way for the Lord." This connects his ministry to a preparation for a "new exodus."
- **Testimony about Jesus:** Upon seeing Jesus, John declares, "Behold or look the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." This evokes Old Testament sacrificial imagery, including the Passover lamb and temple sacrifices, suggesting Jesus' role in both forgiving and judging sin.
- "When he uses the term lamb to describe Jesus he conjures up all the language in the Old Testament about the sacrificial lamb perhaps focusing on the Passover and all the other temple sacrifices involving the lambs."

- **Baptism with the Holy Spirit:** John testifies that Jesus is the one "who is going to be baptizing with the Holy Spirit" (John 1:33). This contrasts with John's baptism with water and foreshadows the role of the Spirit in Jesus' ministry and the lives of his followers. The descent and remaining of the Spirit on Jesus are highlighted.
- "John continues to describe Jesus in this section and speaks of him as the one who is going to be baptizing with the Holy Spirit in verse 33."

## 2. The Calling of the First Disciples (John 1:35-51):

- **Disciples Following Jesus:** Andrew and Peter are the first to follow Jesus after John's testimony. Jesus' question, "What do you want?" and his invitation, "Come and you will see," are noted as an interesting start to their discipleship.
- "So, we first see Andrew and Peter in verses 35 to 42 and Philip and Nathanael in verses 43 through 51 and it's interesting to see how these people interact with Jesus and how they interact with each other."
- **Philip and Nathanael:** Philip is called by Jesus and then brings Nathanael to him. Nathanael's initial skepticism about Nazareth ("Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?") and Philip's simple invitation, "Come and see," are highlighted.
- "Nathanael's reply was very interesting he basically said what came to his mind and didn't sugarcoat it a bit he exclaimed Nazareth can anything good come from there and Philip said simply come and see reiterating pretty much in verse 46 what Jesus had said to him in verse 38."
- **Jesus' Interaction with Nathanael:** Jesus' knowledge of Nathanael being under the fig tree impresses him, leading to Nathanael's confession: "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the King of Israel."
- "Jesus says I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you. This is enough for Nathanael to say rabbi you are the son of God you are the king of Israel..."
- **Promise of Greater Things:** Jesus tells Nathanael, "You will see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man" (John 1:51), linking him to Jacob's ladder in Genesis 28 and hinting at a greater revelation to come.

- "Interesting that verse 39 come and you will see sort of anticipates verse 51. So, we have then the first two people Andrew and Peter and then we have Philip and Nathanael in 43 and following."
- **Renaming of Peter:** Jesus renames Simon as Cephas (Aramaic) or Peter (Greek), signifying a future role for him.
- "Jesus looked at him and said you are Simon son of John you will be called Cephas which is Aramaic evidently Kepa is related to the Greek word Peter which we are going to hear him described later on in this gospel."

### 3. Jesus' First Sign at Cana (John 2:1-12):

- **The Wedding and the Problem:** Jesus and his newly formed group of disciples attend a wedding in Cana of Galilee. They run out of wine, causing a potentially embarrassing situation for the hosts. The cultural significance of wine as a staple and sign of blessing is emphasized.
- "So having now received his first disciples we're now told that Jesus is invited to a wedding feast in Cana of Galilee and there is an embarrassing problem there which leads him to do his first miracle his first sign."
- **Mary's Intervention:** Jesus' mother informs him of the lack of wine. His response, "Woman, why do you involve me? My hour has not yet come," is interpreted not as a harsh rebuke but as a statement about the timing of his public manifestation of power, linked to his ultimate "hour" of suffering and glorification.
- "When the mother of Jesus comes to him and says they have no wine it's not so simple as to go down to the convenience store and buy a new box or whatever... When Jesus says to Mary, my hour has not yet come, I believe the point of that is to say, I'm not going to make a spectacular demonstration here of taking care of this problem, because my time, my hour, which in John, as we will see, speaks of the cross, of the redemption, and of the passion, and of Easter. It's not time for that yet."
- **The Miracle:** Jesus instructs the servants to fill stone water jars (used for ritual purification according to Jewish law) with water, which he then miraculously turns into wine. The quality of the wine is noted by the master of the banquet as being the best. The inconspicuous nature of the miracle (only the servants knew the source) is highlighted.

- "He simply takes the water that was there in the stone vessels for purification and turns it into wine without even letting very many people know well what's going on. Only the servants who took the water originally knew what had happened we're told here in verse 9."
- **Significance of the Miracle:** John 2:11 states, "What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him." This event is crucial as the first public demonstration of Jesus' divine power and the manifestation of his glory, leading to the initial faith of his disciples.
- "Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory. So, we remember now from the prologue that we just looked at in the last tape that Jesus came to be the ultimate revelation of God's glory... and by this act of changing water into wine, he is indeed revealing the glory of God."
- **Symbolic Interpretation:** Dr. Turner suggests the water turned into wine may symbolize the arrival of God's future blessing for Israel, contrasting the ritual purification represented by the water jars with the "wine of God's eschatological blessing." This connects to Old Testament prophecies about an abundance of wine in the Messianic age (e.g., Isaiah, Jeremiah, Joel, Psalm 104:15).
- "So, in my prophetic text, which speaks of God blessing Israel abundantly in the future with plenty of wine, and with the Moses and Jesus comparison in chapter 1, verses 14 to 18, it seems to me that Jesus changing the water to wine is perhaps a way of speaking about how that the future for Israel is not simply going to be a matter of ritual purity... but is also experiencing the wine of God's eschatological blessing."

#### 4. Structural Considerations:

- Dr. Turner mentions a scholarly interpretation that views John 1:19 - 2:12 as representing the seven days of a new creation, culminating in the wedding feast. However, he states he is "not so sure that I think this is a big deal" but brings it to attention for further study.

## 5. Geographical Context:

- The session identifies key locations mentioned in the passage: the wilderness of Judea (where John baptized), Jerusalem, Bethany across the Jordan, Galilee, Bethsaida, Capernaum, and Cana. The potential locations of John's ministry are discussed as a matter of some debate.
- Dr. Turner provides visual aids (though not included in the text excerpts) and descriptions of modern-day sites associated with Cana (wedding churches with ancient stone vessels) and Capernaum (excavations of Peter's house and the synagogue). The significance and authenticity of these sites are acknowledged as uncertain.
- "So, we have images of places that very well may be Cana of Galilee in ancient times although there is some debate about that. It's a village about three miles northeast of Nazareth. It's traditionally been associated with the Cana of Galilee."

## 6. Messianic Titles in John 1:

- Dr. Turner emphasizes the abundance of messianic titles applied to Jesus in this early part of John's Gospel, including: Messiah (Anointed One), the Prophet (Deuteronomy 18), Lamb of God (Isaiah 53), Son of God, Rabbi (My Teacher), King of Israel, and Son of Man (Daniel 7). These titles draw on Old Testament expectations and foreshadow Jesus' identity and mission.
- "We have some very interesting messianic titles in John chapter 1. We could take this whole video series and just develop what these titles say, but it's amazing how many different ones are occurring here just in these early portions of the chapter."

## 7. Old Testament Allusions:

- The narrative is rich with allusions to the Old Testament, which would have been understood by John's original audience. Examples include:
- Isaiah 40 (John's self-identification as the voice in the wilderness).
- Exodus 33 (Moses desiring to see God, alluding to Jesus revealing God's glory).
- Deuteronomy 18 ("the prophet like Moses").
- Isaiah 53 (the Lamb of God).
- Isaiah 42 (God's Spirit upon his chosen one).

- Daniel 9 (Messiah).
- Genesis 28 (Jacob's ladder and the Son of Man).
- Psalm 104:15 (wine as a gift of God).
- Ezekiel 36 (clean water and spiritual renewal).

**Conclusion:**

Dr. Turner's session on John 1:19 - 2:12 provides a detailed examination of John the Baptist's pivotal testimony, the initial gathering of Jesus' disciples, and the profound significance of Jesus' first sign at Cana. He highlights the narrative flow, structural possibilities, geographical context, and the rich tapestry of Old Testament allusions and messianic titles that contribute to understanding Jesus' identity and the dawning of God's eschatological blessings. The session emphasizes the importance of interpreting these passages within their historical and literary context before drawing personal applications.

## 4. Study Guide: Turner, John, Session 4, John 1:19-2:12

### Study Guide: John 1:19-2:12

#### Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. According to Dr. Turner, what is the significance of John's testimony being the starting point of the narrative in John 1:19?
2. Describe the initial interrogation of John the Baptist by the Jewish leaders and their primary concern.
3. What does John the Baptist mean when he refers to Jesus as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world"?
4. Explain the significance of the Spirit descending and remaining on Jesus in John's testimony.
5. Describe the interactions between Jesus and his first disciples: Andrew and Peter, and Philip and Nathanael.
6. What was the social and cultural significance of wine at a wedding feast in ancient Israel, as discussed by Dr. Turner?
7. Explain how Jesus resolved the problem of the lack of wine at the wedding in Cana and who was aware of the miracle.
8. According to John 2:11, what was the purpose of Jesus' first sign at Cana?
9. What is the potential symbolic significance of Jesus turning water into wine in the context of Old Testament prophecies?
10. Explain Jesus' statement to his mother, "My hour has not yet come," in relation to the events that would follow in the Gospel of John.

#### Quiz Answer Key

1. The fact that the narrative of John begins with John's testimony is significant because the prologue has already introduced John's role as a witness. This emphasizes the importance of John's witness in pointing people towards Jesus and establishing his identity.
2. The Jewish leaders, comprising priests and Levites from Jerusalem, interrogated John the Baptist to understand his activities in the Judean desert. Their primary

concern likely stemmed from fears of a popular messianic movement that could incite unrest against Roman rule, prompting them to investigate John's claims and authority.

3. When John the Baptist calls Jesus "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world," he is drawing upon Old Testament imagery of sacrificial lambs, particularly the Passover lamb and temple sacrifices. This title suggests that Jesus' mission involves dealing with sin through sacrifice and redemption, both by forgiving those who believe and ultimately judging and removing sin from the world.
4. The descent and remaining of the Spirit on Jesus was crucial in John's testimony as it identified Jesus as the one chosen by God and the one who would baptize with the Holy Spirit. This event signified Jesus' unique relationship with God and the continuation of God's presence through the Spirit with Jesus' followers.
5. Andrew and Peter initially followed Jesus after John's testimony, and Jesus invited them to "come and see" where he was staying. Philip, upon finding Nathanael, declared that they had found the Messiah, though Nathanael was initially skeptical; Jesus then impressed Nathanael with his knowledge, leading him to confess Jesus as the Son of God and King of Israel.
6. In ancient Israel, wine was not merely a beverage but a staple of subsistence and a symbol of God's blessing and future prosperity. Running out of wine at a wedding feast would have been deeply embarrassing for the hosts, indicating a significant social and cultural failure.
7. Jesus resolved the lack of wine by instructing the servants to fill stone water jars used for purification with water, which he then miraculously turned into wine without explicitly announcing the miracle. Only the servants who drew the water were aware of what had occurred.
8. According to John 2:11, Jesus' first sign at Cana of Galilee was performed to reveal his glory, the divine glory that was introduced in the prologue. This manifestation of his glory through the miracle led his disciples to put their faith in him.
9. The act of Jesus turning water into wine can be interpreted symbolically as representing the arrival of God's eschatological blessing for Israel, as prophesied in the Old Testament where an abundance of wine symbolized future restoration and prosperity. It suggests that the future blessing is not just about ritual purity

(represented by the water jars) but also about experiencing the fullness of God's favor.

10. Jesus' statement, "My hour has not yet come," to his mother indicates that the time for his ultimate purpose, which in John refers to his crucifixion, resurrection, and glorification (his "passion"), had not yet arrived. Performing a public miracle in response to a social need might prematurely trigger events leading to his "hour," which was to occur according to God's timing.

## **Essay Format Questions**

1. Analyze the significance of John the Baptist's testimony in John 1:19-34 in relation to the prologue of the Gospel of John and its role in introducing Jesus.
2. Discuss the symbolism and significance of Jesus' first miracle at the wedding in Cana (John 2:1-12) in the context of both its immediate setting and its broader theological implications within the Gospel of John.
3. Explore the development of faith in the first disciples (Andrew, Peter, Philip, and Nathanael) as depicted in John 1:35-51, paying attention to the different ways they encountered and recognized Jesus.
4. Compare and contrast the Old Testament allusions present in John 1:19-2:12, explaining how these allusions contribute to John's portrayal of Jesus' identity and mission.
5. Examine the tension between the immediate needs presented in the narrative (e.g., the interrogation of John, the lack of wine) and Jesus' awareness of his predetermined "hour," as illustrated in John 1:19-2:12.

## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Testimony:** A formal statement or declaration of fact or belief, often used in a legal or witnessing context. In John, it refers to John the Baptist's declarations about Jesus.
- **Messiah:** A Hebrew term meaning "anointed one," referring to the promised deliverer of Israel. It is equivalent to the Greek term "Christ."
- **Lamb of God:** A title for Jesus used by John the Baptist, evoking Old Testament imagery of sacrifice and redemption, particularly the Passover lamb and the suffering servant in Isaiah 53.
- **Rabbi:** A Hebrew term meaning "my teacher" or "master," used as a sign of respect for a religious leader or teacher.
- **Sign:** In the Gospel of John, a miracle performed by Jesus that points beyond itself to reveal his divine glory and identity. The turning of water into wine is the first such sign.
- **Glory:** The divine radiance and honor of God, made visible in Jesus Christ. Jesus' miracles reveal his glory.
- **Eschatological:** Relating to the "last things" or the end times, often referring to God's ultimate plans for the future and the establishment of his kingdom.
- **Ritual Purity:** A state of ceremonial cleanliness required by Jewish law for participation in religious practices and entering sacred spaces. Stone vessels were preferred as they were less likely to become ritually impure.
- **Hour:** In the Gospel of John, this term often refers to the appointed time for Jesus' suffering, death, resurrection, and glorification – his "passion." It also sometimes refers to the coming age of salvation.
- **Prologue:** The introductory section of a literary work, setting forth the themes and scope of what is to follow. In John's Gospel, the prologue (John 1:1-18) introduces key concepts about Jesus' identity as the Word and his relationship with God.

## **5. FAQs on Turner, John, Session 4, John 1:19-2:12, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)**

### **Frequently Asked Questions: John 1:19-2:12**

#### **1. What is the significance of John the Baptist's testimony at the beginning of the narrative in John's Gospel (John 1:19-34)?**

John's testimony in this section is crucial as it marks the transition from the prologue's theological introduction to the narrative itself. It fulfills the prologue's description of John as a witness to the Light (Jesus). John explicitly denies being the Messiah, Elijah, or the prophet, identifying himself instead as "the voice of one calling in the wilderness" from Isaiah 40, preparing the way for the Lord. His testimony then shifts to Jesus, whom he identifies as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world and the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit. This testimony serves to point people away from John and towards Jesus as the central figure.

#### **2. How did Jesus' first disciples come to follow him according to John 1:35-51? What is notable about their interactions with Jesus?**

Jesus' first disciples were initially followers of John the Baptist. John himself directed Andrew and another unnamed disciple to Jesus. Jesus then invited them to "come and see," leading them to stay with him. Andrew then brought his brother Simon Peter to Jesus, who gave him the name Cephas (Peter). The next day, Jesus called Philip to follow him. Philip then found Nathanael and told him about Jesus, whom Nathanael initially doubted because of his Nazarene origin. However, after Jesus revealed his knowledge of Nathanael's presence under a fig tree, Nathanael confessed Jesus as the Son of God and the King of Israel. Their interactions highlight Jesus' direct invitation, the disciples' varying levels of initial understanding and faith, and Jesus' insightful and sometimes enigmatic responses.

#### **3. What is the context and significance of the wedding at Cana in John 2:1-12?**

The wedding at Cana is significant as the setting for Jesus' first miracle, or "sign," in John's Gospel. The cultural context of wine at a wedding feast in ancient Israel was crucial, as it was considered a staple and running out would have been deeply embarrassing for the hosts. Mary, Jesus' mother, brought the lack of wine to his attention. Jesus' response, mentioning that his "hour has not yet come," suggests a timing related to his larger mission. Nevertheless, he miraculously turned water into wine, revealing his glory and prompting his disciples to put their faith in him.

**4. Why does the text emphasize that the water turned into wine at Cana was in stone water jars used for purification (John 2:6)?**

The detail about the stone water jars used for purification is likely significant in contrasting the old practices of ritual cleansing with the new reality brought by Jesus. Stone jars, unlike pottery, did not retain ritual impurity according to rabbinic law. The fact that Jesus uses these vessels to create wine, a symbol of God's eschatological blessing in the Old Testament, may suggest that Jesus' coming transcends and transforms the existing religious practices, offering a greater and more joyous blessing.

**5. What does Jesus mean when he says to his mother, "My hour has not yet come" (John 2:4)? How is the concept of "the hour" used in the Gospel of John?**

When Jesus tells his mother that his "hour has not yet come," he is referring to a specific, divinely appointed time for his ultimate glorification, which in John's Gospel is consistently linked to his suffering, death on the cross, resurrection, and ascension (his "passion"). This statement indicates that while Jesus has the power to act, he is operating according to a predetermined schedule. The term "hour" in John is used in multiple ways: it refers to this pivotal time of his passion and glorification, but it can also refer to the eschatological future and even the present time in the context of belief and judgment.

**6. How does the miracle at Cana function as a "sign" in John's Gospel (John 2:11)? What is the relationship between Jesus' signs, his glory, and the faith of his disciples?**

The miracle at Cana is explicitly identified as the "first of the signs" through which Jesus revealed his glory. In John's Gospel, these signs are not merely displays of power but are intended to point to Jesus' divine identity and his role as the revealer of God. The manifestation of his glory through this miraculous act directly led to his disciples putting their faith in him. This establishes a pattern throughout John where Jesus' signs serve as catalysts for belief and deeper understanding of his divine nature and mission.

**7. How does Dr. Turner suggest we should approach reading and interpreting the narrative of John's Gospel? What does he caution against?**

Dr. Turner emphasizes the importance of reading John's Gospel as a narrative, understanding the flow of events and how individual verses are situated within the larger story. He advises against "plaque-ifying" the text, which means extracting verses out of their narrative context for personal application without first understanding their meaning within the story John is telling. He advocates for interpreting the stories scene by scene to grasp their intended message before making personal applications.

**8. What possible symbolic meanings does Dr. Turner discuss in relation to the water and the wine in the account of the wedding at Cana?**

Dr. Turner discusses the potential symbolic meanings of water and wine in the context of the wedding at Cana. He suggests that the water in the stone jars, used for Jewish ritual purification, might symbolize the existing religious practices of Israel. The transformation of this water into wine, a symbol of God's future blessing and abundance in the Old Testament prophecies, could then represent the arrival of that eschatological blessing through Jesus. This interpretation suggests that Jesus' coming brings more than just ritual purity; it ushers in the fullness of God's promised future for Israel, characterized by joy and abundance.