

Notes on the Greek New Testament Week 207 – John 2:12-3:21

Day 1031: John 2:12-17

Verse 12

Μετὰ τοῦτο κατέβη εἰς Καφαρναοὺμ αὐτὸς καὶ ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοὶ [αὐτοῦ] καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐκεῖ ἔμειναν οὐ πολλὰς ἡμέρας.

μετὰ τοῦτο is a frequent connective between narratives (2:12; 3:22; 5:1, 14; 6:1; 7:1; 11:7, 11; 19:28, 38). This verse is transitional, it links what precedes to what follows.

καταβαίνω come or go down, descend

Capernaum is by the sea of Galilee and to go there from Cana would therefore mean a descent.

ἐκεῖ there, in that place

καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ is omitted by \times W some OL MSS and the Armenian. Evidence for inclusion is strong.

ἔμειναν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl μένω remain, stay

πολύς, πολλή, πολυ gen πολλοῦ, ης, ου much, many

Verses 13-16 Cleansing of Temple

The Synoptic Gospels record Jesus cleansing the Temple at the end of his ministry, shortly before his death. Beasley-Murray comments, "The relationship of the accounts of the cleansing of the temple in the Fourth Gospel and in the synoptics has been endlessly discussed, with all possible variety of options put forward by exegetes. There is reasonably widespread agreement now that: (i) the event happened only once, not twice (at the beginning and end of the ministry of Jesus); (ii) it took place in the last week of the life of Jesus; (iii) the Fourth Evangelist had no intention of correcting the timing of the event, but set his account at the beginning of the ministry of Jesus to highlight its significance for understanding the course of the ministry. It provides a vital clue for grasping the nature and the course of our Lord's work, his words and actions, his death and resurrection, and the outcome of it all in a new worship of God, born out of a new relation to God in and through the crucified-risen Christ."

Carson, however, concludes, "It is not possible to resolve with certainty whether only one cleansing of the temple took place, or two; but the arguments for one are weak and subjective, while the most natural reading of the text favours two. Meanwhile it is important to note (1) that a detail in *John's* account of the temple-cleansing provides crucial background to the *Synoptic* record of Jesus' trial (cf. notes on 2:19), and (2) that this *early* temple-cleansing does not issue immediately in a conspiracy by the authorities to have him arrested and killed, for Jesus has not yet established his reputation, whereas the *later* cleansing reported in the Synoptics is presented more or less as one of the last straws that call down the wrath of the religious establishment."

Verse 13

Καὶ ἔγγυς ἦν τὸ πάσχα τῶν Ἰουδαίων, καὶ ἀνέβη εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ὁ Ἰησοῦς.

ἔγγυς adv near

πάσχα n Passover

"τὸ πάσχα strictly denotes the Passover celebration held on the night of 14–15 Nisan, which was followed by the Feast of Unleavened Bread, 15–21 Nisan. In later Judaism the two feasts were combined under the one term and called the Passover." Beasley-Murray.

John mentions three distinct Passovers (2:13; 6:14; 11:55; four if we add 5:1 as a separate Passover).

Carson suggests that τῶν Ἰουδαίων here has a geographical sense, it took place in Judea, Jewish territory.

ἀνέβη Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἀναβαίνω go up

Verse 14

καὶ εὗρεν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ τοὺς πωλοῦντας βόας καὶ πρόβατα καὶ περιστεράς καὶ τοὺς κερματιστάς καθημένους,

ἱερον, ου n temple, temple precincts

Here τῷ ἱερῷ means the whole temple precincts. The 'market' was probably in the court of the Gentiles, cf. Mk 11:17.

πωλεῶ sell, barter

βους, βοῶς m ox

προβατον, ου n sheep

περιστερα, ας f dove, pigeon

"– for the purpose of sacrifice. It was convenient for worshippers coming from a distance to be able to rely upon finding suitable animals in the Temple market." Barrett.

κερματιστης, ου m money-changer

"Temple dues had to be paid in the Tyrian coinage; supplies were obtainable in the Temple and it seems that usually only a moderate charge (2-4 per cent) was made for the service." Barrett.

καθημαι sit, sit down, live

Verse 15

καὶ ποιήσας φραγέλλιον ἐκ σχοινίων πάντας ἐξέβαλεν ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ, τὰ τε πρόβατα καὶ τοὺς βόας, καὶ τῶν κολλυβιστῶν ἐξέχεεν τὸ κέρμα καὶ τὰς τραπέζας ἀνέτρεψεν,

P⁶⁶ and P⁷⁵ and some other MSS prefix ὡς to φραγέλλιον, 'a kind of whip.' Despite the age of these witnesses the addition looks like an attempt to tone down the action of Jesus.

φραγελλιον, ου n whip

σχοινιον, ου n rope

For driving out the cattle.

ἐκβαλλω throw out, expel, cast out
τε enclitic particle and, and so; τε ... και both ... and, not only ... but also
κολλυβιστης, ου m money-changer
ἐξέχεεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s ἐκχεω and
ἐκχυννω pour out
κερμα, τος n coin
τραπεζα, ης f table
ἀνατρεπω overturn

Sanders thinks that Jesus could not have done this alone and must have been helped – presumably by his disciples.

Verse 16

καὶ τοῖς τὰς περιστεράς πωλοῦσιν εἶπεν, Ἄρατε ταῦτα ἐντεῦθεν, μὴ ποιεῖτε τὸν οἶκον τοῦ πατρὸς μου οἶκον ἐμπορίου.

ἄρατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl αἶρω take, take up, take away

Jesus is careful not to deprive the traders of their wares – hence the different treatment of those selling doves.

ἐντεῦθεν from here

οἶκος, ου m house

ἐμποριον, ου n market

Cf. Zech 14:21; Mal 3:1,3. Jesus' objection here is to the trade as such: contrast the incident recorded in the Synoptics where the focus seems to be on *unfair* trade.

Verse 17

Ἐμνήσθησαν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ὅτι γεγραμμένον ἐστίν, Ὁ ζήλος τοῦ οἴκου σου καταράγεται με.

ἐμνήσθησαν Verb, aor pass dep indic, 3 pl μνησθαι remember, call to mind

John does not make it clear whether they recalled this scripture at the time or only later.

γεγραμμένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc & n nom/acc s γραφω write

Cf. Ps 69:9. This is a psalm concerning the Righteous Sufferer and is frequently cited in the NT with respect to Jesus death.

ζηλος, ου m, and ους n zeal, jealousy
καταράγεται Verb, fut midd dep indic, 3 s κατεσθιω eat up, devour

Day 1032: John 2:18-25

Verse 18

ἀπεκρίθησαν οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ, Τί σημεῖον δεικνύεις ἡμῖν, ὅτι ταῦτα ποιεῖς;

ἀποκρινομαι answer, reply, say

The word σημεῖον is used here in the sense familiar from the synoptics, "adversaries of Jesus wrongfully seek a sign as proof of his claim and their request is rejected." Barrett. Carson adds, "If the authorities had eyes to see, the cleansing of the temple was already a 'sign' they should have thought through and deciphered in terms of Old Testament Scripture."

δεικνυμι show, point out, reveal

The thought of having *authority* to do such things is implied, cf. Mk 11:28.

Verse 19

ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, Λύσατε τὸν ναὸν τούτου καὶ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις ἐγερῶ αὐτόν.

ἀπεκρίθη Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s ἀποκρινομαι

λυω loose, release, set aside

λυειν is regularly used in classical Greek of destruction of a building and bears this sense also in Eph 2:14.

ναος, ου m temple, sanctuary

"ναος (which occurs in this context in John) does not in general seem to be distinguished from ἱερον in the New Testament. If a distinction is to be made, ναος must refer to the central shrine or sanctuary, not the whole Temple precincts (cf. Matt 13:2...)." Barrett.

τρεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three
ἐγερῶ Verb, fut act indic, 1 s ἐγειρω
raise

Cf. Matt 12:39; Mk 8:12; Lk 11:29,30 where the only sign Jesus will give to the unbelieving Jews is the sign of the prophet Jonah – that of his own death and resurrection. See also Mark 14:58||Matt 26:61 and Mark 15:29||Matt 27:30 which seem to reflect this statement of Jesus.

Verse 20

εἶπαν οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι, Τεσσεράκοντα καὶ ἕξ ἔτεσιν οἰκοδομήθη ὁ ναὸς οὗτος, καὶ σὺ ἐν τρισὶν ἡμέραις ἐγερεῖς αὐτόν;

εἶπαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl λεγω
τεσσερακοντα forty
ἕξ six
ἔτος, ους n year
οἰκοδομήθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s
οἰκοδομεω build, build up

The temple was begun in 20/19 BC but was not completed until 63 AD, many years after Jesus' words. These words here must therefore mean that 'the temple had been 46 years in the building thus far ...', though this would not be the natural sense of the aorist οἰκοδομήθη. However, for a similar use of the aorist cf. Ezra 5:16 LXX.

ἐγερεῖς Verb, fut act indic, 2 s ἐγειρω

"Such misunderstandings are characteristic of John (see on 3:3) and are often, as here, more than a literary trick employed by a writer given to irony. They represent in miniature the total reaction of Judaism to Christ; the Jews perceived only what was superficially visible in Jesus and naturally rejected as absurd the suggestion that he should be the Son of God; if they had penetrated beneath the surface they would have seen the truth." Barrett.

Verse 21

ἐκεῖνος δὲ ἔλεγεν περὶ τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ σωματος αὐτοῦ.

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that (one)

ἐκεῖνος is used to point to Jesus, cf. 5:11; 7:11; 9:12,28,37; 19:21,35.

σωμα, τος n body

"The human body of Jesus was the place where a unique manifestation of God took place and consequently became the only true Temple, the only centre of true worship; cf. 4:20-24." Barrett. Carson comments, "The temple itself pointed forward to a better and final meeting-point between God and human beings (cf. 1:51; 4:21-24)."

Verse 22

ὅτε οὖν ἠγέρθη ἐκ νεκρῶν, ἐμνήσθησαν οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ ὅτι τοῦτο ἔλεγεν, καὶ ἐπίστευσαν τῇ γραφῇ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ ὃν εἶπεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς.

ὅτε conj when, at which time
ἠγέρθη Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s ἐγειρω

ἠγέρθη is passive in form, but can bear the intransitive as well as the passive sense. Beasley-Murray writes, "In view of ἐγερῶ in v 19 and the parallel concept in 10:17–18 the intransitive sense is more suitable here."

νεκρος, α, ον dead
ἐμνήσθησαν Verb, aor pass dep indic, 3 pl
μιμνησκομαι remember
πιστευω believe (in), have faith (in)

"During the ministry the disciples, in spite of their call and their belief in Jesus, evoked by his signs (2:11), understood his words little more than his adversaries. It was only his resurrection, and the gift, contingent upon it, of the Paraclete, which called his sayings to mind and enabled them to be understood (14:26; 16:14). The several incidents of the ministry could be understood only in the light of the completed whole." Barrett.

γραφη, ης f writing, Scripture

The singular suggests a particular scripture and could refer back to Ps 69:9 from v.17. Though it may be better to understand the singular to mean that the Old Testament as a whole speaks of Christ, his death and resurrection.

Verses 23-25

Beasley-Murray writes, "Just as 2:1 harks back to the events of chap. 1 yet commences a new division of the Gospel, so 2:23–25 is linked with the setting of the previous episode yet belongs essentially with chap. 3, since it provides a context for the Nicodemus narrative and an important clue to its understanding."

Verse 23

Ὡς δὲ ἦν ἐν τοῖς Ἱεροσολύμοις ἐν τῷ πάσχα ἐν τῇ ἑορτῇ, πολλοὶ ἐπίστευσαν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ, θεωροῦντες αὐτοῦ τὰ σημεῖα ἃ ἐποίει·

πάσχα n see v.13

ἑορτη, ης f **festival, feast**

The meaning of ἐν τῇ ἑορτῇ is probably 'in the festival crowd' (cf. 7:11 and Mk 14:2).

ὄνομα, τος n **name, person**

θεωρεω **see, watch, observe**

Cf. 3:2 where Nicodemus mentions signs performed by Jesus.

Verse 24

αὐτὸς δὲ Ἰησοῦς οὐκ ἐπίστευεν αὐτὸν αὐτοῖς διὰ τὸ αὐτὸν γινώσκειν πάντας,

"οὐκ ἐπίστευεν αὐτὸν, did not entrust himself. πιστεῦειν is comparatively rare in this sense in the New Testament (Luke 16:11; Rom 3:2; 1 Cor 9:17; Gal 2:7; 1 Thess 2:4; 1 Tim 1:11; Titus 1:3), the specifically Christian sense having excluded it.

This does not mean that faith prompted by the miracles of Jesus is spurious, rather that "such faith is only the first step towards Jesus; it has not yet seen him in his true significance, and it is therefore not yet fully established." Bultmann.

"διὰ το αὐτὸν γινώσκειν πάντας. Cf. 1 Sam 16:7; Jesus has divine knowledge and is not misled by appearances, even by the appearance of faith." Barrett.

Verse 25

καὶ ὅτι οὐ χρεῖαν εἶχεν ἵνα τις μαρτυρήσῃ περὶ τοῦ ἀνθρώπου· αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐγίνωσκεν τί ἦν ἐν τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ.

χρεῖα, ας f **need, want**

εἶχεν Verb, imperf act indic, 3 s ἔχω

μαρτυρήσῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s

μαρτυρεω **bear witness, testify**

ἐπιγινώσκω **perceive, understand**

Emphasises Jesus' divinity, cf. Jer 17:10.

Day 1033: John 3:1-8**3:1 ff.**

"The one who 'knew all men', who 'did not need man's testimony about man' (2:24-25), now enters into a number of conversations in which he instantly gets to the heart of individuals with highly diverse backgrounds and needs – Nicodemus (3:1-15), the Samaritan woman (4:1-26), the Gentile official (4:43-53), the man at the pool of Bethesda (5:1-15), and more." Carson.

Verse 1

Ἦν δὲ ἄνθρωπος ἐκ τῶν Φαρισαίων, Νικόδημος ὄνομα αὐτῷ, ἀρχῶν τῶν Ἰουδαίων·

Note the link with the previous verses in the echo of the word ἄνθρωπος

ὄνομα, τος n see 2:23

ἀρχῶν, οντος m **ruler, official**

Nicodemus would seem to have been a member of the Sanhedrin, a Pharisee and a Rabbi.

Verse 2

οὗτος ἦλθεν πρὸς αὐτὸν νυκτὸς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Ῥαββί, οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἐλήλυθας διδάσκαλος· οὐδεὶς γὰρ δύναται ταῦτα τὰ σημεῖα ποιεῖν ἃ σὺ ποιεῖς, ἐὰν μὴ ἦ ὁ θεὸς μετ' αὐτοῦ.

νυξ, νυκτος f **night**

"Rabbis are reported to have studied and conversed till late at night... Elsewhere, however (9:4; 11:10; 13:30), νυξ is used with more than literal signification, and, though John may have meant simply that Nicodemus visited Jesus by night for reasons of secrecy (cf. 19:38f.), it is perhaps more probable that he intended to indicate the darkness out of which Nicodemus came into the presence of the true Light (cf. vv. 19-21)." Barrett.

ῥαββι **rabbi, teacher, master**

His address is a term of respect. οἶδαμεν "Nicodemus speaks on behalf of others as well as himself. The 'we' may be the Pharisees, or the ἀρχοντες, or both; but it is (in view of the following words) more probable that it refers to the πολλοὶ of 2:23 who believed because they beheld the signs done by Jesus." Barrett.

ἐλήλυθας Verb, perf act indic, 2 s ἐρχομαι

διδάσκαλος, ου m **teacher**

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμα, οὐδεν **no one, nothing**

δυναμαι **can, be able to**

ἐάν if; ἐάν μη **except, unless**

ἦ Verb, pres subj, 3s εἶμι

"These words, though true, are to John an inadequate expression of faith. They treat Jesus as having essentially the same significance as e.g. Moses (Ex. 3:12, ἔσομαι μετὰ σου) or Jeremiah (Jer 1:19 μετὰ σου ἔγω εἶμι του ἐξαίρεισθαι σε)." Barrett.

Verse 3

ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, ἐὰν μὴ τις γεννηθῆ ἄνωθεν, οὐ δύναται ἰδεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ.

ἀπεκρίθη Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s
ἀποκρίνομαι answer, reply, say
γεννηθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s γενναω
be father of, give birth to; pass be born
ἀνωθεν from above, again

Cf. 1:12-13. "ἀνωθεν is capable of two meanings and here it probably has both. It may mean 'from above', but also 'afresh', 'again'. The birth which is here required is certainly a second birth, but it is not (see v.4) a mere repetition of man's first birth, but a begetting from above, from God." Barrett. Other occurrences of ἀνωθεν in John mean 'from above' (3:31; 19:11, 23).

Beasley-Murray writes, "The concept of being begotten from above is not a simple translation of becoming as a child, but an adaptation of the Jewish hope of a new creation." Cf. Matt 19:28 where Jesus speaks of the kingdom in terms of παλιγγενεσία, 'regeneration.' See also Titus 3:5.

ἰδεῖν Verb, aor act infin ὄραω see,
perceive, recognise

"It is impossible to distinguish between ἰδεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ and εἰσελθεῖν τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ in v.5. 'To see' means 'to experience'; cf. 3:36, οὐκ ὁψεται ζῶν; also Mark 9:1." Barrett.

The kingdom of God is a characteristic theme of Jesus according to the synoptics but occurs in John only here and in verse 5 – though the kingdom is mentioned also at 18:36 and the theme of Jesus as king occurs frequently in the passion narrative.

Carson comments, "To a Jew with the background and convictions of Nicodemus, 'to see the kingdom of God' was to participate in the kingdom at the end of the age, to experience eternal, resurrection life... One of the most startling features of the kingdom announced in the Synoptics is that it is not exclusively future. The kingdom, God's saving and transforming reign, has in certain respects already been inaugurated in the person, works and message of Jesus. John stresses this 'inaugurated' or 'realised' component of the long-awaited salvation even more."

Verse 4

λέγει πρὸς αὐτὸν [ὁ] Νικόδημος, Πῶς δύναται ἄνθρωπος γεννηθῆναι γέρων ὢν; μὴ δύναται εἰς τὴν κοιλίαν τῆς μητρὸς αὐτοῦ δεύτερον εἰσελθεῖν καὶ γεννηθῆναι;

γεννηθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin γενναω
γέρων, οντος m old man, grown man

Would seem to imply that Nicodemus was an old man (perhaps implied also by the fact he was a leader among the Jews) – though the term may be used in a more general sense, meaning 'grown up'.

κοιλια, ας f stomach, womb
δευτερος, α, ον second; a second time

Nicodemus understands ἀνωθεν in the sense of 'again' but does not understand that Jesus also means 'from above'. "Nicodemus understands what has been said to him in purely human terms (cf. v.12, ἐπιγεια); and therefore misunderstands it." Barrett. Nicodemus' reply may express a degree of scorn at the unbelievable words of Jesus.

Verse 5

ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς, Ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, ἐὰν μὴ τις γεννηθῆ ἔξ ὕδατος καὶ πνεύματος, οὐ δύναται εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ.

ὔδωρ, ὕδατος n water

There is some debate over the meaning of the reference here to water. The main views are:

- i) It is a reference to the baptism of John cf. 1:26,33. John's water baptism was preparatory to the coming of the kingdom which cannot be entered apart from the work of (or baptism by) the Spirit (so Bengel, Godet, Westcott). Beasley-Murray cautiously adopts this view, commenting, "Pharisees like Nicodemus should not stand aloof from the call to repentance for the kingdom of God issued by John the Baptist and by Jesus, for *all* stand in need of God's forgiveness and the recreating work of the Holy Spirit, which is as imminent as the kingdom itself."
- ii) The reference is to Christian baptism. Some proponents say these words mean that water baptism is necessary to, but not sufficient for, salvation.
- iii) The reference is to natural (first) birth (so Leon Morris).
- iv) A new begetting of 'water and spirit' refers to the cleansing and renewal spoken of in many places in the Old Testament, pictured there sometimes in terms of water, sometimes in terms of spirit (so Carson). The point, however, is clear: the work of the Spirit is essential to salvation – it is God who saves.

For τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ, some cursives and numerous Fathers read τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν. This may be due to the known frequency of the expression in Matt, 'to enter the kingdom of heaven' (Matt 5:20; 7:21; 18:3; 19:23).

Verse 6

τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς σὰρξ ἐστίν, καὶ τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος πνεῦμά ἐστιν.

γεγεννημένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc & n nom/acc s γενναω

σαρξ, σαρκος f flesh, physical body, human nature

σαρξ and πνεῦμα are not two sides to human nature but represent two contrasting orders of existence – the earthly, from man, and the heavenly, from God.

Verse 7

μὴ θαυμάσης ὅτι εἶπόν σοι, Δεῖ ὑμᾶς γεννηθῆναι ἄνωθεν.

θαυμάσης Verb, aor act subj, 2 s θαυμαζω wonder, be amazed

δεῖ impersonal verb it is necessary, must

Note the plural ὑμᾶς – a response to Nicodemus' "we know" of v.2. Through Nicodemus Jesus addresses those whom he represents. Carson says that the plural is "a strengthening form of the generalising 'anyone' or 'a man' (Gk τις) in 3:3, 5."

Verse 8

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.

τὸ πνεῦμα the play on the two meanings of the word, 'wind' and 'spirit', cannot easily be reproduced in English.

ὅπου adv. where

θελω wish, will

πνεω blow (of wind)

φωνη, ης f sound

ποθεν interrog adv. from where

ποῦ interrogative adverb where

ὑπαγω go, go one's way, depart

οὕτως and οὕτω adv. thus, in this way

The work of the Spirit is secret and cannot be observed – though the effects of his work are visible. We cannot ask *how* the Spirit regenerates but we can ask *whether* he has regenerated. "Men cannot in themselves fathom the operation of the Spirit, but the Spirit himself is able to bring them within the sphere of his own activity and impart his own properties to them. Through the Spirit men live not in this age but in the age to come." Barrett. Cf. 1:13.

Day 1034: John 3:9-15

Verse 9

ἀπεκρίθη Νικόδημος καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Πῶς δύναται ταῦτα γενέσθαι;

ἀπεκρίθη see v.3

"Not, How can these things be? but, How can these things happen?" Barrett.

Verse 10

ἀπεκρίθη Ἰησοῦς καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Σὺ εἶ ὁ διδάσκαλος τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ταῦτα οὐ γινώσκεις;

διδασκαλος, ου m see v.2

"The article emphasises the status of Nicodemus: the great, universally recognised, teacher." Barrett.

Verse 11

ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι ὅτι ὁ οἶδαμεν
λαλοῦμεν καὶ ὁ ἑώρακαμεν μαρτυροῦμεν,
καὶ τὴν μαρτυρίαν ἡμῶν οὐ λαμβάνετε.

οἶδα know, understand

λαλεω speak, talk

ἑώρακαμεν Verb, perf act indic, 1 pl ὄραω
see, observe

μαρτυρεω bear witness, testify

μαρτυρια, ας f testimony, witness,
evidence

What is the significance of the plural verbs?
Barrett suggests that just as through
Nicodemus Jesus addresses all the unbelieving
Jews, so here he speaks not for himself alone
but also for his disciples – for believers who
have known the work of the Spirit.
Carson suggests that "Jesus is sardonically
aping the plural that Nicodemus affected when
he first approached Jesus (v 2)."

Verse 12

εἰ τὰ ἐπίγεια εἶπον ὑμῖν καὶ οὐ πιστεύετε,
πῶς ἂν εἶπω ὑμῖν τὰ ἐπουράνια
πιστεύσετε;

ἐπίγειος, ον earthly, of the earth

εἶπον Verb, aor act indic, 1s & 3pl λεγω

πιστευω believe (in), have faith (in)

ἂν if

εἶπω Verb, aor act subj, 1s λεγω

ἐπουράνιος, ον heavenly

Barrett understands Jesus to mean that he has
spoken in parables, in terms of familiar earthly
things, and that this should have evoked faith
in Nicodemus. If it has not, how will
Nicodemus believe if Jesus speaks directly –
without earthly illustration – of heavenly
things.

Carson thinks that the 'earthly things' may be
the new birth, which though 'from above' takes
place in the sphere of this present world.

"Jesus says, in effect, that entrance into the
kingdom depends absolutely on new birth; if
Nicodemus stumbles over this elementary
point of entry, then what is the use of going on
to explain more of the details of life in the
kingdom? The 'heavenly things' are then the
splendours of the consummated kingdom, and
what it means to live under such glorious,
ineffable rule."

Verse 13

καὶ οὐδεὶς ἀναβέβηκεν εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν εἰ
μὴ ὁ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταβάς, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ
ἀνθρώπου.

οὐδεὶς, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing

ἀναβέβηκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s

ἀναβαινω go up, come up, ascend

εἰ μὴ except

Carson argues that εἰ μὴ introduces an
exception to the previous idea. Here it should
not be translated 'except' (suggesting that
Jesus *has* ascended into heaven) but should be
translated 'but' or 'but rather,' cf. Rev 21:27 for
a similar usage.

καταβάς Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s

καταβαινω come or go down, descend

No one can go up into heaven to seek to
discover God for himself. The only way to
know God is through Christ who has come as
the revelation of God.

Many authorities add at the end of the verse
the phrase 'who is in heaven'; some alter it to
'who was in heaven,' and yet others to 'who is
from heaven.' The omission is supported by P⁶⁶
and P⁷⁵ & B L. The early attestation of the
shorter reading inclined the UBS editors to
follow it.

Verse 14

καὶ καθὼς Μωϋσῆς ὑψωσεν τὸν ὄφιν ἐν
τῇ ἐρήμῳ, οὕτως ὑψωθῆναι δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν
τοῦ ἀνθρώπου,

καθὼς as, just as

ὑψωω exalt, lift up, raise

ὄφις, εως m snake, serpent

ἐρημος, ου f deserted place, desert

Cf. Numb 21:4-9.

οὕτως and οὕτω thus, in this way

ὑψωθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin ὑψωω

Cf. Is 52:13. This verb can be used of Jesus'
ascension, but John clearly has the cross in
mind (cf. 8:28; 12:32, 34). "He will be lifted
up on the cross... and his lifting up will result
not only in glory for himself but also in
healing for mankind." Barrett.

δεῖ impersonal verb it is necessary, must

"In the Fourth Gospel these themes – the
divine revelation, exaltation and the obedient
suffering of the Son – constantly congregate
around the title 'the Son of Man' (cf. notes on
1:51). He *must* be lifted up: that is the
determined purpose of God (cf. Mk 8:31;
10:45). By his being lifted up, Jesus the Son
of Man will be returned to the glory he once
shared with his Father, while those who turn to
him, as the Israelites turned to the bronze
snake, will experience new birth." Carson.

Verse 15

ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ἐν αὐτῷ ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

"The expression ὁ πιστεύων ἐν αὐτῷ has caused confusion in the textual tradition. The text is read in P⁷⁵ B, whereas P⁶⁶ reads ἐπ αὐτῷ, P⁶³ (apparently) κ and most MSS read εἰς αὐτόν, and A reads ἐπ αὐτόν. In this Gospel πιστεύειν is [elsewhere] always followed by εἰς (34 times). Both the unusualness and the ambiguity speak for the originality of ἐν αὐτῷ; in that case it must be viewed as an adverbial phrase, linked with ἔχη: 'may in him have life eternal' (so Metzger ... and most recent commentators)." Beasley-Murray.

ζωη, ης f life

αἰώνιος, ον eternal, everlasting

Not just a future 'eternal life' but the life of the age to come which is also a present reality for the one who has come to know Christ the exalted one.

Day 1035: John 3:16-21**Verses 16-21**

Carson argues that vv 16-21 are the Evangelist's explanatory reflections on the words of Jesus that precede. Beasley-Murray similarly speaks of these verses as "A confessional summary of the Gospel."

Verse 16

Οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον, ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν, ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ' ἔχη ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

οὕτως and οὕτω see v.8

Emphasises the intensity of the love.

ἀγαπαω love, show love for

"The world as a whole is the object of God's love, but that very fact causes the distinction drawn in v.18 between ὁ πιστευων and ὁ μη πιστευων." Barrett.

ὥστε so that, with the result that
μονογενης, ες only, unique

Cf. 1:14, also Gen 22.

ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s δίδωμι

"Here alone in the Fourth Gospel the love of God for the rebellious *world* is stated to be the reason for the incarnation and death of Christ; more characteristically love for the disciples and the evil of the world are stressed. That is no reason for diminishing the importance of this statement; it is the fundamental summary of the message of this Gospel and should therefore be seen as the background of the canvas on which the rest of the Gospel is painted. Becker points out that this 'comprehensive horizon' appears elsewhere (e.g., 1:7, 9; 12:32), and suggests that the Evangelist consciously resisted the tendency in the Church to isolationism." Beasley-Murray.

ἀπόληται Verb, aor midd subj ἀπολλυμι
destroy; midd be lost, perish, die

Verse 17

οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν εἰς τὸν κόσμον ἵνα κρίνη τὸν κόσμον, ἀλλ' ἵνα σωθῆ ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ.

ἀπέστειλεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s

ἀποστελλω send, send out

κρινω judge, pass judgement on,
condemn

"The process of judgement is an inseparable concomitant of salvation; no real contradiction is involved when Jesus says that he came both not to judge and to judge." Barrett. Barrett provides a useful summary of the theme of judgement in John.

σωθῆ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s σωζω save,
rescue, heal

Verse 18

ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν οὐ κρίνεται· ὁ δὲ μὴ πιστεύων ἤδη κέκριται, ὅτι μὴ πεπίστευκεν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ μονογενοῦς υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ.

"The present verse may be regarded as a statement of the negative aspect of the doctrine of justification by faith. The believer (though a sinner) does not come under condemnation; but the absence of faith calls down condemnation upon itself, or, better, is itself an aspect, the subjective aspect, of condemnation. The reason for this is shown in the next verse." Barrett.

ἤδη adv now, already

κέκριται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s κρινω

"The judgement is already past, but the sentence remains." Barrett.

"Already in need of a Saviour before God's Son comes on his saving mission, this person compounds his or her guilt by not believing in the name of that Son. As with the arrogant critic who mocks a masterpiece, it is not the masterpiece that is condemned but the critic." Carson.

ὄνομα, τος n name, person

Verse 19

αὕτη δέ ἐστιν ἡ κρίσις, ὅτι τὸ φῶς ἐλήλυθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον καὶ ἠγάπησαν οἱ ἄνθρωποι μᾶλλον τὸ σκότος ἢ τὸ φῶς, ἦν γὰρ αὐτῶν πονηρὰ τὰ ἔργα.

Barrett's thinks the words here reflect the predestinarian teaching of this gospel: "Men are divided into two classes, those who do evil and those who do the truth." Barrett's assertion needs to be balanced by the stress on faith drawn out in response to confrontation with Christ (e.g. the *growing* faith of the man born blind in ch 9).

κρίσις, εως f judgement, condemnation
φως, φωτος n light

Cf. 1:4.

ἐλήλυθεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s ἐρχομαι
μαλλον adv more; rather, instead
σκοτος, ους n darkness, evil
ἢ or, than
πονηρος, α, ον evil, bad, wicked

Verse 20

πᾶς γὰρ ὁ φαῦλα πράσων μισεῖ τὸ φῶς καὶ οὐκ ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸ φῶς, ἵνα μὴ ἐλεγχθῇ τὰ ἔργα αὐτοῦ·

φauλος, η, ον evil, wrong, bad
πρασσω practice, do
μισεω hate
ἐλεγχθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s ἐλεγχω
show (someone his) fault, show
(something) up for what it is, convict

"The word is used at 16:8 of the activity of the Paraclete, and signifies a convincing exposure." Barrett.

"The verb suggests not only exposure but shame and conviction." Carson.

Some MSS, including P⁶⁶, add to the verse ὅτι πονηρὰ ἐστίν ('because [or 'that'] they are evil'). There appears to be no obvious reason for the deletion of the phrase; it could have been added from v 19

Verse 21

ὁ δὲ ποιῶν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸ φῶς, ἵνα φανερωθῇ αὐτοῦ τὰ ἔργα ὅτι ἐν θεῷ ἐστὶν εἰργασμένα.

ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality; ἐν ᾧ. truly
φανερωθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s

φανερωω make known, reveal, make evident

εἰργασμένα Verb, perf pass ptc, n nom/acc
pl ἐργαζομαι work, do, perform

What he has done has been done "in union with Him, and therefore by His power." Westcott. He comes to the light not to show off what he has done but what God has done.

Carson concludes, "The purpose of these three verses, then, is not to encourage readers to think they fall into a deterministic category bound up with their intrinsic nature, but to make them see the imminence of their danger (the verdict is being declared), and the fundamentally moral reasons why people hate the light. John stresses these points in the hope that his readers will beseech God that all they do may be done through him – in short, that they will turn to the 'lifted up' Son of Man with the same simple, desperate, unqualified faith as the Israelites displayed who turned to the bronze snake in the desert (vv 13-15). By such faith and such faith alone can anyone experience the new birth (vv. 3, 5) and thereby gain eternal life (vv 15-16)."