

Shepherd My Sheep (Jn 21:1–25)
Jaunting through John (Message 56)

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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND: What about John 21?

Some Bible teachers argue that John 21 is not part of the book, because they do not know how to reconcile it with the evangelistic purpose of the book (John 20:30–31)

1. We should reject their view, because no manuscript has been found that omits chapter 21

2. The problem is (rather) that the common view of the meaning of John 21 is faulty. (Many expositors who regard John 21 as part of the book still misinterpret John 21)

BACKGROUND: Why is it that the disciples went up to Galilee?

1. Jesus told them to go there:

Mat 28:16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them.

2. This is where they normally reside

- A. Jn 1:44 says Philip, Andrew & Peter were from Bethsaida (on the Sea of Galilee)
- B. Mk 1:16–19 shows that James and John also resided in (or near) Bethsaida
- C. Jn 21:2 says that Nathanael was from Cana of Galilee

Note: Peter was married (cf. Mt 8:14) & lived in Capernaum (cf. Mt 8:5)
(He likely moved from Bethsaida to Capernaum after becoming a disciple)

3. Jesus headquartered in Capernaum in Galilee for His 3½ year ministry

Matthew, Mark & Luke show that Jesus spent most of His time in Galilee, but John tells us that Jesus went to Jerusalem for the various feasts (Jn 2:13ff.; 7:1ff.; 10:22ff, etc.)

Therefore, my take is that Jesus told His disciples to go home (to Galilee). He would meet them at a designated mountain (at a designated date and time).

However, John 21 preceded Mt 28:16's meeting. Mt 28:16–17 said the 11 met Him at a mountain, but Jn 21:2–3 is a meeting w/ 7 disciples who were fishing in one boat.

Thus, I take it that the disciples expected to meet Jesus at a later date,

NEW EXPOSITION

(21:1–14) Jesus Appears to the Disciples by the Sea of Galilee

(21:1–2) Later, Jesus manifested Himself to seven disciples by Lake Tiberias (Sea of Galilee)

John does not tell us how much later this is, but mentions locked doors at 2 prior appearances (Jn 20:19 and 26). It seems that both appearances were in Jerusalem. The appearance to Thomas was Sunday, Apr 12, AD 33 (1 wk after His resurrection). I suspect that the eleven remained in Judea for the entire Feast of Unleavened Bread (the seven days following Passover).

It would take two days to travel to Galilee. That second day would be an all-day walk, so I doubt that they would have gone fishing the night after arriving in Galilee. Thus, the earliest that John 21 could occur would be Wednesday, April 15.

Those present were:

1. Simon Peter
2. Thomas
3. Nathanael
- 4–5. Zebedee's sons: James & **John** (cf. Mat 4:21)
- 6–7. Two other disciples

Note that John was present: The author would need to be one of the seven present, because John 21:24 indicates that the book of John consists of events which the author witnessed

(21:3) Peter said he was going fishing, six others joined him, but they caught nothing that night
Many preachers suggest that the disciples evidence unbelief by going fishing. Are they right?

(21:4) Jesus stood on the shore at daybreak, but the disciples did not recognize Him

(21:5) When asked if they had caught nothing, they acknowledged that they had caught nothing
Questions with *ouk* (*not*) expect a positive answer: *It is Sunday, isn't it?* (Yes, it is)
Questions with *mē* (*not*) expect a negative answer: *It isn't Monday, is it?* (No, it isn't)
The question has *mē*, expecting a negative answer.

(21:6) Jesus said to cast their net to starboard, which yielded such a heavy catch that they could not haul the net into the boat

Remember what Jesus said in John 15:4

(21:7–8) John said *It is the Lord*, so Peter put on his outer garment and swam to shore, while the others rowed 100 yards to shore, dragging the net

Note that they obeyed before recognizing who said to cast on the starboard

(21:9) When they came ashore with the boat, they saw that Jesus had bread and was barbecuing fish on a charcoal fire

(21:10–11) Jesus told [Peter] to bring some of their fresh-caught fish; who [with help] dragged the net with 153 large fish ashore, but the net did not tear

Musht (Tilapia) are the largest fish in the Sea of Galilee (they can weigh 3+ pounds each)

Most of these guys made a living by selling the fish they caught: Of course they counted the fish. There is no symbolic meaning to the number 153.

(21:12) Jesus invited them to breakfast; none of them brashly asked His identity, because they knew that He was the Lord

Many interpreters stumble over *None dared ask. . . because they knew*

(21:13) Jesus served them bread and fish on His third appearance to the disciples

(21:15–19) Jesus Reinstates Peter

(21:15) After breakfast, Jesus asked Peter if he loved Him more than [he loved] the disciples; Peter said that he loved Him, so Jesus commanded him to feed His lambs

1. Many treat this as if Jesus asked Peter, *Do you love Me more than [other disciples] love Me?* Context disproves this theory that Jesus sought for Peter to become a fruit inspector.

Instead, Jesus accepts Peter and desires for him to focus on loving and serving Him

Many interpreters try to make a big point of the switch between *agapaō* and *phileō*.

However, John uses the two terms interchangeably:

So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, “Lord, the one You love (*phileō*) is sick.”⁴ When Jesus heard it, He said, “This sickness will not end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”⁵ Now Jesus loved (*agapaō*) Martha and her sister and Lazarus. . . . So the Judeans said, “See how He loved (*phileō*) Him.” (11^{3-5, 36})

John is called *the disciple Jesus loved* using *agapaō* in 13:23, but *phileō* in 20:2.

Furthermore, Jesus treats the term *friend* (*philos*):

You are My friends (*philos*) if you do whatever I command you. I don’t call you servants any more, because a servant does not know what his master is doing. But I have called you friends (*philos*), because I have made known to you everything I have heard from My Father. (11¹⁴⁻¹⁵)

Jesus	Peter
(21:15a) Do you love me? (<i>agapaō</i>)	(21:15b) I love you (<i>phileō</i>)
(21:16a) Do you love me? (<i>agapaō</i>)	(21:16b) I love you (<i>phileō</i>)
(21:17a) Do you love me? (<i>phileō</i>)	(21:17b) I love you (<i>phileō</i>)

2. Who are His sheep in this context? My take on John 10 is that they are believers. How does this fit within the flow of John, a book designed for unbelievers? It fits very simply. The new under-shepherds must resemble the Good Shepherd, not the wicked shepherds who fleece the flock and who run away when the wolf comes.

(21:16) Jesus asked a second time if he loved Him; Peter said that he loved Him, so Jesus commanded him to shepherd His sheep

(21:17) Peter grieved that Jesus asked a third time if he loved Him; responding that He knew everything, including that he loved Him, so Jesus commanded him to feed His sheep

(21:18–19) Jesus said that when Peter was young, he fastened his own belt and went where he wanted, but in his old age, he will stretch out his hands and be led where he does not want to go: specifically, Peter would glorify God by being crucified; then Jesus told Peter to follow Him

Note the allusion to John 15:13

Peter denied Jesus three times (Jn 13:37–38; 18:17, 25–27). Now Jesus encourages him to affirm His love for Christ three times.

(21:20–23) What about John?

(21:20–21) Peter asked *What would become of John?* (the disciple who was close enough to Jesus at Passover to ask about the betrayer)

(21:22–23) Jesus said that it was not Peter’s concern (even if He wanted John to remain until He comes), but brethren misunderstood it as an affirmation that John would remain until He comes

Observe that Jesus promised to return, but left the timing vague. It is yet future, even now.

(21:24–25) John’s Book

(21:24) John testifies truthfully with regard to that which he wrote in this book, and we know that His testimony is valid (because it is corroborated by other witnesses)

(21:25) Jesus did so many other things that the world would be hard-pressed to produce the books that would be needed for a truly comprehensive account

CONCLUSION

<p>Soon You Will Not See Me: 16:16-33: Soon the 11 would not see JC, but soon they would see Him; some puzzled over this; He said they would grieve, but the world would be glad, but sorrow would turn to joy, as labor pains change to joy, when a child is born; their sorrow will change to unshakeable joy, when they see Him again, so they will not then ask Him [but will ask the Father in His name]; The Father will give what they ask in His name; He will soon speak plainly about the Father; then they will pray to the Father (directly) in His name, because the Father loves them; He acknowledges that they believe Him, but will soon scatter, leaving the Shepherd alone—though the Father will remain with Him; He said these things so they may have peace (despite tribulation from the world); they are to believe Him: He has conquered the world</p>
<p>Glorify Your Son: 17:1-11a: JC asked the Father to glorify the Son so JC may glorify the Father, which is like JC's glory in having authority over all flesh so the Son would [glorify the Father by] giving EL to bels the Father gave to Christ, who know the Father & Christ [those lacking EL don't know Father or Son]; JC glorified the Father on earth by finishing work the Father gave Him; JC prays for the Father to glorify Him in His presence w/ the glory He had before creating the world; JC revealed the Father to the 11 (that kept His word) given Him from the world; the 11 know that the Father is the source of what Christ has given them, because He told them the words the Father gave to Christ and they received them as the words of the Father who sent Him; JC prays for the 11 who belong to the Father and were given to Him by the Father, so this prayer is not for the world in general; but for the ones who belong to Christ & the Father, who have glorified Christ; the 11 will remain in the world when Christ returns to the Father</p>
<p>Prayer for all bels: 17:11b-26: JC prays that GF unite those He gave Him, as JC & GF are united; He protected them, only Judas is lost; JC returns to GF, so He wants His joy fulfilled in them (requiring GF's protection); JC has given the 11 GF's word, but world hates them because they are not of world, just as (it hated) JC who is not of world; so He prays for protection while they are in world, not removal from world, tho they do not belong to world, just as JC did not belong to world; JC prays that GF sanctify the 11 (to serve GF) by His true word; JC sent the 11 into world, as GF sent Him; JC sanctified Himself (to do GF's will) so that the 11 would also be sanctified (to do GF's will) by truth; JC prays both for the 11 & that (1) those who will believe thru their world will be united as GF & Son are united & (2) that world would believe that GF sent JC; The glory JC received from GF [to glorify GF in unity w/ Him] He has given to the 11 [to glorify GF in unity w/ JC & GF], so they would be mature in unity & so world may know that GF sent JC & loves bels; JC prays that bels may be w/ Him, so they may see the glory GF gave Him because GF eternally loves JC; tho world doesn't know GF, JC knows Him & the 11 know that GF sent Him; thus JC revealed & will reveal GF to the 11, so they may share in GF's love for JC</p>
<p>Jesus Betrayed & Arrested: 18:1-11: JC & the 11 entered a grove [Gethsemane] that Judas knew, because JC often went there; so Judas led armed Jewish leaders & Roman officials & soldiers; but JC met them & asked whom they seek, because He knew what would befall Him; they said <i>Jesus the Nazarene</i>; He said <i>I am</i> & they fell to the ground; He again asked who they sought; they said <i>Jesus the Nazarene</i>; He said He already told them; He told them to let the 11 go, fulfilling His statement that He had not lost any of them; Peter cut off right ear of the HP's servant, but JC said to sheathe his dagger, because JC will indeed drink the cup the Father gave Him</p>
<p>Jesus' night trials: 18:12-27: JC was arrested & first taken to Annas, whose son-in-law Caiaphas, the high priest, had said <i>It is good for one man to die for the people</i>; Peter & John followed JC; John (who knew the high priest) entered the high priest's yard w/ JC (John asked the doorkeeper to let Peter in & she asked him if he were JC's disciple; he denied it); Annas questioned JC about His disciples & His teaching; JC said He spoke openly, not having a secret agenda; JC challenged procedures; the high priest should question witnesses that heard His teaching; A guard struck JC & rebuked Him for insubordination; JC challenged the propriety of striking Him; instead, they should determine whether proof of evildoing exists; Annas sent Him to Caiaphas; Peter denied JC two more times; then a cock crowed</p>
<p>Manipulation of Pilate: 18:28-40: In early a.m. officials took JC to the praetorium (but didn't enter); PP came out & asked the charge against JC (opening new trial); they tried to steer PP back to the prior charge; he said to try JC [no threat to Rome], but refused because they lacked capital authority (fulfilling JC's prediction of how He would die); PP asked JC: <i>Are You the Judean King?</i> JC asked if question came from PP or high priests; PP retorted that he is not Judean [so it is not his own question], but asked why His own nation & high priests betrayed Him to PP; JC said that His kingdom isn't of this world, because (if it were) His disciples would fight, so Judeans wouldn't arrest Him; PP asked if He were a king; JC said that PP said it Himself; JC was born & came into world to testify to truth; those of the truth hear Him; PP scoffed at JC's claim to represent truth & left; PP told Judean officials that he exonerated JC; PP referred to his custom of releasing a prisoner & [hoping crowds would disagree with the leaders] & asked if he should release the King of the Judeans; the crowds shouted to release Barabbas, an insurrectionist</p>
<p>Behold the Man: 19:1-16: Pilate had Jesus (though declared innocent) flogged; Soldiers put a wreath of thorns & a purple robe on Him, hailed Him as <i>King of the Judeans</i> & struck Him; Pilate proclaimed Him innocent; temple officials shouted <i>Crucify Him!</i> Pilate [taunted them by] saying <i>Crucify Him yourselves</i> (but they could not); they making Himself God's Son is a capital offence; Pilate fearfully asked JC where He was from, but He did not answer him; Pilate reminded Jesus of his authority to crucify or release so He would answer; Jesus said his jurisdiction in this trial only came about by God's design [that the Judean authorities would betray Him to Pilate], so (Caiaphas) who handed Him to Pilate has greater culpability; Pilate planned to release Jesus, but Judean officials shouted that he would not be Caesar's friend, because One who sets Himself up as king opposes Caesar; Pilate sat at the <i>bēma</i> seat (to pronounce judgment); At about 6:00 a.m. on Friday of Passover, Pilate said: <i>Behold your King</i>; they shouted to crucify Him & that Caesar was their only king; Pilate handed Jesus over to be crucified and He was led away</p>
<p>Tetelestai: 19:17-30: Jesus went, carrying His cross to Golgotha & was crucified between two others; many Judeans read Pilate's trilingual sign <i>Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Judeans</i>; chief priests asked that it be changed to <i>He claimed to be King of the Judeans</i>, but Pilate refused; 4 soldiers divided the garments by casting lots, including the seamless woven tunic, fulfilling Psalm 22:18; 4 women ene stood near the cross; Jesus entrusted His mother to the care of John; Jesus knew that everything was accomplished, fulfilled Scripture by saying, <i>I thirst</i>; a soldier dipped a sponge in sour wine & held it to His mouth; after drinking, Jesus said that His work for the Father was completed & gave up His spirit</p>
<p>The Crucified One Lives: 19:31-20:10: Judeans asked Pilate to break legs to empty the crosses for Sabbath; they broke the others' legs, but not JC, who already died; a soldier speared Him; blood & H₂O came; John testifies truthfully, so readers may believe; unbroken bones, despite pre-Sabbath crucifixion fulfill OT; using a spear & no broken bones will fulfill <i>Looking upon One they pierced</i>; Joseph, a previously secret disciple (because of Judeans) asked for & got His body; Nicodemus brought 100 lbs of spices; they bound Him in linen w/ spices (as Judeans do) into a nearby tomb before Sabbath; early Sunday a.m. Mary Magdalene saw the moved stone & told Peter & John; John stooped w/o entering & saw the clothes; Peter entered & also saw the cloths; John entered, saw & believed; they did not yet know Scripture that JC must rise; they went home</p>
<p>Blessed Ones who Haven't seen: 20:11-31: Mary Magdalene looked inside the tomb, crying; 2 seated angels asked <i>Why are you crying?</i> she said Jesus' body was stolen; she saw a man who asked <i>Why are you crying? & Who are you looking for?</i> so she asked where the body was, so she could take it; Jesus said <i>Mary!</i> she said <i>Rabboni!</i> Jesus said Don't cling, because I haven't yet gone to the Father. Tell the 11 that I will ascend to My Father; she said she saw the Lord & told His words; that evening, as the 10 were behind locked doors (fearing Judeans) Jesus entered & greeted them w/ peace; He showed His wounds; they were overjoyed to see Him; He sent them, as the Father sent Him; He breathed the Spirit upon them, commissioned them to forgive; Thomas was absent, so they kept saying that they saw the Lord; Thomas said that only touching Jesus' wounds would persuade him; a week later, as Thomas was w/ them behind locked doors, Jesus entered & greeted them w/ peace; Jesus urged Thomas to touch & believe (that He is resurrected); Thomas confessed Jesus as his Lord & God; Jesus acknowledged that seeing (Him) resulted in Thomas believing, but spoke highly of those who already believed w/o seeing Him; the (apostolic) disciples could testify to many other signs not recorded in this book, but John included 8 signs that unbels would receive (everlasting) life in Jesus' name by believing in Jesus as the life-giving Messianic Son of God</p>