

THE FIRST DAYS IN THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN

DIFFERENT POSSIBILITIES

I. The first day - John the Baptist identifies himself with the "voice in the desert" preparing the way for the day of the Lord and the greater one to come. John's baptism is preparing people for this coming. See Ez. 36:25-32; Mal. 3:22-24. As with the first day of creation, light is coming into a dark world.

II. The second day - John the Baptist points out Jesus in person and witnesses to Him especially in terms of the Lamb of God and the Son of God who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. As with the second day of creation, there is a distinction between the waters above and the waters below.

III. The third day - John the Baptist again describes Jesus as the Lamb of God and now his disciples (Andrew and likely John begin to come to Christ. On the third day of creation, land rose out of the water. Here the new place for Christians (the place where Jesus resides) arises from the waters of the baptism of John.

- The call of Peter may have been this day or the next day. There is a textual variance, as well as some ambiguity about the meanings of the words. On the fourth day, the light was ordered into the sun, the moon and the stars. Here the greater light of Jesus is shining on in His early disciples and, under Peter, that light will be ordered.

IV. The fourth or fifth day - The theme of evangelizing continues and expands into visions of the new kingdom. Jesus personally now calls Phillip, who in turn seeks out Nathaniel. Using the image of a fig tree, Jesus speaks in prophetic terms and Nathaniel accepts Him as the Messiah. Again, as with the fourth day, the light of Christ is showing forth in His disciples. Or, as on the fifth day, when God filled the waters and the air with fish and birds, the purification of the waters (symbolized by John's baptism, given by Jesus' baptism) are now filled with glorious visions of the Messianic kingdom. See Isaiah 11; Daniel 7; Micah 4:4; Psalm 2.

V. "The third day" - Jesus turns water into wine at the wedding feast of Cana. He, at Mary's request reverse the division between man and woman, and humanity and nature that came from the fall. If the day when Jesus called Philip and Nathaniel is the first of the three days, then this day would be either the sixth or the seventh day, depending on whether their call was on the fourth or the fifth day. If, by contrast, the counting of the three days begins only with the day after the call of Philip and Nathaniel, this day of Cana is either the seventh or the eighth day.

- If it is the sixth day, it may symbolize the order of the garden of Eden, with Jesus and Mary as the new Adam and Eve, presented to the world on this, the new sixth day.
- If it is the seventh day, it may symbolize the new peace and rest of the now restored Sabbath.
- If it is the eighth day, it may symbolize the first day of a new creation, as the first Resurrection appearances did, which were also on the first days of the week. See John 20:1; 19.
- In all cases, this miracle seems to represent a reversal of the Fall of Man and anticipate the Resurrection, which will, according to Jesus' prophecies recorded in other Gospels, also be on "the third day" after His death. The silent days anticipate the days of the silence when Jesus was in the tomb.

VI. If the Gospel account here skips the sixth day, which seems likely, another reason for skipping that day is probably that the Gospel is to recount what will happen on the new sixth day, i.e.. the death of Christ, described in this Gospel also as the glorification and lifting up of Christ.