

Gospel of John

Study Questions

Chapter 4:

1. What did the tension between the Pharisees and John the Baptist, and later Jesus, reveal about the expectations of the Messiah during that time?
2. How might the Pharisees' focus on geographic origins (Bethlehem vs. Nazareth) have limited their ability to recognize Jesus's true identity?
3. If the passage states that Jesus "knew what was going on in Jerusalem," what does this imply about his awareness of human intentions, and how does it relate to his divine nature?
4. Beyond the literal act of "preparing the way," what deeper spiritual or theological meaning can be attributed to John the Baptist's role in heralding Jesus?
5. Why might Jesus's journey through Samaria have been a deliberate choice rather than a mere geographical necessity, considering the historical animosity between Jews and Samaritans?
6. How did the people's "turning to Jesus in great numbers" challenge the established religious authority of the Pharisees, and what was at stake for both parties?
7. The text mentions John was "not worthy to unloose" Jesus's shoe latchet. What cultural or social significance did this act of service hold, and how does it emphasize the difference in their status?
8. Considering the Pharisees' apprehension, how do you think Jesus's teachings on topics like love, forgiveness, and humility would have been received by those focused on strict religious law and tradition?
9. What is the significance of the "stir" caused by John's ministry, and how did this prepare the spiritual ground for Jesus's own ministry?
10. The passage highlights a subtle tension. How can we apply the lesson of "subtly arising tensions" to modern contexts, and what does it teach us about recognizing and addressing conflict?