Navigating the Living Waters of the Gospel of John: On Wading with Children and Swimming with Elephants

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Abstract
The Fourth Gospel has been called "a stream in which a child can wade and an elephant can swim."
John has long been used as a primer for newcomers to faith, and it continues to be a favorite devotional reading for young and old alike. On the other hand, John continues to be an ongoing storm center among the finest of Bible scholars and theologians. John’s content, complete with its theological tensions, evoked three centuries of debate in the early church, and it continues to produce great torrents of diverse scholarly opinion on a great number of issues into the twenty-first century. The question I want to explore is Why? What is it that renders John so reader friendly on one hand, and so theologically puzzling on the other? Put otherwise, how does one navigate the “living waters” of the Gospel of John?

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The Gospel of John is a mystical reflection on the Word Made Flesh - Jesus Christ. His Gospel is the only one which presents the miracle of the wedding feast at Cana, the discourse on the Bread of Life, the raising of Lazarus, the references to the living water and the Holy Spirit, the washing of the disciples’ feet, the Prayer of Jesus, and his words to Mary and John at the Cross. John portrays Jesus in control of the events leading up to the Crucifixion, as events He must undergo to be obedient to His Father and save mankind. The Sacraments of Baptism (Chapter 3) and Eucharist (Chapter 6) are unequivocally presented in the Gospel of John. The Gospel begins with John 1 All modern Cetacea live in water and cannot survive out of the water. In spite of this, cetaceans are mammals. Like other mammals and unlike other vertebrates, they nurse their young; they have three ear bones that are involved in sound transmission (hammer, anvil, and stirrup), and their lower jaws consist of a single bone (the dentary). Another surprising feature in the skeleton of Indohyus was found in the bones of its extremities. The larger bones of the extremities of mammals are usually hollow, and the cavity in them is filled with bone marrow. Usually, on cross section (Fig. 8 ), the marrow cavity of the femur (the thighbone) makes up more than 60% of the total thickness of the bone, and the bony walls, called cortex, are thin.