

7.08.18 ~ **John 12:17-26**, "Gentiles Seek Jesus."

In order to refresh our memories and get a little background information before we read today's section of Scripture, let's take a look at **John 11:18-19, 30-34, 39-46**.

Read John 12:17-18... So, those who had been there when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, are continuing to tell everyone what they had seen. Those who heard them were intrigued and went out to meet Jesus as He came into Jerusalem at the south end of the Mount of Olives.

And so, the crowd from Bethany who had believed in Jesus at Lazarus' resurrection were now merging with a crowd from Jerusalem who are both curious and excited to see the miracle worker Himself.

Last week we looked at Jesus' entry into Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey.. **John 12:13** describes this marvelous scene, the people are waving palm branches and shouting, "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the King of Israel." Remember that "Hosanna!" is a contraction of the words "save now" and "please," so that the intent is adoration, praise, and pleading!

The name Jesus is Greek, in Hebrew it is Yeshua, they both mean, "God's salvation," i.e., the people are shouting, "God's Salvation, Please, Save Us!"

All this is going on (**John 12:14-15**) as Jesus rides it into town on a donkey's colt, fulfilling **Zechariah 9:9** [written 500 BC], "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you;... .. humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey."

Read John 12:19... The Pharisees are tracking Jesus' movements; for they have many allegiances among the people, reporting to them where Jesus is and what He is doing (see **John 11:47-48, 53-54; 12:1, 9-11**).

The sad truth is, that in just five days the Pharisees will be able to turn the people against Jesus, so that instead of crying out — "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the King of Israel." — the people will be crying out "Crucify Him!" "Crucify Him!" "Crucify Him!"

Read John 12:20-22... This is so interesting, i.e., here in Jerusalem, the epicenter for all Jewish Worship, Ceremony, Ritual and Sacrifice; during a time when the Religious Leaders are planning to capture and execute Jesus, there are these Greeks [Gentiles] who have come to the feast to Worship the God of the Hebrews and to celebrate Passover.

These Gentile proselytes to Judaism were Greeks who had turned from their pagan polytheistic religion to the One True God, the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth; these Gentile converts were called God-fearers in the Book of Acts (cf. Acts 10:1-2; 17:4, 17).

God's plan was always to save men, women and children from every culture, tongue and nation (cf **John 10:14-16**; see **Acts 10:1-8, 13-16, 30-35, 39-48**).

We are not told, in John's narrative, where these Greeks (**John 12:20**) came from, just that they wanted to see Jesus. But we know they came to Philip and Philip was from Bethsaida of Galilee, which is near the Decapolis [lit. *a group of ten cities*], the inhabitants of these cities were mostly Greek, so it is possible that Philip spoke Greek. Andrew was also from Bethsaida (cf. John 1:44), so Philip goes to confer with Andrew, and together they go to Jesus on behalf of the Greeks.

Read John 12:23-24... This is indeed some heavy theology. Jesus is on the Sanhedrin's hit list, the Religious Leaders of Israel want Him silenced, eradicated, even though He is the Messiah, their Lord and Savior, the One who fulfills all the promises and covenants through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Jesus' response here seems to be directed to any and all who will believe in and follow Him. Look again (**verse 23**), "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified." This is the first time in any of the gospel narratives that Jesus speaks of "His hour" as being present; always before it is off in the future (cf. John 2:4; 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20). But from **John 12:23** on, it is always referred to as expected, just around the corner, i.e., imminent (cf. **John 12:27; 13:1; 16:32**).

John 17:1-5, "Jesus... ..lifting up His eyes to heaven, said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life. This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.'"

Think about it, Jesus is entering Jerusalem to offer Himself as the once for all sacrifice and payment for all sin for all people; on day one, the people are cheering Him as their Savior and King, sent from the LORD to save and bless them.

For the people to hear Jesus say His hour had come, would have probably been understood as it being time for Him to overthrow the Romans and set up His earthly kingdom, as Daniel prophesied 500+ years before Jesus was born.

Daniel 7:13-14,

"I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven, One like a Son of Man was coming, and He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one which will not be destroyed."

But, as we studied last week, the Jews had their timing way off; for although Jesus will one day in the future enter Jerusalem as a conquering King; the next future event in God's chronology will be when all those belonging to Christ are taken up into heaven, followed by the rise of the Anti-christ on earth that will set

off 7 years of Tribulation; after which, Christ will return to earth, coming down out of heaven, riding on a White Stallion, He is the Word of God, the KING of Kings and LORD of Lords, and everyone will see Him (cf. **Revelation 1:7; 19:11-16**).

Here in **John 12:23**, the *hour for the Son of Man to be glorified* has to do with the Lamb of God, God's Son, who dies for the sins of the world and is then raised from the dead by the power of God, demonstrating that He has sovereign authority over Sin, Death, and Judgement forever.

Jesus' statement in **John 12:24**, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit," is antithetical to the Messiah the Jews were looking for [a conquering Messiah-King warrior] who would rid Israel of the Romans and all Gentiles, establishing His Kingdom of blessing and prosperity, now.

But the point Jesus is making is that He will not be glorified by people waving palm branches and shouting, "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the King of Israel." For without God's Son making full payment for our sins, i.e., taking God's wrath (meant for us) upon Himself, there could never be a glorious kingdom that is without sin's curse (See **Revelation 21:1-5**).

2Corinthians 5:21, "He [God] made Him [Jesus] who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

1John 5:1-5, "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

1John 5:20, "And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."

Romans 1:16, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek."

Jesus has come to offer Himself up, although the majority of Jews will reject Him, Gentiles, like these in **John 12:20** will receive Him (cf. **John 1:11-13**)

Galatians 3:26-29, "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise."

Pastor Mike

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