

## **Day 19 Wednesday**

### **John 12:17-33**

**17** Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word.

**18** Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him.

**19** So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!”

**20** Now there were some Greeks among those who went up to worship at the festival.

**21** They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, with a request. “Sir,” they said, “we would like to see Jesus.”

**22** Philip went to tell Andrew; Andrew and Philip in turn told Jesus.

**23** Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

**24** Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.

**25** Anyone who loves their life will lose it, while anyone who hates their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

**26** Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.

**27** “Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour.

**28** Father, glorify your name!”

Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.”

**29** The crowd that was there and heard it said it had thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him.

**30** Jesus said, “This voice was for your benefit, not mine.

**31** Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.

**32** And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”

**33** He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die.

## **There Was Much Going On in Jerusalem**

At this time, Jerusalem is overflowing with pilgrims arriving to celebrate Passover (Deuteronomy 16:16). Not all these travelers are Jewish—some are "Greeks," which in this case is a generic term referring to Gentiles.

Jesus has just entered Jerusalem to great fanfare in the triumphal entry (John 12:12–18). This has renewed His enemies' interest in having Him killed (John 11:53), because of prior events and His raising of Lazarus (John 12:1–11), this has also generated more interest in Jesus and His ministry. The people referred to here among those are Greeks.

## **Plenty of Plots and Plans**

Even though the murderous plans of Jesus' enemies are secret (Matthew 26:4; Mark 14:1), nobody has any doubt that they mean Him harm (John 11:8). That is one possible explanation for why these men are said to approach Philip, specifically.

## **God's Plans Proceed with Caution**

Perhaps Philip was acting as the first layer of security for Jesus, vetting those who wanted to get close to Him (John 12:22). It's also possible that these Greeks approached Philip—who has a Greek name—because they knew of him from his time in Bethsaida.

## **The Interest and Request of the Greeks**

The Gospel does not tell us if Jesus actually met with the Greeks. The emphasis and focus switches to the words of Jesus where he spoke of his coming death and sacrifice. It is likely that Greeks were invited in; and what comes in the following verses may be a summary of that conversation. Jesus' point is simple. Unless he dies, his ministry will not bear much fruit. Those who sanctify God's name might also be required to die with him, but his Father will honor them.

## **Non-Jewish (Gentile) Interest Signaled That It Was Time**

Jesus previously said that the time was not ready:

### **John 7:6**

**1** After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him.

**2** Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand.

**3** His brothers therefore said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing.

**4** For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world."

**5** For even His brothers did not believe in Him.

**6** Then Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready.

**7** The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil.

**8** You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come."

The seeking interest of Gentiles is a signal that now the hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. Now that the hour has come, it is time for Jesus to make the final sacrifice. Jesus never really responded to the Greeks here, but He would on the other side of the cross. So that these Greeks, as well as others, could receive the new life He offered, then Jesus must die (be glorified) first.

The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified: Jesus didn't mean that He would be glorified in the eyes of men. That just happened at the triumphal entry. The glorification Jesus pointed to here was being glorified on the cross. Something the world could only see as disgraceful humiliation, Jesus saw as being glorified.

## **The Importance of the “Voice”**

The gospel of John refers to Jesus' miracles using the Greek term *semeion*, which means "sign." When we see a "sign" by the side of a road, in a hallway, or on the door of a building, we know that there is a message being given.

The sign does not exist for its own sake—it's there to tell people something. The evidence Jesus provides during His earthly ministry does the same thing, pointing people to truth (John 20:30–31). Of course, people often ignore signs, for various reasons. They also ignore God's signs.

While speaking to a crowd in Jerusalem (John 12:20–22), Jesus is answered by a voice from heaven (John 12:28). This is as literal and direct a "message from God" as any skeptic could hope for. In fact, some critics of faith often claim that it would take an incident just like this to convince them. That, of course, is not true.

Evidence is not the problem, the problem is an unbelieving and unrepentant heart (Romans 1:18–20; John 5:39–40; Luke 16:31). Some of those hearing this voice—in the presence of a man who recently raised the dead (John 11:40–43)—dismiss it as meaningless natural noise (John 11:29).

Jesus' comment here specifically refers to that audible voice from heaven. It also applies, generally, to all the evidence God offers humanity. This message is urgent: each person's time is short (James 4:14), and those who ignore the truth risk being lost for eternity (John 3:16–18). After this encounter, the gospel of John will make it clear that spiritual rebellion is at the heart of disbelief (John 12:37–40).