



His Final Steps... Led to Some Greeks

Text: John 12:20-33 NAS 1995

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: During these Wednesdays of Lent, we are on a journey with Jesus as He takes His finals steps:

- 2/22: Raising Lazarus – 2 to 4 weeks before G. Friday.
- 3/1: Being anointed by Mary – the Saturday before Palm Sunday.
- 3/8: Cleansing the Ct. of the Gentiles – Holy Monday.
- 3/15: Cursing the fig tree – Holy Monday Morning; teaching about the withered tree – Holy Tu. Morning.
- Today: Being sought out by Greeks (Gentiles) – late on Holy Tuesday.

1. **The Setting:** ²⁰ Now there were some Greeks among those who were going up to worship at the feast; ²¹ these then came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and *began to ask him, saying, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”* ²² Philip came and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip came and told Jesus. ²³ And Jesus answered them, saying, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.”

- a. The feast: The first three spring feasts – *Passover, Unleavened Bread, and Firstfruits* – were celebrated together during an 8-day period (Lev. 23).

- b. Philip: He was from Bethsaida, *which was near a large Greek area called the Decapolis*. Philip may have known those Greeks. They must have heard much about Jesus – ♦His teaching with authority and ♦His mighty miracles, *so they wanted to see and talk to Jesus*.
- c. Jesus' Reply: When Jesus heard about the request of the Greeks, *He knew His death was drawing near*.¹
2. **Jesus Explained the Necessity of His Death:**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.”** // A seed can remain a seed, BUT if it is planted, *it dies to bear fruit*. Jesus' living without sin is a critical part of His saving work, BUT He also had to †bear our sins, †bear our punishment, and †lay down His life! Now, *over the past 2,000 years*, a multitude of Greeks, *Gentiles* have been brought into God's eternal kingdom!
3. **Jesus Explained the Sacrifice of His Followers:** This section is **SO CHALLENGING** and **SO IMPORTANT** for everyone!
- a. ²⁵ **“He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal.”** // What are YOU living for – *this life or the life to come?* Dr. Kretzmann wrote: **“Only he that hates his life in this present world, that is willing to give up and sacrifice everything for the sake of the Master, will guard and keep his soul unto life eternal.”** Jesus said: **“If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me”** (Lk. 9:23). In other words, he **“must deny his natural self, must give up his**

¹ Creation to Abram (2,000 yrs.) – *focused on everyone!* Abram through Acts 9 (2,000) – *descendants of Abraham!* Acts 10 to the end (2,000 so far) – *Gentiles, Romans 11:25!*

own natural wishes, desires, and inclinations, and must patiently take upon himself all the sufferings and hardships which his confession of Christ will bring upon him" (Kretzmann).

- b. ²⁶ **"If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him."** // To follow Jesus is to BE LIKE Jesus – **NOT** living for self, **BUT** for *the eternal benefit of others!* Those who know Jesus will ♦ live for Him now and ♦ be with Him forever!

4. **Jesus Was Troubled:** ²⁷ **"Now My soul has become troubled** [*as I know My suffering and death are drawing near*]; **and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'** [*spare Me from this suffering and death*]? [**NO!**] **But for this purpose I came to this hour** [*to suffer, die, and bear much fruit*]. // When facing the horrible **+**physical suffering, **+**sin-bearing, and **+**eternal punishment to win our salvation, ***Jesus did not shrink back!*** What is the only right attitude for all who know Jesus as Savior and Lord? **"We are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved"** (Heb. 10:39 NIV).

5. **Jesus Was Encouraged:**

- a. Then, *expressing His resolve to do His Father's will – to complete His saving work*, Jesus said: ²⁸ **Father, glorify Your name."** // That is, *grant the full measure of Your will to crush Me to death for the salvation of the world!*
- b. **Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."** // We have all fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23), but Jesus

glorified His Father with †His putting on of human flesh, †His sinless life, and †His sacrificial death.

- c. ²⁹ So the crowd of people who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, “An angel has spoken to Him.” ³⁰ Jesus answered and said, “This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes.” // As the Father testified about Jesus being His Son when He was baptized and transfigured, *the Father also testified on Holy Tuesday. Based on the voice, Jesus called all of them to believe!*

6. **Jesus Spoke of His Crucifixion and Satan’s Defeat:**

³¹ “**Now judgment** [decision] **is upon this world; now the ruler of this world** [Satan] **will be cast out** [as I defeat him, as I open the way to freedom from his control]. ³² **And I, if I am lifted up from the earth** [when I hang on a cross between heaven and earth], **will draw all men to Myself.**” ³³ **But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die.** // Are people still being controlled by Satan and the forces of evil today? Yes, but there is a way out – **REPENTANCE** (Acts 3:19)! This is the key question: Will people “**stand by Christ, the Redeemer, or by Satan, the destroyer of their souls**”? (Kretzmann).

Let Us Pray: Dearest Jesus, *even though you saw the horror of Your work, TYSVM for pushing forward to defeat Satan and win our salvation! Help us to deny ourselves and live for YOU!*

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