

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #248

Passion Week: Monday... Day of Authority in Action

The Seeking Greeks, And Jesus' Death

JN 12.20-26

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.

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

	CONTEXT DIGEST
Location	The Temple Courts in Jerusalem
Timeline	Early April (Month 39)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage VIII: Passion Week
	B. Monday: Day of Authority in Action
Title	3. The Seeking Greeks, And Jesus' Death

COMMENT:

Today's reading follows the second cleansing of the Temple perfectly. Jesus had cleansed the "Court of the Gentiles" in the morning of all merchandising activities, then policed the Courts to maintain them as a place of prayer, and evangelization of the Gentiles who came seeking God. Now that he had accomplished that task, he saw immediate fruit. Some Greek seekers after God came searching for him in the Court of the Gentiles!

This is one of the most perplexing, yet wonderful scenes in the gospel when we understand it as Jesus did. Oh to see the glory of this encounter that never happened! (For an edifying, full study of this text, please read the attached special supplement, "The Seeking Greeks.")

Jesus had to be excited with the request from the Greek seekers to meet him. This was the beginning of the shift in the loci of the Kingdom from the Jewish people to *"all the nations"*--the Gentiles. It was no small thing to him--it was everything. Yet, he chose not to physically meet with these seekers. Why not?

Notice that Jesus immediately began to speak about his death, through whom he would **"draw all men to myself"** (JN 12.32). The Lord's plan was to take the gospel to "the Greeks"--indeed "all the nations" through his

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body, the Church. The only way the Greeks, the Jews, or any person in the world can really "meet Jesus" was for him to die for their sins, to open up the way of access to himself. Jesus had the full intention to draw these very Greeks to himself in the near future through his death and resurrection, the gospel, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus' teaching about the necessity of his death and resurrection also had a direct relationship to his authority. It was therefore appropriate that he speak of his death on this day featuring that authority. He had said:

"The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life--only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down on my own accord. I have the power to lay it down and the authority to take it up again. I received this command from my Father." (JN 10.17-18)

Sinners have no authority to determine whether we live or die. The wages of sin is death, and we are under God's authoritative judgement regarding it. However, as the sinless Son of God, Jesus had always been alive in God's kind of eternal life. He could never permanently die. However, he also had the divine authority to choose to temporarily give up his life as a sacrifice for sin. Jesus' ability to atone for our sins was a product of his divine power and authority. His Lordship made it possible for him to also become our Savior.

Jesus had many important things to say about his death in these, and the following verses. We would all do well to pay close attention to them, and make them a regular part of our meditations on his life.

APPLICATION:

Jesus was counting on our faithfulness in evangelism and discipleship when he chose not to meet with the seeking Greeks himself. He was leaving it to us!

Who are you seeking to lead to faith in Christ right now? How many lost people are you praying for regularly?

Is the degree of your zeal in personal evangelism appropriate to the trust Jesus has placed in you by giving you his gospel and His Spirit so that you can finish the task?