

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #264

Tuesday of Passion Week... Day of Testing and Teaching

The Apostle John Describes Israel's Rejection of Jesus

JN 12.37-43

37 Even after Jesus had performed so many signs with permanent effects in their presence, they were still refusing to believe in him. 38 This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet:

“LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR MESSAGE
AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?” (Is. 53.1)

39 For this reason they were not able to believe, because, as Isaiah says elsewhere:

40 “HE HAS PERMANENTLY BLINDED THEIR EYES
AND HARDENED THEIR HEARTS,
SO THEY CAN NEITHER SEE WITH THEIR EYES,
NOR UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEARTS,
NOR TURN—AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.” (Is. 6.10)

41 Isaiah said this because he saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him.

42 Yet at the same time many even among the leaders believed in him. But because of the Pharisees they would not openly acknowledge their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved human praise more than praise from God.

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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
	C. Tuesday: Day of Testing and Teaching
Title	14. The Apostle John Describes Israel's Rejection of Jesus

COMMENT:

This, and the next two readings closed out Jesus' public ministry to Israel. When he departed the Temple on this epic day, Tuesday of Passion week, he would never return again in his earthly life. He was done.

Jesus would continue to minister a tremendous portion of his Word privately to his disciples, (MT 24-25; JN 13-17), but his evangelistic outreach as the Messiah was over. This makes these three readings (DJN #260, 261, 262) extremely important. Here is what they cover:

(1) The apostle John's description of Israel's rejection of Jesus (JN 12.37-43)

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- (2) Jesus' final evangelistic appeal to the nation (JN 12.44-50)
- (3) Jesus' broken hearted lament over Jerusalem (MT 23.37-39)

John's summary of Israel's rejection of Jesus as the Messiah is remarkable in several ways. The first is the magnitude of the two Scriptures in Isaiah that John used to interpret Jesus' ministry.

John referred to Is. 53, the "**Lamb of God/Suffering Servant**" passage. Jesus had already said that this Scripture was about him. John the Immerser had so proclaimed it from the beginning of his ministry. It is no less impressive for John to quote it here--as a summary in the final moments of Jesus' public preaching.

The second reference is even more awesome. John said that Isaiah "*saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him*" in his vision of "*the LORD, high and lifted up*" on the throne in the Holy of Holies in the Temple in Isaiah 6, with the four creatures crying out "*holy, holy, holy.*" This is one of the most exalted worship scenes in all the Bible.

John is saying that Isaiah saw Jesus on that throne, and worshipped him as the LORD God--a pre-incarnate revelation of Jesus as GOD the Son of the highest order. John unquestionably received this interpretation of Is. 6 directly from Jesus. We included this Old Testament scene as DJN #003.

Since Jesus is both the eternal Son of God, the 2nd Person of the Trinity--God almighty of Isaiah. 6, it is all the more impressive that he is also "the Lamb of God" of Is. 53. This is the God-man--the promised Messiah--that his own people rejected. "*He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world did not know him. He came to his own, and they did not receive him.*" JN 1.10-11

While the nation as a whole rejected Jesus, a small remnant--just as prophesied by Isaiah--did believe in him. Some of these were even among the leadership, like Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus. These were still "secret" believers on that Tuesday afternoon. They loved the human praise of their colleagues more than the praise of God. Jesus did not consider them true believers yet. But the story does not end there, and that is why John mentioned this.

After Jesus' death, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus will team up to claim the body of Jesus at the cross, hastily prepare it, and then bury it in a brand new tomb that belong to Joseph of Arimathea.

John's point is that the death of Jesus is what pushed these two members of the Sanhedrin out of secret, uncommitted faith, into full surrender of their entire beings to Jesus--no matter what the consequences were. They too, saw Jesus die as "*the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world,*" and that vision led them into full commitment. So it is for every true believer.

APPLICATION:

The love of human praise, or glory, is a powerful thing. It is the difference between entering the kingdom of God by faith, and rejecting Jesus in unbelief. As Jesus said, it is impossible to become his disciple without embracing his cross as our own. The message of the cross is foolishness to the world, and a stumbling block to the proud. But for those who believe, it is the glory, love, wisdom, and power of God.

Once we have seen the glory of the Crucified and risen Jesus, we become dead to the praise of men, and our hearts and mouths open up to gleefully join the ceaseless song of heaven... "holy, holy, holy."

Do you depend upon the praise and acclaim of people for your joy, or motivation to follow Jesus?

How can you focus your heart and mind more consistently on your crucified Lord? When will you begin?