

(3) The Attraction of Sacrifice (Jn. 12:20-50)

1. The Pharisees' dismay at Jesus' fruitful ministry (Jn. 12:19) finds an immediate application when a party of Greeks requests to see Jesus (Jn. 12:20-26).
 - a. "Some" Greeks is neither many nor few (Jn. 12:20).
 - b. Philip from Bethsaida was their point of contact. Through Andrew they brought these Greeks to Christ (Jn. 12:21,22).
 - c. The text does not record the specific question(s) asked by this Greek delegation, but the Lord's response teaches the reality of death and life (Jn. 12:23-26). Resurrection from the dead was a concept for derision among most Greeks (cf. Acts 17:31,32).
 - d. Previous encounters featured an individual gentile, but this episode appears to be unique and contributes to the common confession of the Church (1st Tim. 3:16).
2. Jesus responds to His soul trouble by engaging in a paterological prayer-focus on the Father's purpose and the Father's glory (Jn. 12:27-43).
 - a. The message to the Gentiles brought the coming crucifixion into undeniable soul trouble (Jn. 12:27a).
 - 1) The troubled soul brings Jesus to a point of hypothetical consideration of alternatives (Jn. 12:27b).
 - 2) God is a Savior, but He doesn't save from His sovereign assignments.
 - 3) The Father's glory is the achievement of the Father's purpose (Jn. 12:28). This includes the Father's purpose for creating volitional spheres of creation (2nd Cor. 9:7; Philem. 14; 1st Pet. 5:2. See also 1st Chr. 29:17-19).
 - 4) This paterological prayer-focus will be repeated right up to and including the crucifixion (Mt. 26:38,39,42; 27:46; Lk. 23:34,46; Jn. 19:30; Ps. 22:1,3ff.).
 - b. The Father answered Jesus' prayer with an encouraging affirmation that Jesus could use to edify the confused crowd (Jn. 12:28b-32).
 - 1) The Father's answer reminded Jesus of a previous glorification (Jn. 11:4,40-44) and a promised glorification (Jn. 13:31,32; 17:1-5).
 - 2) This dual reality mirrors that of the Bride of Christ. We have both a previous (Jn. 17:22; Rom. 8:30) and promised (Jn. 17:24; Rom. 8:17,21) glorification.
 - 3) The observing crowd thought the Father's voice was either thunder or an angel (Jn. 12:29 cf. Ex. 19:19; Rev. 6:1).
 - c. The message from the Father and through the Son communicated the eternal victory over sin and death and the universal drawing unto life (Jn. 12:30-32).
 - 1) The Father's satisfaction regarding the Son's work on the cross is also a judgment regarding Satan (Jn. 12:30; 16:11; 1st Jn. 3:8).
 - 2) The Ascension of Jesus Christ from the Earth has tremendous significance in the angelic conflict (Jn. 12:32a; cf. Col. 1:20; 2:15).
 - 3) The drawing of the Son (Jn. 12:32b) and the drawing of the Father (Jn. 6:44) must both be understood as components of the redemption process. ἐλκίω helkuō ^{#1670}_{ox} (Jn. 6:44; 12:32; 18:10; 21:6,11; Acts 16:19).
 - d. The crowd knew about an eternal Christ, but was deficient in their Son of Man understanding (Jn. 12:34-43).
 - 1) Messianic expectations emphasized the glory and minimized/denied the suffering.
 - 2) Considerations were given as to different messiahs fulfilling the suffering passages (Arnold Fruchtenbaum, *Messianic Bible Studies* MBS011 The Suffering Messiah of Isaiah 53; cf. Mt. 11:3; 1st Pet. 1:10-11).
 - a) The suffering Messiah was termed *Mashiach ben Yosef*.
 - b) The second, glorious Messiah was termed *Mashiach ben David*.
 - 3) Son of Man was a subject central to Daniel (Dan. 7:13-14) and Ezekiel's (Ezek. 2:1,3,6,8 & etc., 93x) revelations.

- 4) Son of Man was frequently used by Christ concerning Himself (Mt. 16:13), and Son of David was used by Christ in conflict with the Pharisees (Mt. 22:41-46; Mk. 12:35-37; Lk. 20:41-44).
 - 5) The need for faith in the Son of Man was the essence of Jesus' gospel message unto eternal life (Jn. 3:14-16; 5:25-27; 12:35-36a).
 - 6) The blindness of the crowd was pathetic, yet prophetic (Jn. 12:36b-43).
3. Jesus didn't hide long (Jn. 12:36), or go far (Mt. 21:23), as He had additional gospel preaching to do on this day (Jn. 12:44-50).
 - a. Faith in Christ is de facto faith in God the Father (Jn. 12:44 cf. 5:24; 1st Pet. 1:20-21 & esp. Jn. 10:30).
 - b. Seeing Christ (and hearing, v.49) is de facto seeing (and hearing) God the Father (Jn. 12:45 cf. 1:18; 14:9,10; 15:23,24).
 - c. Faith in Christ is the only means by which rescue from darkness can occur (Jn. 12:46 cf. 1:9; 8:12; 12:35; Col. 1:13-14).
 - d. First Advent is not the occasion for judgment, but rejection of Christ's message will have an eschatological judgment based upon a protological judgment (Jn. 12:47-48 cf. 3:17-19).
 - e. The Father's commandment is eternal life, which makes faith acceptance an act of obedience (Jn. 12:50; 1st Jn. 3:23,24).