

In the Name of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Intro

“Sir, excuse me, sir, we would like to see Jesus.”

It was a group of Greeks—now whether or not they were actually from Macedonia, or simply non-Jews referred to as “Greeks”—they were Gentiles seeking after the holy, they had come to Jerusalem for the Passover, and now they wanted to see this Jesus they had heard so much about.

Phillip wasn't quite sure what to do with these Greek-speaking Gentiles, so he talked it over with Andrew and together they went to see Jesus.

Whatever happened to these Greeks, we'll never know.

- Did they get to see Jesus or not?

For John moves on to the RESULT of this request and what it meant for Jesus.

For John, the request of these Gentiles marks a turning point for Jesus.

Their coming is the sign that Jesus' ministry is to **reach beyond** the existing covenant with Israel.

That Covenant we've been hearing about in our OT lesson throughout Lent, and the one that Jeremiah renews with Israel in our reading today.

So, let's take a look at this New Covenant that **Jeremiah** proclaims.

I. A New Covenant

A. But, Israel couldn't keep that Covenant—time after time, they lost faithfulness with God and broke their end of the bargain.

1. And so now they find themselves in EXILE—ruled by a foreign power and no longer a nation unto themselves.

2. But even in this time of chaos and confusion—God remains faithful—and sends the Prophet **Jeremiah** to once again, in the words of our Eucharistic Prayer, “renew God's promise of salvation.”

3. Here, in our OT lesson, we hear that God is going to establish a **NEW COVENANT** with God's people.

4. God will now make a Covenant that will be different from the one made when God led the people to freedom from Egypt—a Covenant that had been broken despite God's faithfulness.

5. And God tells what this Covenant will be like:

- *“It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors ... the covenant that they broke.*

- *“I will put My Law within them, and I will write it on their hearts;*

- *“And I will be their God and they shall be my people.”*

B. This Covenant is no longer made with a GROUP—but with each INDIVIDUAL person.

1. This Covenant will not be written in stone—but in the hearts of the people, so that every person would know the Lord from their innermost being.

2. And because this Covenant has been internalized, each person will be able to keep it.

3. But, whereas the Covenant that **Jeremiah** proclaimed would be written on the hearts of the people, the followers of Jesus would experience another Covenant through his death and resurrection.

4. This new covenantal relationship through Jesus is to be extended to EVERYONE; and now the hour to inaugurate it with sacrifice has arrived.

II. Gospel

A. Throughout John's Gospel, we repeatedly hear Jesus say, "My hour has not yet come."

1. But now, as Jesus sets his sights on the path that will inevitably lead to the cross, we hear him say, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."

2. And then, as soon as he says this, he says a curious thing.

3. He says, "Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say—'Father, save me from this hour'?"

4. Unlike Matthew, Mark and Luke, John does not have the story of Jesus' agony in the garden before his arrest—so in a way, he presents it here.

5. But no sooner than he says it, Jesus quickly rebounds and says: "No, it is for this reason that I have come TO this hour. Father, glorify your name."

6. And then a voice from heaven proclaims that God has already glorified his name, and is about to do so once more in Jesus' sacrifice.

B. It's interesting to note where we hear this "voice from heaven" in the Gospels.

1. Essentially, we hear it three times:

- Jesus' Baptism
- His Transfiguration
- And here

2. And what can we say about each of these events—each one is a new BEGINNING.

3. Jesus' Baptism is the beginning of his PUBLIC MINISTRY.

4. The Transfiguration is the beginning of Jesus setting his sights on JERUSALEM and the CROSS.

5. And now we have the beginning of Jesus' FINAL ACTS that lead to his death and resurrection.

C. Jesus then goes on to say that judgement has come and his exaltation on the cross sets the world free from the control of "the ruler of this world."

1. When Jesus is lifted up on the cross, the full extent of God's love will be made visible.

2. And as he is lifted up—he will draw all people to himself.

3. Through his life-saving act on the cross, Jesus extends his NEW COVENANT with God to **ALL** people.

4. And as Jesus' followers, we are called to share in it, too.

III. We would see Jesus

A. But do we want to?

1. Do we WANT to SEE Jesus?

2. Do we want to meet him?

- Do we want to follow in his way—all the way to the cross?

3. Or is it not convenient and we'll come back another time?

4. There's so much to do, and so many things to get done, we'll just come back at a better time.

5. But, **better** never gets here—and neither do we;

- oh, we **know** about Jesus—but will we follow?

B. Jesus says, "*Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also.*" (v.26)

1. So where are we?

2. Are we following Jesus with our daily lives—or are we waiting for a more convenient time?

3. Are you holding onto this life with both hands—or are you ready to give it up—to take the risk—to answer whatever Jesus asks—for the life to come?

4. Are you ready to follow Jesus all the way?

5. Or do we say, “Ah, I’ll come back another time—when you’re not so busy.”

C. “Sir, we want to see Jesus.”

1. And to see Jesus, all you have to do is look around—for Jesus is everywhere.

2. He is in **EVERY action**—the ones we take, and the ones we don’t take.

3. He is in **EVERY opportunity**—the ones we grasp, and the ones we miss.

4. He is in **EVERY** opportunity to be a follower—for where he is there WE must be, and where WE are **servicing**, there he is.

5. “Sir, we want to see Jesus.”

- Look around, he’s right there; waiting for you with open arms.

6. For where we see Jesus is in the face of the OTHER.

7. “Sir, we want to see Jesus.”

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. AMEN.

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