

Memorial Bible Reading - 2010

Events leading to Nisan 14

Friday, March 26

*** Events on Nisan 9 ***

(John 12:12-19) ¹² The next day the great crowd that had come to the festival, on hearing that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, ¹³ took the branches of palm trees and went out to meet him. And they began to shout: "Save, we pray you! Blessed is he that comes in Jehovah's name, even the king of Israel!" ¹⁴ But when Jesus had found a young ass, he sat on it, just as it is written: ¹⁵ "Have no fear, daughter of Zion. Look! Your king is coming, seated upon an ass's colt." ¹⁶ These things his disciples took no note of at first, but when Jesus became glorified, then they called to mind that these things were written respecting him and that they did these things to him.

¹⁷ Accordingly the crowd that was with him when he called Laz'a-rus out of the memorial tomb and raised him up from the dead kept bearing witness. ¹⁸ On this account the crowd, because they heard he had performed this sign, also met him. ¹⁹ Therefore the Pharisees said among themselves: "YOU observe YOU are getting absolutely nowhere. See! The world has gone after him."

(Mark 11:1-11) ¹¹ Now when they were getting near to Jerusalem, to Beth'pha-ge and Beth'a-ny at the Mount of Olives, he dispatched two of his disciples ² and told them: "Go into the village that is within sight of YOU, and as soon as YOU pass into it YOU will find a colt tied, on which none of mankind has yet sat; loose it and bring it. ³ And if anyone says to YOU, 'Why are YOU doing this?' say, 'The Lord needs it, and will at once send it off back here.'" ⁴ So they went away and found the colt tied at the door, outside on the side street, and they loosed it. ⁵ But some of those standing there began to say to them: "What are YOU doing loosing the colt?" ⁶ They said to these just as Jesus had said; and they let them go.

⁷ And they brought the colt to Jesus, and they put their outer garments upon it, and he sat on it. ⁸ Also, many spread their outer garments on the road, but others cut down foliage from the fields. ⁹ And those going in front and those coming behind kept crying out: "Save, we pray! Blessed is he that comes in Jehovah's name! ¹⁰ Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Save, we pray, in the heights above!" ¹¹ And he entered into Jerusalem, into the temple; and he looked around

upon all things, and, as the hour was already late, he went out to Beth'a-ny with the twelve.

Saturday, March 27

*** Events on Nisan 10 ***

(John 12:20-50) ²⁰ Now there were some Greeks among those that came up to worship at the festival. ²¹ These, therefore, approached Philip who was from Beth-sa'i-da of Gal'i-lee, and they began to request him, saying: "Sir, we want to see Jesus." ²² Philip came and told Andrew. Andrew and Philip came and told Jesus.

²³ But Jesus answered them, saying: "The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified. ²⁴ Most truly I say to YOU, Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains just one [grain]; but if it dies, it then bears much fruit. ²⁵ He that is fond of his soul destroys it, but he that hates his soul in this world will safeguard it for everlasting life. ²⁶ If anyone would minister to me, let him follow me, and where I am there my minister will be also. If anyone would minister to me, the Father will honor him. ²⁷ Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me out of this hour. Nevertheless, this is why I have come to this hour. ²⁸ Father, glorify your name." Therefore a voice came out of heaven: "I both glorified [it] and will glorify [it] again."

²⁹ Hence the crowd that stood about and heard it began to say that it had thundered. Others began to say: "An angel has spoken to him." ³⁰ In answer Jesus said: "This voice has occurred, not for my sake, but for YOUR sakes. ³¹ Now there is a judging of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. ³² And yet I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw men of all sorts to me." ³³ This he was really saying to signify what sort of death he was about to die. ³⁴ Therefore the crowd answered him: "We heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever; and how is it you say that the Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?" ³⁵ Jesus therefore said to them: "The light will be among YOU a little while longer. Walk while YOU have the light, so that darkness does not overpower YOU; and he that walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. ³⁶ While YOU have the light, exercise faith in the light, in order to become sons of light."

Jesus spoke these things and went off and hid from them. ³⁷ But although he had performed so many signs

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before them, they were not putting faith in him, ³⁸ so that the word of Isaiah the prophet was fulfilled which he said: "Jehovah, who has put faith in the thing heard by us? And as for the arm of Jehovah, to whom has it been revealed?" ³⁹ The reason why they were not able to believe is that again Isaiah said: ⁴⁰ "He has blinded their eyes and he has made their hearts hard, that they should not see with their eyes and get the thought with their hearts and turn around and I should heal them." ⁴¹ Isaiah said these things because he saw his glory, and he spoke about him. ⁴² All the same, many even of the rulers actually put faith in him, but because of the Pharisees they would not confess [him], in order not to be expelled from the synagogue; ⁴³ for they loved the glory of men more than even the glory of God.

⁴⁴ However, Jesus cried out and said: "He that puts faith in me puts faith, not in me [only], but in him [also] that sent me; ⁴⁵ and he that beholds me beholds [also] him that sent me. ⁴⁶ I have come as a light into the world, in order that everyone putting faith in me may not remain in the darkness. ⁴⁷ But if anyone hears my sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I came, not to judge the world, but to save the world. ⁴⁸ He that disregards me and does not receive my sayings has one to judge him. The word that I have spoken is what will judge him in the last day; ⁴⁹ because I have not spoken out of my own impulse, but the Father himself who sent me has given me a commandment as to what to tell and what to speak. ⁵⁰ Also, I know that his commandment means everlasting life. Therefore the things I speak, just as the Father has told me [them], so I speak [them]."

Sunday, March 28

*** Events on Nisan 11 ***

(Luke 21:1-36) Now as he looked up he saw the rich dropping their gifts into the treasury chests. ² Then he saw a certain needy widow drop two small coins of very little value there, ³ and he said: "I tell YOU truthfully, This widow, although poor, dropped in more than they all did. ⁴ For all these dropped in gifts out of their surplus, but this [woman] out of her want dropped in all the means of living she had."

⁵ Later, as certain ones were speaking concerning the temple, how it was adorned with fine stones and dedicated things, ⁶ he said: "As for these things that

YOU are beholding, the days will come in which not a stone upon a stone will be left here and not be thrown down." ⁷ Then they questioned him, saying: "Teacher, when will these things actually be, and what will be the sign when these things are destined to occur?" ⁸ He said: "Look out that YOU are not misled; for many will come on the basis of my name, saying, 'I am he,' and, 'The due time has approached.' Do not go after them. ⁹ Furthermore, when YOU hear of wars and disorders, do not be terrified. For these things must occur first, but the end does not [occur] immediately."

¹⁰ Then he went on to say to them: "Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; ¹¹ and there will be great earthquakes, and in one place after another pestilences and food shortages; and there will be fearful sights and from heaven great signs.

¹² "But before all these things people will lay their hands upon YOU and persecute YOU, delivering YOU up to the synagogues and prisons, YOU being haled before kings and governors for the sake of my name. ¹³ It will turn out to YOU for a witness. ¹⁴ Therefore settle it in YOUR hearts not to rehearse beforehand how to make YOUR defense, ¹⁵ for I will give YOU a mouth and wisdom, which all YOUR opposers together will not be able to resist or dispute. ¹⁶ Moreover, YOU will be delivered up even by parents and brothers and relatives and friends, and they will put some of YOU to death; ¹⁷ and YOU will be objects of hatred by all people because of my name. ¹⁸ And yet not a hair of YOUR heads will by any means perish. ¹⁹ By endurance on YOUR part YOU will acquire YOUR souls.

²⁰ "Furthermore, when YOU see Jerusalem surrounded by encamped armies, then know that the desolating of her has drawn near. ²¹ Then let those in Ju-de'a begin fleeing to the mountains, and let those in the midst of her withdraw, and let those in the country places not enter into her; ²² because these are days for meting out justice, that all the things written may be fulfilled. ²³ Woe to the pregnant women and the ones suckling a baby in those days! For there will be great necessity upon the land and wrath on this people; ²⁴ and they will fall by the edge of the sword and be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled on by the nations, until the appointed times of the nations are fulfilled.

²⁵ "Also, there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth anguish of nations, not knowing the way out because of the roaring of the sea and [its]

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agitation, ²⁶ while men become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ And then they will see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ But as these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift YOUR heads up, because YOUR deliverance is getting near.”

²⁹ With that he spoke an illustration to them: “Note the fig tree and all the other trees: ³⁰ When they are already in the bud, by observing it YOU know for yourselves that now the summer is near. ³¹ In this way YOU also, when YOU see these things occurring, know that the kingdom of God is near. ³² Truly I say to YOU, This generation will by no means pass away until all things occur. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will by no means pass away.

³⁴ “But pay attention to yourselves that YOUR hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day be instantly upon YOU ³⁵ as a snare. For it will come in upon all those dwelling upon the face of all the earth. ³⁶ Keep awake, then, all the time making supplication that YOU may succeed in escaping all these things that are destined to occur, and in standing before the Son of man.”

Monday, March 29

*** Events on Nisan 12 ***

(Matthew 26:1-5) 26 Now when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said to his disciples: ² “YOU know that two days from now the passover occurs, and the Son of man is to be delivered up to be impaled.”

³ Then the chief priests and the older men of the people gathered together in the courtyard of the high priest who was called Ca'ia-phas, ⁴ and took counsel together to seize Jesus by crafty device and kill him. ⁵ However, they kept saying: “Not at the festival, in order that no uproar may arise among the people.”

(Matthew 26:14-16) 14 Then one of the twelve, the one called Judas Is-car'i-ot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵ and said: “What will YOU give me to betray him to YOU?” They stipulated to him thirty silver pieces. ¹⁶ So from then on he kept seeking a good opportunity to betray him.

(Luke 22:1-6) 22 Now the festival of the unfermented cakes, the so-called Passover, was getting near. ² Also, the chief priests and the scribes were seeking the effective way for them to get rid of him, for they were in fear of the people. ³ But Satan entered into Judas, the one called Is-car'i-ot, who was numbered among the twelve; ⁴ and he went off and talked with the chief priests and [temple] captains about the effective way to betray him to them. ⁵ Well, they rejoiced and agreed to give him silver money. ⁶ So he consented, and he began to seek a good opportunity to betray him to them without a crowd around.

TUESDAY, MARCH 30

MEMORIAL –AFTER SUNDOWN

*** Events on 13 and 14 ***

(Matthew 26:17-19) 17 On the first day of the unfermented cakes the disciples came up to Jesus, saying: “Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the passover?” ¹⁸ He said: “Go into the city to So-and-so and say to him, The Teacher says, ‘My appointed time is near; I will celebrate the passover with my disciples at your home.’” ¹⁹ And the disciples did as Jesus ordered them, and they got things ready for the passover.

(Mark 14:12-16) 12 Now on the first day of unfermented cakes, when they customarily sacrificed the passover [victim], his disciples said to him: “Where do you want us to go and prepare for you to eat the passover?” ¹³ With that he sent forth two of his disciples and said to them: “Go into the city, and a man carrying an earthenware vessel of water will encounter YOU. Follow him, ¹⁴ and wherever he goes inside say to the householder, ‘The Teacher says: “Where is the guest room for me where I may eat the passover with my disciples?”’” ¹⁵ And he will show YOU a large upper room, furnished in preparation; and there prepare for us.” ¹⁶ So the disciples went out, and they entered the city and found it just as he said to them; and they prepared for the Passover.

(Luke 22:7-13) 7 The day of the unfermented cakes now arrived, on which the passover [victim] must be sacrificed; ⁸ and he dispatched Peter and John, saying:

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“Go and get the passover ready for us to eat.”⁹ They said to him: “Where do you want us to get [it] ready?”¹⁰ He said to them: “Look! When YOU enter into the city a man carrying an earthenware vessel of water will meet YOU. Follow him into the house into which he enters.¹¹ And YOU must say to the landlord of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you: “Where is the guest room in which I may eat the passover with my disciples?”’¹² And that [man] will show YOU a large upper room furnished. Get [it] ready there.”¹³ So they departed and found it just as he had said to them, and they got the passover ready.

(John 13:1-5) 13 Now, because he knew before the festival of the passover that his hour had come for him to move out of this world to the Father, Jesus, having loved his own that were in the world, loved them to the end.² So, while the evening meal was going on, the Devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Is-car'i-ot, the son of Simon, to betray him,³ he, knowing that the Father had given all things into [his] hands and that he came forth from God and was going to God,⁴ got up from the evening meal and laid aside his outer garments. And, taking a towel, he girded himself.⁵ After that he put water into a basin and started to wash the feet of the disciples and to dry them off with the towel with which he was girded.

(John 14:1-3) 14 “Do not let YOUR hearts be troubled. Exercise faith in God, exercise faith also in me.² In the house of my Father there are many abodes. Otherwise, I would have told YOU, because I am going my way to prepare a place for YOU.³ Also, if I go my way and prepare a place for YOU, I am coming again and will receive YOU home to myself, that where I am YOU also may be.

Wednesday, March 31

*** Events on Nisan 14 ***

(John 19:1-42) 19 At that time, therefore, Pilate took Jesus and scourged him.² And the soldiers braided a crown of thorns and put it on his head and arrayed him with a purple outer garment;³ and they began coming up to him and saying: “Good day, you King of the Jews!” Also, they would give him slaps in the face.⁴ And Pilate went outside again and said to them: “See! I bring him outside to YOU in order for YOU to know

I find no fault in him.”⁵ Accordingly Jesus came outside, wearing the thorny crown and the purple outer garment. And he said to them: “Look! The man!”⁶ However, when the chief priests and the officers saw him, they shouted, saying: “Impale [him]! Impale [him]!” Pilate said to them: “Take him yourselves and impale him, for I do not find any fault in him.”⁷ The Jews answered him: “We have a law, and according to the law he ought to die, because he made himself God’s son.”

⁸ When, therefore, Pilate heard this saying, he became more fearful;⁹ and he entered into the governor’s palace again and said to Jesus: “Where are you from?” But Jesus gave him no answer.¹⁰ Hence Pilate said to him: “Are you not speaking to me? Do you not know I have authority to release you and I have authority to impale you?”¹¹ Jesus answered him: “You would have no authority at all against me unless it had been granted to you from above. This is why the man that handed me over to you has greater sin.”

¹² For this reason Pilate kept on seeking how to release him. But the Jews shouted, saying: “If you release this [man], you are not a friend of Caesar. Every man making himself a king speaks against Caesar.”¹³ Therefore Pilate, after hearing these words, brought Jesus outside, and he sat down on a judgment seat in a place called The Stone Pavement, but, in Hebrew, *Gab'ba-tha*.¹⁴ Now it was preparation of the passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews: “See! YOUR king!”¹⁵ However, they shouted: “Take [him] away! Take [him] away! Impale him!” Pilate said to them: “Shall I impale YOUR king?” The chief priests answered: “We have no king but Caesar.”¹⁶ At that time, therefore, he handed him over to them to be impaled.

Then they took charge of Jesus.¹⁷ And, bearing the torture stake for himself, he went out to the so-called Skull Place, which is called *Gol'go-tha* in Hebrew;¹⁸ and there they impaled him, and two other [men] with him, one on this side and one on that, but Jesus in the middle.¹⁹ Pilate wrote a title also and put it on the torture stake. It was written: “Jesus the Naz-a-rene' the King of the Jews.”²⁰ Therefore many of the Jews read this title, because the place where Jesus was impaled was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, in Latin, in Greek.²¹ However, the chief priests of the Jews began to say to Pilate: “Do not write ‘The King of the Jews,’ but that he said, ‘I am King of the Jews.’”

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²² Pilate answered: "What I have written I have written."

²³ Now when the soldiers had impaled Jesus, they took his outer garments and made four parts, for each soldier a part, and the inner garment. But the inner garment was without a seam, being woven from the top throughout its length. ²⁴ Therefore they said to one another: "Let us not tear it, but let us determine by lots over it whose it will be." This was that the scripture might be fulfilled: "They apportioned my outer garments among themselves, and upon my apparel they cast lots." And so the soldiers really did these things.

²⁵ By the torture stake of Jesus, however, there were standing his mother and the sister of his mother; Mary the wife of Clo'pas, and Mary Mag'da-lene. ²⁶ Therefore Jesus, seeing his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing by, said to his mother: "Woman, see! Your son!" ²⁷ Next he said to the disciple: "See! Your mother!" And from that hour on the disciple took her to his own home.

²⁸ After this, when Jesus knew that by now all things had been accomplished, in order that the scripture might be accomplished he said: "I am thirsty." ²⁹ A vessel was sitting there full of sour wine. Therefore they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a hyssop [stalk] and brought it to his mouth. ³⁰ When, now, he had received the sour wine, Jesus said: "It has been accomplished!" and, bowing his head, he delivered up [his] spirit.

³¹ Then the Jews, since it was Preparation, in order that the bodies might not remain upon the torture stakes on the Sabbath, (for the day of that Sabbath was a great one,) requested Pilate to have their legs broken and the [bodies] taken away. ³² The soldiers came, therefore, and broke the legs of the first [man] and those of the other [man] that had been impaled with him. ³³ But on coming to Jesus, as they saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. ³⁴ Yet one of the soldiers jabbed his side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. ³⁵ And he that has seen [it] has borne witness, and his witness is true, and that man knows he tells true things, in order that YOU also may believe. ³⁶ In fact, these things took place in order for the scripture to be fulfilled: "Not a bone of his will be crushed." ³⁷ And, again, a different scripture says: "They will look to the One whom they pierced."

³⁸ Now after these things Joseph from Ar-i-ma-the'a, who was a disciple of Jesus but a secret one out of [his] fear of the Jews, requested Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. Therefore he came and took his body away. ³⁹ Nic-o-de'mus also, the man that came to him in the night the first time, came bringing a roll of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds [of it]. ⁴⁰ So they took the body of Jesus and bound it up with bandages with the spices, just the way the Jews have the custom of preparing for burial. ⁴¹ Incidentally, at the place where he was impaled there was a garden, and in the garden a new memorial tomb, in which no one had ever yet been laid. ⁴² There, then, on account of the preparation of the Jews, they laid Jesus, because the memorial tomb was nearby.

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Additional recommended reading:

<p><i>Greatest Man - Chapter 112</i> Jesus' Final Passover Is At Hand</p>
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AS TUESDAY, Nisan 11, draws to a close, Jesus finishes teaching the apostles on the Mount of Olives. What a busy, strenuous day it has been! Now, perhaps while returning to Bethany for the night, he tells his apostles: "You know that two days from now the Passover occurs, and the Son of man is to be delivered up to be impaled."

Jesus apparently spends the following day, Wednesday, Nisan 12, in quiet retirement with his apostles. On the day before, he had rebuked the religious leaders publicly, and he realizes that they are seeking to kill him. So on Wednesday he does not openly show himself, since he does not want anything to interfere with his celebrating the Passover with his apostles the following evening.

In the meantime, the chief priests and the older men of the people have gathered in the courtyard of the high priest, Caiaphas. Smarting from Jesus' attack the previous day, they are making plans to seize him by crafty device and have him put to death. Yet they keep saying: "Not at the festival, in order that no uproar may arise among the people." They are in fear of the people, whose favor Jesus enjoys.

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While the religious leaders are wickedly conspiring to kill Jesus, they receive a visitor. To their surprise, it is one of Jesus' own apostles, Judas Iscariot, the one into whom Satan has implanted the base idea of betraying his Master! How pleased they are when Judas inquires: "What will you give me to betray him to you?" They gladly agree to pay him 30 silver pieces, the price of a slave according to the Mosaic Law covenant. From then on, Judas seeks a good opportunity to betray Jesus to them without a crowd around.

Nisan 13 begins at sundown Wednesday. Jesus arrived from Jericho on Friday, so this is the sixth and final night that he spends in Bethany. The next day, Thursday, final preparations will need to be made for the Passover, which commences at sundown. That is when the Passover lamb must be slaughtered and then roasted whole. Where will they celebrate the feast, and who will make the preparations?

Jesus has not provided such details, perhaps to prevent Judas from informing the chief priests so that they might apprehend Jesus during the Passover celebration. But now, probably early Thursday afternoon, Jesus dispatches Peter and John from Bethany, saying: "Go and get the passover ready for us to eat."

"Where do you want us to get it ready?" they ask.

"When you enter into the city," Jesus explains, "a man carrying an earthenware vessel of water will meet you. Follow him into the house into which he enters. And you must say to the landlord of the house, 'The Teacher says to you: "Where is the guest room in which I may eat the passover with my disciples?"' And that man will show you a large upper room furnished. Get it ready there."

No doubt the landlord is a disciple of Jesus who perhaps anticipates Jesus' request to use his house for this special occasion. At any rate, when Peter and John arrive in Jerusalem, they find everything just as Jesus foretold. So the two of them see to it that the lamb is ready and that all the other arrangements are made to care for the needs of the 13 Passover celebrants, Jesus and his 12 apostles. **Matthew 26:1-5, 14-19; Mark 14:1, 2, 10-16; Luke 22:1-13; Exodus 21:32.**

Greatest Man - Chapter 116 Preparing the Apostles for His Departure

THE memorial meal is over, but Jesus and his apostles are still in the upstairs room. Although Jesus will soon be gone, he has many things yet to say. "Do not let your hearts be troubled," he comforts them. "Exercise faith in God." But he adds: "Exercise faith also in me."

"In the house of my Father there are many abodes," Jesus continues. "I am going my way to prepare a place for you . . . that where I am you also may be. And where I am going you know the way." The apostles do not comprehend that Jesus is talking about going away to heaven, so Thomas asks: "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How do we know the way?"

"I am the way and the truth and the life," Jesus answers. Yes, only by accepting him and imitating his life course can anyone enter the heavenly house of the Father because, as Jesus says: "No one comes to the Father except through me."

"Lord, show us the Father," Philip requests, "and it is enough for us." Philip apparently wants Jesus to provide a visible manifestation of God, such as was granted in ancient times in visions to Moses, Elijah, and Isaiah. But, really, the apostles have something much better than visions of that type, as Jesus observes: "Have I been with you men so long a time, and yet, Philip, you have not come to know me? He that has seen me has seen the Father also."

Jesus so perfectly reflects the personality of his Father that living with and observing him is, in effect, like actually seeing the Father. Yet, the Father is superior to the Son, as Jesus acknowledges: "The things I say to you men I do not speak of my own originality." Jesus properly gives all credit for his teachings to his heavenly Father.

How encouraging it must be for the apostles to hear Jesus now tell them: "He that exercises faith in me, that one also will do the works that I do; and he will do works greater than these"! Jesus does not mean that his followers will exercise greater miraculous powers than he did. No, but he means that they will carry on the ministry for a much longer time, over a much greater area, and to far more people.

Jesus will not abandon his disciples after his departure. "Whatever it is that you ask in my name,"

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he promises, "I will do this." Further, he says: "I will request the Father and he will give you another helper to be with you forever, the spirit of the truth." Later, after he ascends to heaven, Jesus pours out on his disciples the holy spirit, this other helper.

Jesus' departure is near, as he says: "A little longer and the world will behold me no more." Jesus will be a spirit creature that no human can see. But again Jesus promises his faithful apostles: "You will behold me, because I live and you will live." Yes, not only will Jesus appear to them in human form after his resurrection but in due time he will resurrect them to life with him in heaven as spirit creatures.

Jesus now states the simple rule: "He that has my commandments and observes them, that one is he who loves me. In turn he that loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will plainly show myself to him."

At this the apostle Judas, the one who is also called Thaddaeus, interrupts: "Lord, what has happened that you intend to show yourself plainly to us and not to the world?"

"If anyone loves me," Jesus replies, "he will observe my word, and my Father will love him . . . He that does not love me does not observe my words." Unlike his obedient followers, the world ignores Christ's teachings. So he does not reveal himself to them.

During his earthly ministry, Jesus has taught his apostles many things. How will they remember them all, especially since, even up to this moment, they fail to grasp so much? Happily, Jesus promises: "The helper, the holy spirit, which the Father will send in my name, that one will teach you all things and bring back to your minds all the things I told you."

Again comforting them, Jesus says: "I leave you peace, I give you my peace. . . . Do not let your hearts be troubled." True, Jesus is departing, but he explains: "If you loved me, you would rejoice that I am going my way to the Father, because the Father is greater than I am."

Jesus' remaining time with them is short. "I shall not speak much with you anymore," he says, "for the ruler of the world is coming. And he has no hold on me." Satan the Devil, the one who was able to enter Judas and get a hold on him, is the ruler of the world.

But there is no sinful weakness in Jesus that Satan can play on to turn him away from serving God.

Enjoying an Intimate Relationship

Following the memorial meal, Jesus has been encouraging his apostles with an informal heart-to-heart talk. It may be past midnight. So Jesus urges: "Get up, let us go from here." However, before they leave, Jesus, moved by his love for them, continues speaking, providing a motivating illustration.

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the cultivator," he begins. The Great Cultivator, Jehovah God, planted this symbolic vine when he anointed Jesus with holy spirit at his baptism in the fall of 29 C.E. But Jesus goes on to show that the vine symbolizes more than just him, observing: "Every branch in me not bearing fruit he takes away, and every one bearing fruit he cleans, that it may bear more fruit. . . . Just as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it remains in the vine, in the same way neither can you, unless you remain in union with me. I am the vine, you are the branches."

At Pentecost, 51 days later, the apostles and others become branches of the vine when holy spirit is poured out on them. Eventually, 144,000 persons become branches of the figurative grapevine. Along with the vine stem, Jesus Christ, these make up a symbolic vine that produces the fruits of God's Kingdom.

Jesus explains the key to producing fruit: "He that remains in union with me, and I in union with him, this one bears much fruit; because apart from me you can do nothing at all." If, however, a person fails to produce fruit, Jesus says, "he is cast out as a branch and is dried up; and men gather those branches up and pitch them into the fire and they are burned." On the other hand, Jesus promises: "If you remain in union with me and my sayings remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will take place for you."

Further, Jesus says to his apostles: "My Father is glorified in this, that you keep bearing much fruit and prove yourselves my disciples." The fruit God desires from the branches is their manifestation of Christlike qualities, particularly love. Moreover, since Christ was a proclaimer of God's Kingdom, the desired fruit also includes their activity of making disciples as he did.

"Remain in my love," Jesus now urges. Yet, how can his apostles do so? "If you observe my commandments," he says, "you will remain in my

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love.” Continuing, Jesus explains: “This is my commandment, that you love one another just as I have loved you. No one has love greater than this, that someone should surrender his soul in behalf of his friends.”

In a few hours, Jesus will demonstrate this surpassing love by giving his life in behalf of his apostles, as well as all others who will exercise faith in him. His example should move his followers to have the same self-sacrificing love for one another. This love will identify them, as Jesus stated earlier: “By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves.”

Identifying his friends, Jesus says: “You are my friends if you do what I am commanding you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master does. But I have called you friends, because all the things I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.”

What a precious relationship to have—to be intimate friends of Jesus! But to continue to enjoy this relationship, his followers must “keep bearing fruit.” If they do, Jesus says, “no matter what you ask the Father in my name he [will] give it to you.” Surely, that is a grand reward for bearing Kingdom fruit! After again urging the apostles to “love one another,” Jesus explains that the world will hate them. Yet, he comforts them: “If the world hates you, you know that it has hated me before it hated you.” Jesus next reveals why the world hates his followers, saying: “Because you are no part of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, on this account the world hates you.”

Explaining further the reason for the world’s hatred, Jesus continues: “They will do all these things against you on account of my name, because they do not know him [Jehovah God] that sent me.” Jesus’ miraculous works, in effect, convict those who hate him, as he notes: “If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have both seen and hated me as well as my Father.” Thus, as Jesus says, the scripture is fulfilled: “They hated me without cause.”

As he did earlier, Jesus again comforts them by promising to send the helper, the holy spirit, which is God’s powerful active force. “That one will bear witness about me; and you, in turn, are to bear witness.”

Further Departing Admonition

Jesus and the apostles are poised to leave the upper room. “I have spoken these things to you that you may not be stumbled,” he continues. Then he gives the solemn warning: “Men will expel you from the synagogue. In fact, the hour is coming when everyone that kills you will imagine he has rendered a sacred service to God.”

The apostles are evidently deeply disturbed by this warning. Although Jesus had earlier said that the world would hate them, he had not revealed so directly that they would be killed. “I did not tell you [this] at first,” Jesus explains, “because I was with you.” Yet, how fine it is to forearm them with this information before he departs!

“But now,” Jesus continues, “I am going to him that sent me, and yet not one of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’” Earlier in the evening, they had inquired about where he was going, but now they are so shaken by what he has told them that they fail to ask further about this. As Jesus says: “Because I have spoken these things to you grief has filled your hearts.” The apostles are grieved not only because they have learned that they will suffer terrible persecution and be killed but because their Master is leaving them.

So Jesus explains: “It is for your benefit I am going away. For if I do not go away, the helper will by no means come to you; but if I do go my way, I will send him to you.” As a human, Jesus can only be in one place at a time, but when he is in heaven, he can send the helper, God’s holy spirit, to his followers wherever they may be on earth. So Jesus’ leaving will be beneficial.

The holy spirit, Jesus says, “will give the world convincing evidence concerning sin and concerning righteousness and concerning judgment.” The world’s sin, its failure to exercise faith in God’s Son, will be exposed. In addition, convincing evidence of the righteousness of Jesus will be demonstrated by his ascension to the Father. And the failure of Satan and his wicked world to break Jesus’ integrity is convincing evidence that the ruler of the world has been adversely judged.

“I have many things yet to say to you,” Jesus continues, “but you are not able to bear them at present.” Therefore Jesus promises that when he pours out the holy spirit, which is God’s active force, it will

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guide them into an understanding of these things in accordance with their ability to grasp them.

The apostles fail particularly to understand that Jesus will die and then appear to them after he is resurrected. So they ask one another: “What does this mean that he says to us, ‘In a little while you will not behold me, and, again, in a little while you will see me,’ and, ‘because I am going to the Father’?”

Jesus realizes that they want to question him, so he explains: “Most truly I say to you, You will weep and wail, but the world will rejoice; you will be grieved, but your grief will be turned into joy.” Later that day, in the afternoon, when Jesus is killed, the worldly religious leaders rejoice, but the disciples grieve. Their grief is changed to joy, however, when Jesus is resurrected! And their joy continues when he empowers them at Pentecost to be his witnesses by pouring out upon them God’s holy spirit!

Comparing the apostles’ situation to that of a woman during her birth pangs, Jesus says: “A woman, when she is giving birth, has grief, because her hour has arrived.” But Jesus observes that she no longer remembers her tribulation once her child is born, and he encourages his apostles, saying: “You also, therefore, are now, indeed, having grief; but I shall see you again [when I am resurrected] and your hearts will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.”

Up to this time, the apostles have never made requests in Jesus’ name. But he now says: “If you ask the Father for anything he will give it to you in my name. . . . For the Father himself has affection for you, because you have had affection for me and have believed that I came out as the Father’s representative. I came out from the Father and have come into the world. Further, I am leaving the world and am going my way to the Father.”

Jesus’ words are a great encouragement to the apostles. “By this we believe that you came out from God,” they say. “Do you believe at present?” Jesus asks. “Look! The hour is coming, indeed, it has come, when you will be scattered each one to his own house and you will leave me alone.” Unbelievable as it may seem, this occurs before the night is finished!

“I have said these things to you that by means of me you may have peace.” Jesus concludes: “In the world you are having tribulation, but take courage! I have conquered the world.” Jesus conquered the world by faithfully accomplishing God’s will despite everything

that Satan and his world tried to do to break Jesus’ integrity.

Concluding Prayer in the Upper Room

Moved by deep love for his apostles, Jesus has been preparing them for his imminent departure. Now, after admonishing and comforting them at length, he raises his eyes to heaven and petitions his Father: “Glorify your son, that your son may glorify you, according as you have given him authority over all flesh, that, as regards the whole number whom you have given him, he may give them everlasting life.”

What a stirring theme Jesus introduces—everlasting life! Having been given “authority over all flesh,” Jesus can impart the benefits of his ransom sacrifice to all dying humankind. Yet, he grants “everlasting life” only to those whom the Father approves. Building on this theme of everlasting life, Jesus continues his prayer:

“This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ.” Yes, salvation is dependent upon our taking in knowledge of both God and his Son. But more is needed than just head knowledge.

A person must come to know them intimately, developing an understanding friendship with them. One must feel as they do about matters and see things through their eyes. And above all, a person must strive to imitate their matchless qualities in dealing with others.

Jesus next prays: “I have glorified you on the earth, having finished the work you have given me to do.” Having thus fulfilled his assignment up to this point and being confident of his future success, he petitions: “Father, glorify me alongside yourself with the glory that I had alongside you before the world was.” Yes, he now asks to be restored to his previous heavenly glory by means of a resurrection.

Summarizing his principal work on earth, Jesus says: “I have made your name manifest to the men you gave me out of the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have observed your word.” Jesus used God’s name, Jehovah, in his ministry and demonstrated a correct pronunciation of it, but he did more than that to make God’s name manifest to his apostles. He also expanded their knowledge and

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appreciation of Jehovah, of his personality, and of his purposes.

Crediting Jehovah as his Superior, the One under whom he serves, Jesus humbly acknowledges: “The sayings that you gave me I have given to them, and they have received them and have certainly come to know that I came out as your representative, and they have believed that you sent me.”

Making a distinction between his followers and the rest of mankind, Jesus next prays: “I make request, not concerning the world, but concerning those you have given me . . . When I was with them I used to watch over them . . . , and I have kept them, and not one of them is destroyed except the son of destruction,” namely, Judas Iscariot. At this very moment, Judas is on his despicable mission to betray Jesus. Thus, Judas is unknowingly fulfilling the Scriptures.

“The world has hated them,” Jesus continues to pray. “I request you, not to take them out of the world, but to watch over them because of the wicked one. They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world.” Jesus’ followers are in the world, this organized human society ruled by Satan, but they are and must always remain separate from it and its wickedness.

“Sanctify them by means of the truth,” Jesus continues, “your word is truth.” Here Jesus calls the inspired Hebrew Scriptures, from which he continually quoted, “the truth.” But what he taught his disciples and what they later wrote under inspiration as the Christian Greek Scriptures is likewise “the truth.” This truth can sanctify a person, change his life completely, and make him a person separate from the world.

Jesus now prays “not concerning these only, but also concerning those putting faith in [him] through their word.” So Jesus prays for those who will be his anointed followers and other future disciples who yet will be gathered into “one flock.” What does he request for all of these?

“That they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in union with me and I am in union with you, . . . that they may be one just as we are one.” Jesus and his Father are not literally one person, but they are in agreement on all things. Jesus prays that his followers enjoy this same oneness so that “the world may have the knowledge that you sent me forth and that you loved them just as you loved me.”

In behalf of those who would be his anointed followers, Jesus now makes a request of his heavenly Father. For what? “That, where I am, they also may be with me, in order to behold my glory that you have given me, because you loved me before the founding of the world,” that is, before Adam and Eve conceived offspring. Long before that, God loved his only-begotten Son, who became Jesus Christ.

Concluding his prayer, Jesus again emphasizes: “I have made your name known to them and will make it known, in order that the love with which you loved me may be in them and I in union with them.” For the apostles, learning the name of God has involved personally coming to know the love of God. **John 14:1–17:26; 13:27, 35, 36; 10:16; Luke 22:3, 4; Exodus 24:10; 1 Kings 19:9-13; Isaiah 6:1-5; Galatians 6:16; Psalm 35:19; 69:4; Proverbs 8:22, 30.**