

**GOSPEL OF JOHN**  
**A DESIRE TO SEE JESUS**  
**JOHN 12:20-23**

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**Introduction**

In our text we read here about a certain group of **GREEKS** who came to **JERUSALEM** to worship at the **JEWISH** feast of **PASSOVER** who had a **DESIRE TO SEE JESUS!** (Cf. The **PHARISEE'S** statement in *Vs 19*)

In our journey through **JOHN'S GOSPEL**, we have been blessed to **SEE JESUS** through the **SCRIPTURE** and observe **HIM** and **HIS** earthly ministry from the time of **JOHN THE BAPTIST'S** pointing to **JESUS** and saying, *"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"* up until **HIS TRIUMPHAL ENTRY** into **JERUSALEM** that happened the same week of **HIS** arrest, trial, and crucifixion.

We have seen multitudes who were blessed to **SEE JESUS** with their own eyes! Many of those who did **SEE JESUS** followed **HIM** after hearing **HIM** and/or **SEEING** the many wonderful miracles, that **HE** did!

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**We have seen some who DESIRED TO SEE JESUS after hearing JOHN THE BAPTIST preach and point them to JESUS!**  
*(John 1:35-40 – ANDREW, SIMON PETER'S brother and another unnamed disciple followed JESUS to where HE dwelt and spent the rest of that with HIM after JESUS told them to "Come and see.")*

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**We have seen some who DESIRED TO SEE JESUS after hearing the witness of others who had SEEN JESUS invited them to "Come And See"!**  
*(In John 1:40-51 – SIMON PETER came to SEE JESUS at the word of ANDREW; NATHANAEL came to SEE JESUS at the word of PHILIP!*

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**Then there was the SAMARITAN woman at JACOB'S WELL who SAW JESUS in an encounter with HIM who then went her way into the city and invited the men of the city to "Come, See" which they did! (4:4-42)**

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**We Have Seen A PHARISEE Who Came To SEE JESUS By Night Secretly. (John 3:1-21 – NICODEMUS)**

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**We have seen many other PHARISEES who came to SEE JESUS but for all the wrong reasons!**

**They only wanted to SEE JESUS to find fault with HIM! And they did find fault with HIM even though there was no fault to be found in HIM!**

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**We have seen a blind man who could not SEE JESUS but JESUS passed by his way and gave him instructions to heal HIM of his blindness such that he could then SEE JESUS when JESUS came looking for him after the Pharisees cast him out of the Temple! (John 9)**

So what is the significance of what we see here in *JOHN 12:20-23*?

**I. WHAT WERE THESE GREEKS (GENTILES) DOING WORSHIPING AT A JEWISH FEAST?**

Before **NEW TESTAMENT** times the only way to **GOD** was through **JUDAISM (Which by the way pointed to the coming MESSIAH!)**

The wording of this from the **GREEK** text it was translated from indicates that these **GREEKS** were accustomed to come and worship at the feast. They were not curiosity seekers or one-time investigators! These were **GOD-fearing GENTILES** who sought the truth!

We know the **JEWS** were known for saying, *"We would see a sign!" (Matthew 12:38, 1 Corinthians 1:22)*, but these **GREEKS** said, *"We would see JESUS."*

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Understand that the **TEMPLE** was built as a series of zones that different classes of people could access:

The outermost area (**THE COURT OF THE GENTILES**) was open to everyone and was originally intended for those non-Jews who wanted to worship **GOD**. It was as close as they could get to the **TEMPLE** proper.

Did you know that when **JESUS** chased the money-changers and merchants away both early in **HIS** ministry and at about this same time, **HE** was actually clearing **THE COURT OF THE GENTILES**. As **HE** drove them out **HE** used a partial quote from *Isaiah 56:7–* *"...For mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people."*

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Let's look at *ISAIAH 56* for the context!

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So, the **LORD** made a way for the **GENTILES** at the same time **HE** made a way for the **JEW**s!

One of **JOHN'S** major themes that we have seen is that **JESUS** is the **SAVIOR OF THE WORLD** and not just the **REDEEMER OF ISRAEL**!

*John 1:29— "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."*

*John 3:16— "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*

The **SAMARITANS** who were half-breed **JEW/GENTILE** rightly identified **JESUS** in *John 4:42*— "...for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the *Christ, the Saviour of the world.*"

In *John 6:33*, **JESUS** said of **HIMSELF** — "*For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.*"

In *John 8:12*, **JESUS** said of **HIMSELF**— "*I am the light of the world.*"

The **GOSPEL** is universal in scope!

In *John 10:16*, we saw **JESUS** say, "*And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*"

Even later in the **APOSTLE JOHN'S** first epistle, he says of **JESUS**, *1 John 2:2*— "*And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*"

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But **THE COURT OF THE GENTILES** was as close as **GENTILES** could get to the **TEMPLE** proper!

So the money-changers and merchants were basically taking up the space that was the only place where the **GENTILES** could worship! Imagine trying to **worship GOD** with the bleating of sheep and the sounds of commerce such as merchants hawking their goods.

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The next area (**THE COURT OF WOMEN**) was open to **JEWISH men and women**.

The next area (**THE COURT OF ISRAEL**) was open to **JEWISH men only**.

The next area (**THE COURT OF PRIESTS**) was open to **JEWISH PRIESTS**.

The final area (**THE HOLY OF HOLIES**) was open to the **JEWISH HIGH PRIEST** but only once a year on **THE DAY OF ATONEMENT**, but not without **BLOOD**!

**So, WHAT WERE THESE GREEKS (GENTILES) DOING WORSHIPING AT A JEWISH FEAST?**

**These GREEKS would have had to be CONVERTS to JUDAISM who were there to worship at the FEAST OF PASSOVER!**

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**II. WHERE WAS JESUS AT THIS TIME?**

We are not specifically told here, but according to *Mark 11:11*, just after **JESUS' TRIUMPHAL ENTRY** into **JERUSALEM** that we saw last week, **JESUS** went into the **TEMPLE**. So, though our text here doesn't say, **JESUS** was most likely inside the **TEMPLE** at this time!

So, the zones that I just mentioned were places where the designated people went to worship—and **THE COURT OF THE GENTILES** was the **ONLY** place where **GENTILES** could enter!

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When **JESUS** went into the **TEMPLE**, **HE** most likely went beyond where these **GREEKS** could go!

But we do know that at some point **JESUS** cleared the **TEMPLE** for a second time according to the account found in **LUKE 11:45-46** and that clearing would have been in **THE COURT OF THE GENTILES!**

**III. WHY DID THESE GREEKS WANT TO SEE JESUS?**

Well, we are **NOT** specifically told and it really doesn't matter for our message, we'll just have to ask when we get to heaven!

**But, let me just suggest some possibilities:**

Since **JESUS** cleared the area of **THE COURT OF THE GENTILES** making room for them to actually do what they came to do (i.e. worship God), they may have wanted to personally thank **JESUS** for doing what **HE** did!

Or when **JESUS** said what **HE** said about **HIS HOUSE: Isaiah 56:7—“...For mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.”** Perhaps they heard the **WORDS** that **JESUS** used and were encouraged by it and wanted to tell **HIM** so!

Or maybe in their worship and hearing of the **SCRIPTURES** they came to understand what escaped the **PHARISEES**—**The truth that JESUS IS THE MESSIAH!**

But again, we are **NOT** specifically told so we can't be dogmatic about it, but it is interesting to think about!

Though **WE** may not know why they were there, **JESUS DID!**

There is **NO** record that **JESUS** talked with these **GREEKS**, but the message that **HE** gave in response contains some vital truths!

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**IV. WHEN JESUS WAS TOLD THAT THESE GREEKS WANTED TO SEE HIM, WHAT IS THE MEANING OF WHAT JESUS SAID? (Vs 23-33)**

I'm just going to touch on this right now, but I don't have time to fully develop what we see here. So, **LORD** willing, we will next week!

But I want to show you a glimpse into what **JESUS** was saying here. These Greeks seeking an audience with **JESUS** showed that what the **PHARISEES** said in the last part of **verse 19** was true!

The world—both **JEW** and **GENTILE** alike—were going after **JESUS!**

And **JESUS** was saying, *“The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.”*

In other words, the hour had finally come for **HIM** to die on Calvary's cross for the sins of mankind and draw the world to **HIMSELF!** (Vs 32)

Think of all the times that the **LORD** we have seen that **HIS** hour had not yet come! It seems that the triggering event of it being time was when these **GREEKS** had such a desire to see **JESUS!**

The **JEW**s had a desire for the **MESSIAH** to come! **HE** came and by and large was rejected by **HIS** own!

*John 1:11-13—“11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not. 12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”*

The **GENTILES** had need of the **MESSIAH** as well and they wanted to **SEE JESUS!**

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**Conclusion**

Those today who have repented of their sin and Believed on **JESUS** and **HIS** finished work on the cross of Calvary and **HIS** resurrection have **HIS** life and have a desire to **SEE JESUS!**

Does that describe you? The **MESSIAH** has come once to pay for our sin!  
**HE'S** coming again to receive those who know **HIM** into **HIS** presence to be with **HIM!**

How much do you desire to **SEE JESUS?**

If you don't know **HIM**, come to know **HIM** today so that you have a desire not only to **SEE JESUS**, but to be like **JESUS!**