

Daily Bible Study Commentary by Pastor Steve

We're excited to have you digging deeper into the Word. The best way to use this study guide is to read the Bible verse(s) first, then Pastor Steve's commentary. God bless you.

John 13:20

v20: After the crucifixion and resurrection Jesus would send His disciples into the world. Their assignment would be to represent Him as faithfully as He had represented His Father. And as they fulfilled that assignment, their presence and ministry would expose how people felt about Jesus, and the way people responded to Jesus would expose how they felt about the Father. Here's how Jesus said this, "The one who receives whomever I send, receives Me; and the one who receives Me receives the One having sent Me" (literal). The heart of God would be expressed to the world by Jesus' disciples just as it had been expressed by Jesus Himself. This was the next step in God's plan of salvation, and it would greatly expand the possibility to taking the gospel to the whole world.

John 13:21

v21: Jesus knew He would be betrayed. That fact had been prophesied by David a thousand years earlier (v18). And He knew who would do it. He knew what Judas would do when He chose him, but that knowledge didn't protect Him from the shock of what was happening. Someone who had walked with Him for the past two to three years, someone He had financially supported through the offerings given to His ministry (Ac 1:16-17), someone who had ministered in His name and watched God's power at work (Mt 10:1-4) was sitting beside Him at that Passover meal waiting for an opportunity to leave the room, so he could report His location to the religious authorities. Knowing what Judas was doing didn't remove the sorrow from the fact that he was doing it. It's never easy to be hated by someone we love, and Jesus loved Judas. John says Jesus "was shaken (stirred) in spirit" (literal). What does that mean? It may mean a sorrowful look appeared on His face. It may mean tears flowed. He may have trembled as He restrained His emotions. And those emotions were likely not only sorrow over the evil that was being done to Him but grief for Judas himself, knowing the horrors which lay ahead of him (Ac 1:18-20). If we recall how accurately Jesus described what would happen to Peter before he denied Him (Mt 26:33-35, 75), then surely He knew that the man sitting beside Him would soon kill himself and die in his sin (Mt 27:3-5).

John 13:21-23

v21 (continued): As those feelings swept over Him Jesus announced (solemnly testified like a witness in a courtroom), "One from among you will give Me over" (literal). There was no one else present, so the disciples knew it must be one of them. **v22:** But who? Jesus had given no clues during their years together. He had not singled out one of them and treated him disrespectfully or spoken to him in anger, so the disciples looked at one another in confusion, not knowing who He meant. **v23:** John refers to himself, in this verse, as "the one whom Jesus loved." Throughout his gospel he is careful not to mention himself or any of his family members by name. For example, it seems likely that his brother, James, was present during their first encounter with Jesus at the Jordan River (Jn 1:35-46), but he makes no mention of him. In fact he only includes himself as the nameless of "the two disciples" standing beside John the Baptist (Jn 1:35, 40). Yet he freely mentions Andrew, Peter, Nathaniel and Philip.

John 13:23-26

v23 (continued): Nor does he ever mention his own mother by name. She was, almost certainly, Mary's sister, Salome (Mk 15:40; Jn 19:25), and was one of the four women who stood near the cross as Jesus was dying (Jn 19:25). He too was standing with them at the foot of the cross, but he speaks of himself only as "the disciple whom He loved." Evidently when he wrote this gospel he humbly looked for a way to speak of himself and his family without using their names. He was writing about Jesus, not himself, so he decided to refer to himself only as one of the disciples (Jn 18:15; 21:2, 23-24) or as a recipient of Jesus' love (Jn 21:7, 20). **vs23-26:** The original Passover meal in Egypt was eaten standing, with staff in hand and sandals on the feet, ready to leave at any moment (Ex 12:11-12). But over the centuries that custom changed. During Jesus' time the custom was to recline on one's left side and to eat with one's right hand from a low table. So the disciple who was "reclining upon Jesus' bosom" (the front fold of His robe), was the person seated immediately to His right. That person was John. From somewhere else at the table Peter caught John's attention by nodding his head in such a way as to indicate that he wanted him to ask Jesus to identify the traitor. John needed only to lean back slightly and whisper the question, "Lord, who is it?" And he did, to which Jesus replied, "It is the one to whom I shall dip the piece of bread and give [it] to him" (literal).

Daily Bible Study Commentary by Pastor Steve

We're excited to have you digging deeper into the Word. The best way to use this study guide is to read the Bible verse(s) first, then Pastor Steve's commentary. God bless you.

John 13:26

v26 (continued): There was no point in hiding Judas' identity any longer, but to expose his treachery suddenly to everyone in the room might have started a fight, so Jesus chose only to tell John, probably to put his mind at ease that it wasn't him. But He didn't merely answer his question by telling him it was Judas; instead He revealed Judas by reaching out to him one last time. Part of every Passover meal is a small dish of bitter herbs (maror). A piece of unleavened bread is dipped into those herbs and eaten as a reminder of the bitterness of Israel's slavery in Egypt (Ex 12:8; Nu 9:11). Apparently Jesus took a piece of bread, dipped it into those bitter herbs and then offered the bread to Judas. Judas must have been seated beside Him to His left. And it's not unusual to offer portions to one another during that meal, so the gesture would not have aroused suspicion. But to Judas, the offer of those bitter herbs, along with a knowing look from Jesus, must have alarmed him. At that moment he realized Jesus knew what he was planning to do and that He was warning him that his betrayal would lead to a bitter end, which of course, it did (Mt 27:3-10; Ac 1:16-20).

John 13:26-27

v26 (continued): Once more John identifies Judas as "Judas, [the son] of Simon Iscariot" (Jn 6:71; 13:2), probably to prevent his readers from confusing him with another disciple named Judas: Judas the son of James (Lk 6:16; Jn 14:22). **v27**: It's quite likely that Judas understood the prophetic warning symbolized by those herbs, but instead of repenting he hardened his heart. He probably flared in anger at Jesus, and that terrible choice opened him up to a form of spiritual possession far worse than demonic possession. John states that as Judas was eating the bread with the herbs on it Satan himself entered into him. One can only imagine the look that came over his face at that moment and the evil presence that must have entered the room. Judas needed to leave immediately. No ministry could continue as long as he was there, so Jesus said to him, "What you are doing, do quickly" (literal).

John 13:28-29

vs28-29: That exchange between Jesus and Judas must have happened rapidly because none of the other disciples realized why Jesus had said this to Judas. They heard Him tell Judas to do something quickly and assumed He had sent him out to purchase supplies or to give a gift to the poor because Judas was the one who was responsible to care for the money which had been donated for their support. **vs28-29** (continued): John's reference here to the possibility of buying the "things which we need for the feast" (literal) (v29) causes some to think that the meal they were taking could not have been a Passover meal because the day of Passover (which begins at twilight) is a sabbath, and if they had not purchased the supplies by then, it would be too late, which is true, but the other gospels clearly describe that meal as a Passover meal (Mt 26:17; Mk 14:12; Lk 22:7, 13, 15), and there are several possible explanations. One is that Jesus chose to celebrate Passover, or at least sit down to the table, earlier in the day before the sabbath actually began. He may have done so in order to have enough time to teach the disciples all that He had planned for that final evening.

John 13:28-30

vs28-29 (continued): Another possibility is that the disciples may have thought that Jesus was sending Judas out, before the sabbath began, to purchase supplies for the "Feast of Unleavened Bread" which would begin the day after Passover (Lev 23:5-6), or possibly even for the "Feast of Firstfruit" which would take place two days later (Sunday) and would require them to offer an "omer" (about two quarts) of barley at the temple (Lev 23:9-14). **v30**: John concludes his description of Judas by saying, "Therefore, that one having taken the piece of bread went out immediately, and it was night" (literal). A trumpet would have sounded at the temple to announce the official beginning of Passover (three stars can be seen in the darkening sky), and that may be what John is telling us by the words "and it was night." But he must also have meant those words to point to the spiritual "night" into which Judas had entered as well as the "hour" of suffering which began for Jesus as Judas left the room (v31).