

Nicodemus *the Scriptural Background*

Night, Darkness, and the World

John 1:3ff

What has come into being in him was life - life that was the light of men; and light shines in darkness, and darkness could not overpower it

The Word was the true light that enlightens everyone; he was coming into the world. He was in the world that had its being through him, and the world did not recognise him.

Jesus, the Light

John 8:12

I AM the Light of the World; anyone who follows me will not walk in the dark, but will have the light of life.

Jesus, Sight for the Blind World

John 9:4f

As long as day lasts, we must carry out the work of the One who sent me: the night will soon be here when no-one can work. As long as I am in the world, I AM the light of the world.

The World and Judgment

John 7:2-7

As the Jewish Feast of Shelters drew near, his brothers said to him: *Leave this place and go to Judaea, so that your disciples too may see the works that you are doing. No-one who wants to be publicly known acts in secret; if this is what you are doing, you should reveal yourself to the world.* Not even his brothers had faith in him. Jesus answered: *For me the right time has not come yet; for you any time is the right time. The world cannot hate you; but it does hate me, because I give evidence that its ways are evil.*

Judgment of the Wilfully Blind

John 9:39-41

Jesus said: *It is for judgment that I have come into this world, so that those without sight may see, and those with sight may become blind.* Hearing this, some Pharisees who were present said to him: *So we are blind, are we?* Jesus replied: *If you were blind, you would not be guilty; but since you say 'We can see', your guilt remains.*

At the Raising of Lazarus

John 11:9f

Are there not twelve hours in the day? No-one who walks in the daytime stumbles, having the light of this world to see by; anyone who walks at night stumbles, having no light as a guide.

The Lifting Up Of The Son of Man

An Oracle of Isaiah

Is 43:8-13

Bring forth the people that is blind, yet has eyes, that is deaf yet has ears. Let all the nations assemble, let the peoples gather here. Which of them has proclaimed this, and revealed things to us in the past? Let them bring their witnesses to justify themselves; let others listen, and say; *It is true.* You yourselves are my witnesses, declares the Lord, and the servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know me and believe me and understand that I AM. No god was formed before me, nor will be after me. I, I AM the Lord, and there is no other Saviour but me. I have revealed, have saved, and have proclaimed, not some foreigner among you. You are my witnesses, the Lord declares. I AM God, yes, from eternity I AM. No-one can deliver from my hand; when I act, who can thwart me?

The Suffering Servant

Is 52:13

Look, my Servant will prosper, will grow great, will rise to great heights.

Jesus' Three Predictions of the Passion in Mark

At Peter's profession "You are the Christ"

Mk 8:31-33

Then Jesus began to teach them that the Son of Man was destined to suffer grievously, and to be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and to be put to death, and after three days to rise again; and he said all this quite openly. Then, taking him aside, Peter tried to rebuke him. But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said to him, *Get behind me, Satan! You are thinking, not as God thinks, but as men do.*

As they make their way through Galilee

Mk 9:30-32

He was instructing his disciples, and telling them: *The Son of Man will be delivered into the power of men: they will put him to death; and three days after he has been put to death he will rise again.* But they did not understand what he said and were afraid to ask him.

On the Way

Mk 10:32-34

They were on the road, going up to Jerusalem. Jesus was walking on ahead of them: they were in a daze, and those who followed were apprehensive. Once more taking the Twelve aside, he began to tell them what was going to happen to him: *Now we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man is about to be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the gentiles, who will mock him and spit at him and scourge him and put him to death; and after three days he will rise again.*

Jesus' Three Predictions of the Passion in John

To Nicodemus: *No-one has gone up to heaven, except the one who came down from heaven, the Son of Man: as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up: so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.* *John 3:12-14*

To the Jews: *When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I AM HE, and that I do nothing of my own accord. What I say is what the Father has taught me; he who sent me is with me, and has not left me to myself, for I always do what pleases him.* *John 8:28f*

To the crowd: *Now sentence is being passed on this world: now the prince of this world is to be driven out; and when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to myself.* By these words he indicated the kind of death he would die. The crowd answered, *The Law has taught us that the Christ will remain for ever. So how can you say 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?* Jesus then said: *The light will be with you only a little longer now. Go on your way while you have the light, or darkness will overtake you: and no-one who walks in the dark knows where he is going. While you still have the light, believe in the light, so that you may become children of light.* Having said this Jesus left them and was hidden from their sight. *John 12:31-36*

The End Of The Public Ministry

John 12: 37-50

Though they had been present when he gave so many signs, they did not believe in him. This was to fulfil the words of Isaiah: *Who has believed what they have heard from us, who has seen in it the Lord's arm?* Indeed, they were unable to believe because (Isaiah again) *He has blinded their eyes, he has hardened their heart to prevent them using their eyes to see, their heart to understand, changing their ways and being healed by me.* Isaiah said this, because he saw his glory, and his words referred to Jesus. Jesus declared publicly: *Whoever believes in me believes, not in me, but in the One who sent me. I have come into the world as light, to prevent anyone who believes in me from staying in the dark any more. If anyone hears my words and does not keep them faithfully, it is not I who will judge him. Anyone who rejects me and refuses my words has his judge already: the word itself that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day. I have not spoken of my own accord: the Father who sent me commanded me what I should say, and I know that his commands mean eternal life. Therefore what the father has told me is what I speak.*