

throughout v. 23. It is important to note, however, that the pronoun is used generically here and refers equally to men, women, and children.

**A TN Or** “does not keep.”

**B TN Or** “the message.”

**C TN Or** “while remaining” or “while residing.”

**D TN Or** “Helper” or “Counselor”; **Grk** “Paraclete,” from the Greek word *παράκλητος* (*paraklētos*). See the note on the word “Advocate” in v. 16 for a discussion of how this word is translated.

**E TN Grk** “that one will teach you.” The words “that one”

have been omitted from the translation since they are redundant in English.

**F TN Grk** “all things.”

**G TN Grk** “all things.”

**H SN Peace I leave with you.** In spite of appearances, this verse does not introduce a new subject (peace). Jesus will use the phrase as a greeting to his disciples after his resurrection (20:19, 21, 26). It is here a reflection of the Hebrew *shalom* as a farewell. But Jesus says he leaves *peace* with his disciples. This should probably be understood ultimately in terms of the indwelling of the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, who has been the topic of the preceding verses. It is his presence, after Jesus has left the disciples and finally returned to the Father, which will remain with them and comfort them.

**I TN** The pronoun “it” is not in the Greek text, but has been supplied. Direct objects in Greek were often omitted when clear from the context.

**J TN Grk** “not as the world gives do I give to you.”

**K TN Or** “distressed or fearful and cowardly.”

**L TN Or** “You have heard that I said to you.”

**M TN Or** “you would rejoice.”

**N SN** Jesus’ statement *the Father is greater than I am* has caused much christological and trinitarian debate. Although the Arians appealed to this text to justify their subordinationist Christology, it seems evident that by the fact Jesus compares himself to the Father, his divine nature is taken for granted. There have been two orthodox interpretations: (1) The Son is eternally generated while the Father is not: Origen, Tertullian, Athanasius, Hilary, etc. (2) *As man* the incarnate Son was less than the Father: Cyril of Alexandria, Ambrose, Augustine. In the context of the Fourth Gospel the second explanation seems more plausible. But why should the disciples have rejoiced? Because Jesus was on the way to the Father who would glorify him (cf. 17:4–5); his departure now signifies that the work the Father has given him is completed (cf.

does not love me does not obey<sup>A</sup> my words. And the word<sup>B</sup> you hear is not mine, but the Father’s who sent me.

<sup>25</sup>“I have spoken these things while staying<sup>C</sup> with you. <sup>26</sup>But the Advocate,<sup>D</sup> the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you<sup>E</sup> everything,<sup>F</sup> and will cause you to remember everything<sup>G</sup> I said to you.

<sup>27</sup>“Peace I leave with you;<sup>H</sup> my peace I give to you; I do not give it<sup>I</sup> to you as the world does.<sup>J</sup> Do not let your hearts be distressed or lacking in courage.<sup>K</sup> <sup>28</sup>You heard me say to you,<sup>L</sup> ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad<sup>M</sup> that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than I am.<sup>N</sup> <sup>29</sup>I have told you now before it happens, so that when it happens you may believe.<sup>O</sup>

<sup>30</sup>I will not speak with you much longer,<sup>P</sup> for the ruler of this world is coming.<sup>Q</sup> He has no power over me,<sup>R</sup> <sup>31</sup>but I am doing just what the Father commanded me, so that the world may know<sup>S</sup> that I love the Father.<sup>T</sup> Get up, let us go from here.<sup>U</sup>

### The Vine and the Branches

**15** “I am the true vine<sup>V</sup> and my Father is the gardener.<sup>W</sup> <sup>2</sup>He takes away<sup>X</sup> every branch that does not

19:30). Now Jesus will be glorified with that glory that he had with the Father before the world was (cf. 17:5). This should be a cause of rejoicing to the disciples because when Jesus is glorified he will glorify his disciples as well (17:22).

**OSN** Jesus tells the disciples that he has told them all these things before they happen, so that when they do happen the disciples *may believe*. This does not mean they had not believed prior to this time; over and over the author has affirmed that they have (cf. 2:11). But when they see these things happen, their level of trust in Jesus will increase and their concept of who he is will expand. The confession of Thomas in 20:28 is representative of this increased understanding of who Jesus is. Cf. John 13:19.

**P TN Grk** “I will no longer speak many things with you.”

**Q SN** The ruler of this world is a reference to Satan.

**R TN Grk** “in me he has nothing.”

**S TN Or** “may learn.”

**T TN Grk** “But so that the world may know that I love the Father, and just as the Father commanded me, thus I do.” The order of the clauses has been rearranged in the translation to conform to contemporary English style.

**USN** Some have understood Jesus’ statement *Get up, let us go from here* to mean that at this point Jesus and the disciples got up and left the room where the meal was served and began the journey to the garden of Gethsemane. If so, the rest of the Farewell Discourse took place *en route*. Others have pointed to this statement as one of the “seams” in the discourse, indicating that the author used preexisting sources. Both explanations are possible, but not really necessary. Jesus could simply have stood up at this point (the disciples may or may not have stood with him) to finish the discourse before finally departing (in 18:1). In any case it may be argued that Jesus refers not to a literal departure at this point, but to preparing to meet the enemy who is on the way already in the person of

Judas and the soldiers with him.

**V SN** *I am the true vine.* There are numerous OT passages which refer to Israel as a vine: Ps 80:8–16, Isa 5:1–7, Jer 2:21, Ezek 15:1–8; 17:5–10; 19:10–14, and Hos 10:1. The vine became symbolic of Israel, and even appeared on some coins issued by the Macabees. The OT passages which use this symbol appear to regard Israel as faithless to Yahweh (typically rendered as “Lord” in the OT) and/or the object of severe punishment. Ezek 15:1–8 in particular talks about the worthlessness of wood from a vine (in relation to

disobedient Judah). A branch cut from a vine is worthless except to be burned as fuel. This fits more with the statements about the disciples (John 15:6) than with Jesus’ description of himself as the vine. Ezek 17:5–10 contains vine imagery which refers to a king of the house of David, Zedekiah, who was set up as king in Judah by Nebuchadnezzar. Zedekiah allied himself to Egypt and broke his covenant with Nebuchadnezzar (and therefore also with God), which would ultimately result in his downfall (17:20–21). Ezek 17:22–24 then describes the planting of a cedar sprig which grows into a lofty tree, a figurative description of Messiah. But it is significant that Messiah himself is not described in Ezek 17 as a vine, but as a cedar tree. The vine imagery here applies to Zedekiah’s disobedience. Jesus’ description of himself as the *true vine* in John 15:1 ff. is to be seen against this background, but it differs significantly from the imagery surveyed above. It represents new imagery which differs significantly from OT concepts; it appears to be original with Jesus. The imagery of the vine underscores the importance of fruitfulness in the Christian life and the truth that this results not from human achievement, but from one’s position in Christ. Jesus is not just giving some comforting advice, but portraying to the disciples the difficult path of faithful service. To some degree the figure is similar to the head-body metaphor used by Paul, with Christ as head and believers as members of the body. Both metaphors bring out the vital and necessary connection which exists between Christ and believers.

**W TN Or** “the farmer.”

**X TN Or** “He cuts off.”

**SN** The Greek verb *αἶρω* (*airō*) can mean “lift up” as well as “take away,” and it is sometimes argued that here it is a reference to the gardener “lifting up” (i.e., prying up) a weak branch so that it bears fruit again. In Johannine usage the word occurs in the sense of “lift up” in 8:59 and 5:8–12, but in the sense of “remove” it is found in 11:39; 11:48; 16:22, and 17:15. In