1. **Intro:**

1.1. **The Portia** (Por-sha) **Spider:** a jumping spider that uses **deception** and **mimicry** to catch and eat **other spiders.**

1.2. It uses **camouflage** or it shows a kind of **behavioral mimicry:**

1.3. It **imitates something** its intended victim finds **harmless** or even **attractive.** (i.e. it crawls on a spider's web, then **plucks the web** to imitate a captured insect)

1.4. **It varies its web signals** to suit its specific victim. If it encounters a **new spider species,** it tries **different signals** rather randomly. (It was once observed to perform **vibratory behavior** for **3 days** until the victim decided to investigate)

1.4.1. That seems to be similar to our enemy the **devil** who seeks to rob, destroy, or sift us like wheat!

1.5. Talk about ruining a good meal! (21)

2. **THE BITE OF BETRAYAL!** (21-23)

2.1. (21) In the East the **worst breach of Friendship** is for one to eat another’s bread & secretly betray him.¹

2.1.1. To eat bread is a token of **loyalty, love, & devotion.**

2.2. His hand is on the table - is an **Aramaic colloquialism,** which means, “he is eating my bread & yet he is plotting against me.”

2.3. (22) **Destined to die!**

2.4. Judas’ **accountability** and God’s **sovereign** plan for Jesus’ death are both seen together in this verse.

2.4.1. Jesus had to die, for His death was the basis of salvation for all mankind, & the only means for lifting the curse of sin.

2.4.2. **But** the betrayer was accountable for his actions.

2.4.3. **There was no other way to ultimate victory except the cross.** This was **God’s plan,** & His death on the cross was **his destiny!**

2.4.4. **The death of Jesus was God’s plan for human redemption.** However, those who were responsible for His death are held accountable for what they did.

2.5. But woe to the man by whom he is betrayed – Judas was **not a helpless pawn** in a **divine drama,** or Jesus would not have pronounced judgment on him for his betrayal.²

---

¹ Gospel Light ; George M. Lamsa; pg.300.
² Shepherd’s Notes; pg.81,82.
2.6. (23) All the disciples were dipping their bread into the main dish, thus they all were asking the question, “Is it I?” (though expecting a neg response) (Mrk 14:19,20)

2.7. Our Lord did not tell His disciples who the traitor was; in fact, in love, Jesus protected Judas to the very end.
2.7.1. He washed Judas’ feet, warned him, and gave him every opportunity to repent.
2.7.2. We must never think that Judas was forced into betraying Jesus just because it was predicted in the Psalms.

3. **I’M NUMBER 1! (24-30)**

3.1. **REVERSING THE WORLD’S STANDARDS!**
3.2. I guess it’s the same as, “Who’s going to ride in the backseat & who will ride shotgun?” - “Who’s going to use the TV Tray & who will sit at the big table?”

3.3. Why would the disciples be arguing over who was the greatest when Jesus had just washed their feet and talked about His suffering and death?³
3.3.1. Come on! He’s going to be setting up His Kingdom on earth & you know he’s going to need a Chief of Staff!
3.3.2. Henry Kissenger said, “What is causing so much disharmony among the nations is the fact that some want to beat the big drum, few are willing to face the music, and no one wants to play second fiddle!”

3.4. Perhaps the arguing grew out of the order of seating at the table.
3.4.1. Seemed Judas was given the place of honor at our Lord’s left, & John was at His right. [Explain U shaped table]

3.5. Whatever the reason, their attitude was that of the world, where competition and authority are important to success.
3.5.1. In the kingdom of God, greatness is measured by how many you serve, not how many serve you.
3.5.2. Dave Thomas, the founder of Wendy’s Hamburgers, wrote: “I got my MBA long before my GED. I even have a photograph of me in my MBA graduation outfit—a snappy knee-length work apron. I guarantee you that I’m the only founder among America’s big companies whose picture in the corporate Annual report shows him wielding a mop and a plastic bucket! That wasn’t a gag; it was a case of leading by example. At Wendy’s, MBA does not mean Master of Business Administration. It means Mop Bucket Attitude!”

3.6. They wanted the glory but not the shame - The crown but not the cross - To be masters but not servants!

³ Warren Wiersbe; Outlines of N.T.
3.7. It is ok to go for greatness! Well actually, it is **praiseworthy** when we do so!
3.7.1. Didn’t Jesus say, “among those born of women there has not risen one **greater** than John the Baptist.” – Jesus was into **Greatness**!
3.7.2. Going after greatness is commended…it just needed to be redefined!
   3.7.2.1. The **motivation** determines its **character**!

3.8. Picture 2 poles with a tension wire! I------------I
3.8.1. 1st pole is 1 Tim.3:1 “If a man **desires** the position of a bishop, he **desires** a good work.”
3.8.2. 2nd pole is Jer.45:5 “do you seek **great things** for yourself? Do not seek them;” (turn to)
3.8.3. We praise God for what Jeremiah but also for his **assistant**!
   3.8.3.1. **Assistants** help those for whom they work, so they can be freed to get their work done!
   3.8.3.2. **Moses** had 70 elders; **David** had his 600 men; **Jesus** had his disciples; **Paul** has **Silas, Timothy, Titus, & others**; **Lone Ranger** had Taunto; & **Jeremiah** had Baruch!

3.9. God warns Baruch, not against ambition per-se, but against self-centered ambition!
3.9.1. Any ambition that **centers on** & **terminates on oneself**…is **wrong** ambition!
3.9.2. Q: Do you have ambitions **for yourself**…**forget them**!
3.9.3. Let nothing be done through **selfish ambition**. Phil. 2:3
3.9.4. For whoever desires to **save his life** will **lose it**, but whoever **loses his life** for My sake and the gospel’s will **save it**. Mark 8:35

3.10. Seek for **God’s work** to be accomplished & **God** to be Glorified!
3.10.1. Like Baruch - When you hear all your work just went up in smoke; When it seems that your witness is useless, remember for **Whom** you are doing them!
3.10.2. Survey your **ambitions** & see if they are from **God**, or for **Self**?

3.11. Jesus is the **model** for our ministry, and He was a **servant**.
   3.11.1.1. He stooped lower & lower.
3.11.2. You may **push yourself** to the **top**, but when you get there, you’ll find yourself **farthest from His presence**!
3.11.3. See, when you **serve others**, you’ll look strangely like God!
3.11.4. Imagine a **relationship, ministry, church, or marriage**, where the battle was…Who can stoop **lower**, to serve the other **better**?

3.12. When Jesus showed himself in His **post-resurrection** appearances, you not what he seemed to **show** the most? His scars! (not some **crown**, not new clothes)

---

4 Erwin McManus; Uprising; pg.251
3.12.1. To Emmaus disciples - He was made known to them in the breaking of bread. (How? When hands broke bread?)
3.12.2. To 10 disciples in upper room - “Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself.” Lk.24:39
3.12.3. To Thomas – “Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side.” Jn.20:27
3.13. Scars seem to be the authentic marks of faithful discipleship.
3.13.1. Who can challenge one’s love when they show you the print of the nails & the mark of the spear???
3.13.2. Paul said, “for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus”.
3.13.3. Do you have any servant marks? Maybe camel knees from praying so much? Or, dishpan hands from washing the feet of others?
3.13.3.1. Let’s take some marks with us!
3.14. 2 privileges:
3.14.1. [1] Eat & Drink at His table (that’s Fellowship)
3.14.2. [2] Sit on thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel (that’s Authority)
3.14.3. So, do you want to be served food down here or up there? Do you want to have authority down here or up there?
3.15. The Lord assured them that the greatest glory was yet to come (29,30).
3.15.1. So why settle for the transient glory of this world?

4. **WHEN A BELIEVER FAILS!** (31-34)
4.1. Watch Jesus now pull back the veil on the unseen realm!
4.2. The apostles had experienced some great blessings that evening, but danger was very near.\(^5\)
4.2.1. Be on your guard when you have a rich spiritual experience, for Satan is ready to attack! \{Beware of the Portia Spider\}
4.2.2. Especially beware when you are deciding who is the greatest!!! 😊
4.3. To sift you like wheat – To test them. (i.e.) To put them through trials as he did Job.
4.3.1. Wheat is sifted so as to separate the tares & the soil from the wheat.
4.3.2. In this process of purification, it is constantly shaken in the sifter.
4.3.3. Sometimes God sifts also! - Amos 9:9 “For surely I will command, and will sift the house of Israel among all nations, As grain is sifted in a sieve; Yet not the smallest grain shall fall to the ground”.
4.3.4. Results of the sifting/shaking: Judas was separated from them; Peter was to deny him; & the other disciples were to flee.
4.4. Satan already controlled Judas, but he had to ask for permission to sift the disciples
4.4.1. Jesus uses a fan, & sifts to get rid of chaff; but the devil uses a fan & sifts to get rid of wheat!

---

\(^{5}\) Warren Wiersbe; With the Word; pg.684.
Have you considered My servant Job? – That word considered reveals the watchful eye of Satan, ever watching the saints. Searching for the weak link in the chain, the weak door in the fortress to break in & rob & destroy.

Of course he couldn’t touch a flea on the back of one of Job’s camels unless God allowed it!

Lessons:

Peter was clueless to the attack, but Christ knew every detail about Peter’s denial. There isn’t a single detail of your testing that Christ doesn’t already know about!

Job 31:4 “Does He not see my ways, And count all my steps?”

He didn’t know he needed help, Jesus knew!

Peter’s answer showed that he comprehended neither the serious events fast approaching, nor the reality of his own weakness.

He needed reassurance, “when you have returned to me”.

He needed to be re-commissioned, “strengthen your brethren”.

Last section, “serve others” now “strengthen others”.

Cooperate with God’s character building process!!!

God doesn’t enjoy seeing your faith come under attack. But He does long to see your faith mature!

He longs to see you become more like Christ.

Christ’s comparison of Simon’s test to a farmer sifting wheat, pointed to the positive outcome of the process.

You can’t make bread out of wheat until the hull has been parted from the grain. That’s why sifting has to take place!

Faith should not fail – [ekleipo /ek·li·po] where we get our word eclipse.

Your faith won’t be eclipsed Peter, because Jesus prayed!

Eph.6:16 “above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.”

And his faith didn’t fail, Nor his love. His courage is what failed!

Peter was a courageous man, but he would fail just the same because of his self-confidence.

Had he heeded the Lord’s warning, he would have spared himself a great deal of sorrow and shame.