

JOHN - LESSON 12

John Chapter 12

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Memory verses for this week: *Psa 30:4 Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. Psa 30:5 For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.*

Introduction: Last week we saw Christ prove that He had power even over death when he raised Lazarus from the dead. After this, the Pharisees began plotting to put Jesus to death. From this point forward, Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews.

Overview of John 12: The first half of John 12 (1) presents Jesus' supper with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus in which Mary anoints Him with ointment. (2) This is followed by the record of His triumphal entry. Finally, (3) Greeks request to see Jesus followed by His response to them. The last half of John 12 is the conclusion of Jesus' public ministry as recorded by John.

The remainder of the gospel were things spoken in private to his disciples in His final day. Here, Jesus looks forward with apprehension to Calvary. The term apprehension used here refers to the power or ability to grasp the importance, significance, or meaning of something He concludes with warning to His unbelieving Jewish audience and applies the fateful prophecy of Isaiah 6:9-10 to them.

I. The Supper at Bethany

John 12:1 Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

John 12:2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

This is one of the greatest stories about being sure we prioritize things in life. Jesus was the ultimate example of how we should all be a servant, but in this account we see the one who was worried about the serving was wrong.

Martha meant well in trying to take care of the company, but Mary demonstrated the greater spirituality in wanting to be with the Lord. Sometimes we can get so wrapped up in our day to day business that we fail to give the Lord the proper attention that He so deserves.

The final week of our Lord's life is at hand. The reference to the "six days before the passover" is difficult to pin point in as much as the observance of the Passover as well as the concurrent feast of Unleavened Bread also involved days of preparation. In any event, the time frame is about a week before Jesus' death. Jesus returned from Ephraim to Bethany where He not long before had raised Lazarus from the dead. A formal supper was held in honor of Jesus and perhaps also Lazarus. Mark's account records that this dinner was held at the home of Simon the leper whom Jesus had previously healed. Martha helped serve the meal and Lazarus was present, perhaps as the other guest of honor.

John 12:3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

We see that Mary "sat" at the feet of Jesus learning. There are many great teachers, but there has never been one nor shall there ever be one greater than Jesus Christ.

Luke 10:38 Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house.

Luke 10:39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

Luke 10:40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

Luke 10:41 And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:

Luke 10:42 But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

The account in Luke says that Mary chose the good part which would not be taken away. Do you choose the good part each day. If we do choose the good part, we will read the Bible each day and draw close to the Lord. But that takes dedication, and much discipline. But we need to be like Mary. We see that Mary earlier had "Fell" at the feet of Jesus when she was grieving at the loss of Lazarus.

John 11:32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

Mary of Bethany, the sister of Martha and Lazarus took "a pound of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair." Spikenard (literally 'true spikenard' or 'real spikenard') was a very expensive

perfume with a wonderful fragrance. It was imported from the far-east and often was made into an oil or ointment. Mary's act in itself bordered upon worship which our Lord received. Both Mark and Matthew's accounts (Mark 14:3, Matthew 26:7) record that she anointed His head. What is at hand is not a contradiction of detail. Rather, there is a complementing of detail.

She did both. John only records of the feet. What is implied is utter submission and worship of Christ by Mary in anointing His feet and wiping them with her hair. The entire house there from was filled with the most pleasant fragrance. Perhaps a thinly veiled fulfillment of Psalm 45:7-11 is in view. If so, Mary, whether wittingly or unwittingly, had anointed the King of Israel though soon to be rejected.

Psa 45:7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.

Psa 45:8 All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.

Psa 45:9 Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.

Psa 45:10 Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house;

Psa 45:11 So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him.

John 12:4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

John 12:5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

John 12:6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

Anytime money is spent by the church, questions are raised as to the reason and purpose. We need to be sure it is the Will of the Lord that we make those expenditures. If our main focus in the church is not to spread the Gospel, we had best question our motives. Here, Mary is questioned why she has "wasted" this ointment on Jesus. Many think that any money given to the cause of the Lord is wasted, but it is never wasted. Only the future will reveal what is in store for those who faithfully give to the work of the Lord.

J. Vernon McGee had this to say about these verses.

"Judas Iscariot is revealing his true nature. He is the treasurer of the group. He doesn't care for the poor; he cares for himself—he is a thief. He was taking some money out on the sly. He wants Mary's money given to the poor so he can handle it and take out his percentage. May I say to you today, the real test of a Christian, the hard-coin test, is the way he handles his finances. The real test of a church or a Christian organization is the way it handles its finances. Is the money used for the cause for which it was given, or is it shifted and used in

some other way? Three hundred pence was the annual wage of a laboring man of that day. Because the spikenard was too costly for Mary to use on herself, she poured it all out on Jesus. Friend, if we would learn to sit at His feet, we would give more to Him, too. Mary had saved this precious ointment in an alabaster box. It came out of India, where the herbs grow high in the Himalayas, and was very expensive. Do you know why she had bought it and saved it? So that when she died it could be used on her body! Now she pours it all out on Him. This is absolute affection, adoration, and attachment to His Person. The odor of that ointment filled the house, and it still fills the world today.

The name *Judas Iscariot* makes reference to how he was from Kerioth of Judea. He was the only one of the twelve not from Galilee. Being from the tribe of Judah, he may have been the archetypical fulfillment of John 1:11 in Christ coming to His own and them receiving Him not. The comment that he “should betray him” is not so much a predestiny of Judas as a prophetic truth. Judas, as treasurer of the group, was a thief and embezzler. Character is indivisible. A person is what he is. One who will cheat and steal so willingly will commit even worse crimes. From the perspective of character, it was not a major distinction for Judas to betray our Lord for gain. He already was accustomed to cheating.

His secret betrayal of Jesus was not greatly different *in character* than secretly betraying the trust of the disciples in embezzling from them. Indeed, the love of money is the root of all evil. Judas was agitated that Mary had consumed the value of 300 pence. The word translated as pence is (dhnarion) *denarion* which is a Latin word. In the Greco-Roman economy of the first century it was the equivalent of a day’s wage. In other words, Mary had spent what amounted to about a year’s income on the ointment with which she anointed Jesus. Judas’ protest that it could have been sold and given to the poor has the foul odor of further embezzlement hanging over it. If she had in fact sold the ointment, presumably she would have given the funds to Jesus who then would have turned them over to Judas as treasurer. Judas saw only shekel signs flying out of his clutches.

John 12:7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

John 12:8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

We see that Jesus rebukes Judas Iscariot for what he said. He was not concerned about the poor, he was a thief. You see many in the church who murmur over how money is spent, but rarely is it one of the tithers. Those involved in doing the Lord’s Work rarely complain, but rather look for ways to further God’s kingdom. Jesus loved the poor as we well know, but he points out that they will always be with us. Should we ignore the poor? Absolutely not. But we should not be overwhelmed with our inability to help all those who are in need. God give us certain families and burdens to help, and we should take advantage of those.

We should note that the anointing that Mary did of Christ's body

1. It pictured Christ's death on the Cross
2. It showed Mary's Love for Christ
3. It was an excellent example of how we should give.

Jesus' rebuke of Judas held a great significance. Such ointments were commonly used by the Jews in burying their dead. It was a means of honoring the deceased in a fashion similar to our custom of sending flowers to a funeral. It also served the practical purpose of masking the odor of death because they did not embalm bodies as modern western culture routinely does. What Mary in effect had done was to send flowers to Jesus *before* the funeral. Rather than anoint Him after He was dead, she did so while He was still alive. The phrase "against the day of my burying hath she kept this" would seem to indicate so.

Mary no doubt knew the tense political climate concerning Jesus. Bethany was just outside of Jerusalem. She was well aware of the warrant for Jesus' arrest and knew that the Jewish authorities had determined to kill Jesus, particularly after He had resurrected her brother. She perhaps, therefore, wanted to honor Jesus while she could. Jesus indicated that her act was prophetic of what was coming.

In verse 8, Jesus rebukes Judas' hypocritical pretense to help the poor. There always has been and always will be poverty. (The source of poverty has more to do with defective human nature than external problems of economics.) Jesus well knew He would soon be gone.

John 12:9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

John 12:10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;

John 12:11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

We see the response of the people. We see three different kinds of people. There were those who were curious, many were wicked, but thank God, some believed on Jesus. When we go out and witness for the Lord, we should not be disappointed when not everyone responds to the Gospel. If only a few truly believed Jesus, we should not be surprised when many refuse to accept Christ as Savior.

More of the purpose of Jesus' resurrection of Lazarus comes into view. He raised Him, of course, to bring glory to God. He also raised him out of compassion for His beloved friends Mary and Martha. Another reason now looms at hand. His resurrection of Lazarus drew the attention of all around Jerusalem.

For the Pharisees and leaders of Israel, it brought great consternation, bringing to a head in their minds what had to be done with Jesus. To the common people, it became the final evidence for them to believe on Jesus. The phrase, "Much people" (*ho ochlos polus*), literally reads, 'the people many.' It was an idiom for the common people. It at times is rendered 'the multitude.' Again, the clear distinction between the hard-hearted, professional religious leadership of the nation and the common people is accentuated.

They had heard of Lazarus' resurrection and they came to see Lazarus the resurrected as well as Jesus the one who resurrected him. The result was that many of them "went away, and believed on Jesus." The significance of this was not missed by the authorities. They therefore "consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death." Lazarus, the ultimate evidence of Jesus' divine power, must be destroyed as well.

The degree of their belief is not noted. It merely may have been they believed He was the Messiah ready to deliver them politically. Evidently, people of the same crowd within the week would cry out "Crucify Him." It would seem that on the next day when Jesus made His triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the excitement and enthusiasm of the crowds was motivated in some degree by the impression which Lazarus' resurrection made. Surely, the One who had raised him must be the Messiah.

Albert Barnes in his commentary said this:

A certain man was sick - The resurrection of Lazarus has been recorded only by John. Various reasons have been conjectured why the other evangelists did not mention so signal a miracle. The most probable is, that at the time they wrote Lazarus was still living. The miracle was well known, and yet to have recorded it might have exposed Lazarus to opposition and persecution from the Jews. See Joh 12:10-11. Besides, John wrote for Christians who were out of Palestine. The other gospels were written chiefly for those who were in Judea. There was the more need, therefore, that he should enter minutely into the account of the miracle, while the others did not deem it necessary or proper to record an event so well known.

Bethany - A village on the eastern declivity of the Mount of Olives.

The town of Mary - The place where she lived. At that place also lived Simon the leper Mat 26:6, and there our Lord spent considerable part of his time when he was in Judea. The transaction recorded in this chapter occurred nearly four months after those mentioned in the previous chapter. Those occurred in December, and these at the approach of the Passover in April.

II. The Triumphal Entry

John 12:12 On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

John 12:13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

John 12:14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written,

John 12:15 Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.

John 12:16 These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.

We see that many knew that Jesus was coming. A year or so back, I was listening to a study of Daniel by David Jeremiah on the radio, and he says this was a fulfillment of prophecy, and it came exactly to the day it was prophesied to come (to the day) if you follow the prophecy laid out in Daniel.

Zec 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

John 12:17 The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.

John 12:18 For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.

John 12:19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

Oh that the comment of the Pharisees was true. At this time, they thought everyone had gone after Christ, but truly only a few acknowledged Jesus as the true Messiah. On this day, on the triumphant entry to Jerusalem, many were there to celebrate his coming.

III. The Inquisitive Greeks

John 12:20 And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:

John 12:21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

We see some of the wise Greeks came to the feast and sought to meet Jesus. During the Christmas season, much is made of the Wise men coming from the east at Jesus' birth. The reality is that they came much later (a year or two later), but it was Wise Men who sought out Jesus. All that seek Jesus today are wise.

Psa 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.

John Gill had this to say about Philip in verse 21.

The same came therefore to Philip,.... Who might know him; they might have been some of his neighbours formerly, for that Philip's parents, though Jews, dwelt among Greeks, seems probable, from the name given to him, which is a Greek one; some have thought, that these Greeks were Syrophoenicians, who dwelt upon the borders of Tyre and Sidon, and were not far off from Galilee, and from Bethsaida, the native place of Philip, and is therefore mentioned as follows:

which was of Bethsaida of Galilee; This place may be interpreted, "the house of hunting", or "of fishing"; for it is not easy to say which it has its name from, since "saida", signifies both hunting and fishing: and seeing it was in or near the tribe of Naphtali, where was plenty of deer, and a wilderness was near it, where might be wild beasts, it might be so called from hunting: and as it was situated near the lake of Gennesaret.

It might have its name from the fishing trade used in it; for Peter and Andrew, who were of it, were both fishermen: but it is yet more difficult to determine, whether this is the same with, or different from the Bethsaida Josephus (s) speaks of, as rebuilt by Philip, and called by him Julius, after the name of Caesar's daughter, as I have observed in since this was in Galilee, of which Herod Antipas was tetrarch, and where Philip could have no power to rebuild places, and change their names; and besides, the city, which he repaired, and called Julian, according to Josephus (t) was in lower Gaulonitis, and therefore must be different, unless that, or any part of it, can be thought to be the same with Galilee: wherefore the learned Reland (u) thinks, that there were two Bethsaidas, and which seems very probable; and it is likely, that this is here purposely called Bethsaida of Galilee, to distinguish it from the other, which, by some persons, might still be called Bethsaida, though it had got a new name.

IV. Jesus' Answer

John 12:22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

John 12:23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

John 12:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

John 12:25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

Christ is presented as the crucified one. It is true that unless a seed dies and is placed in the ground, it will not sprout and bring forth much fruit. This teaching was to show that Christ had to die on the cross that we might be forgiven of our sins.

John 17:1 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven,

and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

John 17:2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

John 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

Mat 26:45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Mat 26:46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

V. Jesus' Answer

John 12:25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

John 12:26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

We see that we are commanded not to love our lives here on earth. God has placed us here for a reason, but we are not to love this present world. We should be willing to lay down our life for others, the same as Jesus has done for us.

1 John 2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

1 John 2:17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Paul told the Corinthians that he took up his cross every day, and he died to the flesh.

1 Cor 15:31 I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.

Col 3:5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:

Col 3:6 For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:

Rom 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Rom 6:7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

Rom 6:8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live

with him:

Rom 6:9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

Rom 6:10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

Rom 6:11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rom 6:12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

Rom 6:13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

Jesus further elaborates upon the paradox of life. The word translated as life in this verse (quch *psuche*) is the word which is also more commonly translated as 'soul.' Loving one's self (i.e., soul) is a sure way to lose it. However, those who would hate their selfish self (i.e., deny themselves) "in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." The Greeks, who evidently were within earshot, came from a culture which had the Epicurean philosophy 'enjoy thyself.'

The simple point Jesus made was that the key to things spiritual, leading to eternal life, is for one to disdain the sinful, self-seeking desires to satisfy one's flesh. Self-orientation is the essence of living in the flesh with all of its corrupt works.

Gal 5:19 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,

Gal 5:20 Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies,

Gal 5:21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Moreover, this demolishes the contemporary mania of raising one's self-esteem. Jesus concludes with a lesson on discipleship (perhaps for the benefit of His Greek audience). A servant will stay close to his master. Therefore, "if any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be."

True service to the master requires being in proximity to the master. If we would serve Him, we must of necessity be close to Him. A profound promise like unto I Samuel 2:30 is set forth. "For them that honour me I will honour." God indeed honors those who serve Him, both in this life and later.

Rev 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give

every man according as his work shall be.

There is an interesting use of verb tense here. The first phrase, “If any man serve me,” is set forth in the subjunctive mode. It conveys the idea, ‘if any man *willfully chooses* to serve me.’ The following phrase, “him will my father honor,” uses the future tense. It is prophetic promise. God *will* honor those who willfully choose to serve Him. Once again, this was likely said within the hearing of His gentile Greek listeners. We today as gentile believers are clearly within the purview of this promise. For this we should praise the Lord.

John 12:27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

John 12:28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

We see that Jesus came into this world to die for our sins, and in so doing, glorifying the Father. Jesus’ every step in life, his very being, was to do the Will of the Father. And God spoke from Heaven saying that he would glorify His name again. John Phillips, in his book the Epistle of John, pointed out that this is the third time that God spoke audibly from Heaven in regards to Jesus.

“The first time was at his baptism, at the commencement of his ministry (Matthew 3:17), the second time was on the mount of transfiguration, at the climax of his ministry (Matthew 17:5), and the third time was here, at the crisis of his ministry. The first time was when he went down into the waters of Jordan; the second time was when he was about to come down from the mount; the third time was when he prepared himself to go down into death.”

John 5:30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

Both the humanity and the Deity of our Lord are plainly in view here. In His humanity, there was an innate fear of what He knew lay just ahead. The word translated as the soul (quch *psuche*) has several nuances in its New Testament usage.

In its more restricted sense it is a reference to the human mind. In its broader sense, it refers to the totality of human non- physical existence including, the mind, the spirit, and the emotions. The latter most likely is what is in view here. Jesus’ soul was troubled.

The phrase, “Father save me from this hour,” is in the imperative mode. He forcefully asked His heavenly Father to deliver Him from what lay ahead. His long foretold hour was at hand and in His humanity, He dreaded it. Yet, in his Deity, He girded the loins of His mind and spirit and reminded Himself, “but for this cause came I unto this hour.” Though in His humanity, He was troubled

about what was impending, yet in His Deity, He set His face as a flint to the task to which God had called Him. He truly was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Just as He had pled with an imperative for God's deliverance from what lay ahead, now in His Deity, He likewise invokes another imperative in pleading for the Father to "glorify thy name." Perhaps to strengthen and encourage Jesus, God replied directly from heaven, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

Like Saul on the road to Damascus, those who were near heard the sound of the voice of God, but evidently most did not understand it. Some thought it thunder, others the voice of an angel. Such a display of heavenly power could only serve to further verify Jesus to those at hand. We are not told exactly where this took place. Certainly, it was in Jerusalem and possibly in or near the Temple complex.

VI. Testimony of Approval From God

John 12:29 The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.

John 12:30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

John 12:32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

What a promise Jesus makes to us in verse 32. If he be lifted up from the earth, he will draw all men unto himself. This has a twofold meaning in that Jesus had to be lifted up to die on the Cross, and then we, who preach the Gospel, have to lift him up to a lost and dying world.

John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

John 3:15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

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.

John 3:17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

John 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

By Christ being lifted up, the archenemy of God, Satan, will be cast out. Satan today is still roaming this earth, but one day he will be chained at the end of the tribulation, and later, after being loosed for a season at the end of the Millennial

kingdom, will be cast into the Lake of Fire with the false prophet and the beast.

Rev 20:10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Psalm 29 likens the voice of the Lord to a powerful thunderstorm of great magnitude. Not only was God's response from heaven intended to give Jesus further resolve and strength for the impending crisis, it also was for the sake of those who saw and heard this occurrence. However they interpreted it to mean, it had to leave a powerful impression of Jesus' relationship to heaven.

His hour had arrived. The climax of the ages was at hand. The beginning of the judgment of the world was about to start. Sin would be judged in His body on the cross. The beginning of the end of Satan's kingdom with its concurrent struggle was near. It was all about to come to a head and Jesus knew it. The "prince of this world" is none other than Satan. He was about to be cast out. The tense of the verb cast out (ekballw *ekballo*) is future.

The beginning of the end of Satan's reign over the world was about to begin. Though in looking back over almost two thousand years of history, we know his power still continues. Yet, it soon will be over. The beginning of his fall from power began at Calvary and more particularly at the resurrection of Jesus.

J. Vernon McGee had this comment about these verses.

"We live in world that is judged. He came to die a judgment death for the sins of the world. If the world will not accept this, the world is judged. How is Satan, the prince of this world, cast out? I believe it is done gradually. When Christ died on the Cross, I am convinced that Satan did not understand what was happening. What he thought would be a defeat turned out to be a victory. He lost the battle at the Cross which is the reason the Lord can say that the prince of this world is cast out. Then in Rev. 12:10 we are told that Satan will be cast out of heaven, which is the second stage. Then in Rev. 20:3, he will be cast into the bottomless pit, and in Rev. 20:10, he will be cast into the lake of fire. This is the last stage of his defeat. At the Cross, his doom was sealed. The Cross marks the victory of Christ and the defeat of Satan.

John 12:33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.

John 12:34 The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

John 12:35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in

darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

John 12:36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

We see that the people do not comprehend what Jesus speaks in regards to him being lifted up. The idea of Jesus dying on the Cross was not something that made sense to them. Jesus tells them that He is the light of this world. So many times he had revealed this to the people, but they did not grasp this. If we want to be known as children of the Lord, we need to walk in the light like Jesus. We can't walk in darkness and be of the Lord.

1 John 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

1 John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

As in John 3:14, Jesus refers to being “lifted up.” Some have postulated this is a reference to His ascension. However, verse 33 makes it rather clear it refers to how He would die—the cross. Just as the serpent in the wilderness was lifted up, so must be the Son of man. But in being lifted up, the power of the cross would draw men down through the ages to the One who suffered, bled, and died for them. The way of the cross thus becomes a great spiritual magnet, drawing all men thereto.

In verse 34, Jesus spoke of the Son of man being lifted up? Clearly, they perceived that Jesus was the Christ. They were puzzled over why He would be lifted up (i.e., crucified), and who this Son of man was? Rather than directly answer their questions, Jesus returned to a metaphor He had used earlier. His presence as the Light of the world was soon to end. He therefore urged them to take advantage of that Light while it was with them.

In ancient cities without modern street lighting, travel after dark was treacherous. Jesus clearly applied this illustration to Himself. “While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.” Here, He adds the truth of not only walking in His light, but more importantly of believing in Him as the Light of the world. Upon finishing this utterance, Jesus departed (evidently the Temple) and secreted Himself from public view.

VII. Fulfillment of Prophecy

John 12:37 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

John 12:38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

John 12:39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

John 12:40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

John 12:41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

We see that many prophecies were fulfilled during this time. All things that were prophesied of the Lord came to pass exactly as they were pinned. Some of the prophecies were in Psalms, some in Micah and the minor prophets, but a large number of the prophecy came from the book of Isaiah. God had blinded the Jews eyes, and even today they still have not realized that the Messiah has already come, almost 2,000 years ago.

A sad commentary upon the spiritual condition of Israel is made. Though He had done such great miracles, and preached such powerful truth before them, “yet they believed not on him.” Imagine so many having witnessed these miracles and still not believing. This best demonstrates the willful voluntary rejection of the gospel that besets all men that was inherited as a result of transgression. There was a stubborn refusal to believe altogether upon Him despite the light of His presence.

In verse 38, John in commenting later on the events recorded noted that this was a fulfillment of several prophecies found in Isaiah. First, he refers to Isaiah 53:1, “Lord, who hath believed our report? And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?” The context of Isaiah 53, without question, is of the cross and the suffering Messiah. John, in quoting there from, points out that even the first verse of that great chapter was prophecy fulfilled. Israel refused to believe even when confronted with such a powerful manifestation of the arm of the Lord before their very eyes.

John proceeds to refer to an even more ominous prophecy found in Isaiah 6:9-10. He indicated that they therefore “could not believe.” The hardness of their hearts in rejecting the clear, powerful, and forceful manifestation of the Son of God in their midst had so blinded their hearts that they could not believe. In so doing, they fulfilled what Isaiah had prophesied more than 700 years earlier.

Because of the hardness of heart of unbelieving Israel, even in Isaiah’s day, and certainly in Jesus’ day, God therefore “blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart’ that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart,

and be converted and I should heal them.” Israel historically had ignored, rejected, and disbelieved not only the prophets, but now even God’s Son. To this day God has placed a veil upon the heart of unbelieving Israel so they cannot believe.

2Co 3:13 And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished:

2Co 3:14 But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ.

2Co 3:15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart.

Rom 11:7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded

Rom 11:8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.

Rom 11:9 And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them:

Rom 11:10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.

The thrust of Romans 11, in this regard, is that we as gentiles not fall into the same error. “For if God spared not the natural branches (Israel), take heed lest he also spare not thee” (Romans 11:21). The veil of spiritual blindness, prophesied by Isaiah, applied by Jesus here, and noted by Paul, will not be altogether removed until the Tribulation when Israel embraces their long-rejected Savior.

Rom 11:25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

Rom 11:26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:

Rom 11:27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

In so prophesying, Isaiah, as quoted in Isaiah 6, was allowed to see Jesus Christ in His glory even as Abraham saw His day.

Joh 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

John 12:42 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but

because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

John 12:43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

Do we have any today that fail to serve God in sincerity and truth because they seek to please men? Of course we do. And if we seek to please men, be sure the Lord is not pleased with our lives. We should fear God, and He and He alone should we strive to please. When our ways please the Lord, He makes our path easy.

Prov 16:7 When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

Psa 112:1 Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.

Psa 112:2 His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

Psa 112:3 Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

Psa 112:4 Unto the upright there ariseth light in the darkness: he is gracious, and full of compassion, and righteous.

A glimmer of light is seen notwithstanding. Many of the chief rulers even in Jerusalem “believed on him.” Yet, they, in fear of the Pharisees and the embarrassment of being put out of their synagogue, “did not confess him.” Sadly, they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.” (The words translated as praise here (doxa doxa) is the word commonly translated as ‘glory.’ What a sad commentary.

They loved the puny glory of their little world more than the infinite glory of God. How true to this day is this of believers ashamed of their Lord in their little world of associates. Without doubting the record of their belief, one can only wonder where these cowardly believers were several days later when Jesus, in the travesty of the ages, was condemned to death.

John 12:44 Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

John 12:45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.

John 12:46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

John 12:47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

In what is the last record by John of Jesus’ public ministry, He cried out, “He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.” The word

translated as cried (*krazw kradzo*) as it implies has the sense of 'crying out aloud.'

It was a proclamation for all who would hear. Though we are not told exactly where this final proclamation took place, it obviously was in a public place—perhaps in or near the Temple complex. The truth is the same then as now. Trust in Jesus Christ ultimately is faith in God the Father. Moreover, in seeing Jesus, they had seen the Father. This is not to imply that the Father and the Son were one personality. Rather as is developed in Hebrews 1:3, Jesus was "the express image of his person." He was of the precise and identical essence of His heavenly Father.

He continued to briefly summarize all He had taught and preached in verse 46. He, as the light of the world, could dispel the darkness thereof. However, the means of receiving His light, piercing the darkness then and now, is by faith in Him. Faith in Jesus Christ, therefore, is the key to His light. Jesus' coming in His first advent was not to judge the world. The purpose of His first coming was "to seek and to save that which was lost". However, in His second coming, the opposite will be the case. Then, He will come to judge and not to save.

Matthew Henry said this about verse 47.

So Christ here takes leave of the temple, with a solemn declaration of three things: -

1. By believing in Christ we are brought into an *honourable acquaintance with God* (Joh 12:44, Joh 12:45): *He that believes on me, and so sees me, believes on him that sent me, and so sees him.* He that believes on Christ, He does not believe in a mere man, such a one as he seemed to be, and was generally taken to be, but he believes in one that is the Son of God and equal in power and glory with the Father.

2. We are hereby brought into a comfortable enjoyment of ourselves (Joh 12:46): *I am come a light into the world, that whoever believes in me, Jew or Gentile, should not abide in darkness.* The character of Christ: *I am come a light into the world*, to be a light to it. This implies that he had a being, and a being as light, before he came into the world, as the sun is before it rises; the prophets and apostles were made lights to the world, but it was Christ only that came a light into this world, having before been a glorious light in the upper world, Joh 3:19.

3. The peril and danger of those that believe not, which gives fair warning to take heed of persisting in unbelief (Joh 12:47, Joh 12:48): *"If any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not, not I only, or not now, lest I should be looked upon as unfair in being judge in my own cause; yet let not infidelity think*

therefore to go unpunished, *though I judge him not, there is one that judgeth him.*" So that we have here the doom of unbelief.

John 12:48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

John 12:49 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

John 12:50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

We see that the Lord came to judge the unbeliever. We don't have to wait to find out if we are condemned by our sins. The bible says we are condemned already. All we can do is hope to find salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ's Word is exactly the same as the Father's Word.

John 3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 3:19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

John 3:20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.

John 3:21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

John 9:4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

John 9:5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

The standard by which unbelieving men will be judged is "the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." Men can ignore, reject, and receive Him not. However, the criteria of their own judgment has already been written. God's Word, readily available, will judge them. Men may think they can get away with rejecting Christ. However, they will never get around His Word. It will be the basis of their judgment in that day.

Jesus concluded His public ministry as recorded in John by noting that He has not spoken of Himself. Rather, "the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak." If the authority of the Son of God is not enough, Jesus added further force to what He had set forth in His ministry. He spoke what ultimately came from God the Father.

The commandment which God the Father has issued is of "life everlasting." Unbelieving men, then as now, in utter folly, reject the gracious command of God

to come to the water of life. Nevertheless, what Jesus spoke is what the Father said unto Him. Not only is further force added to Jesus' ministry thereby, greater folly and wrath is upon those reject Him and His truth.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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