

## Entry Into Jerusalem: Christ as Blesser of the Millennial Earth

### *John 12*

**John 12.** In this chapter, we have the closing events of the Lord's public ministry. We find Him at one time in close fellowship with His loved ones, and at another time speaking publicly to Jews and Gentiles. We have, in a certain way, a final offer to accept Jesus as Messiah, and to believe on Him as the Sent one of the Father. It closes with a summing up of Christ's public ministry, just before He goes into the upper room for a little time with His own.

#### Contents

- [The Assembly: The Supper and Anointing at Bethany \(12:1-11\)](#)
- [The Chief Priests Plot to Kill Lazarus and Jesus \(12:9-11\)](#)
- [The Appearing: The Triumphal Entry of the Son of David into Jerusalem \(12:12-19\)](#)
- [The Millennium: The Son of Man sought by Gentiles \(12:20-36\)](#)
  - [The Hour of His Glory Foreshadowed by the Request of the Greeks \(12:20-23\)](#)
  - [The Hour of His Suffering: The Death and Resurrection of the Son of Man \(12:23-36\)](#)
- [Summary of Israel's Response to the Lord's Ministry \(12:37-50\)](#)
  - [Impediments to Belief \(12:37-43\)](#)
  - [Final Message: To Believe on Jesus is to Believe on the One Who Sent Him \(12:44-50\)](#)

## The Assembly: The Supper and Anointing at Bethany (12:1-11)

**Psalm 23.** We see a beautiful fulfillment of the 23rd Psalm in the experience of Jesus as He traveled toward Jerusalem. While Jesus was fully Divine, He was also fully man; with a human soul, feelings, and emotions. He rejoiced to count Jehovah as His shepherd, and cast

all His care upon the Father. He had walked through parched desert for days, but the supper at Bethany was to His soul as “green pastures” and the fellowship of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus as “still waters”. In this sense, His soul was restored and led forward in the “paths of righteousness”. Times like this one gave our Lord courage, and that though He walked “through the valley of the shadow of death”, he was not afraid, because His God was with Him. In Bethany, there were friends, but also enemies. The betrayer was there. The chief priests were taking counsel to put Him to death. Yet God was able to “prepare a table” before Him even in the presence of His enemies. Finally, God brought along Mary, to anoint His head with oil. How this display of love would cause His cup (joy) to run over! In the refreshment of this scene, Jesus could go on to the cross, with confidence that goodness and mercy would follow Him, and after the work was accomplished, to enjoy of the presence of God forever! Parallel passages are Matt. 26:6-13 and Mark 14:3-9.

## CHAPTER 12

**1** Jesus therefore, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where was the dead *man* Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from among *the* dead. **2** There therefore they made him a supper, and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those at table with him. **vv.1-2**  
**The Supper at Bethany.** The Lord arrived at Bethany “six days before the passover” at evening time. This would be at the close of the Jewish Sabbath, or the Friday evening by Roman reckoning. This is the third mention of a Passover in this gospel (John 2:13; 6:4; 11:55), and that Jesus went up on each occasion. The home in Bethany, as we noted in ch.11, was a place Jesus was always welcome, and where He frequently stopped on His journeys to Jerusalem. Jesus was now on His *last* journey. He was going to the cross, but the Father afforded His Son a little oasis in the desert, a supply of refreshment to His soul, in a scene of total opposition. They made him a supper, and Martha served. Again, as at previous times (Luke 10:38-42), while Martha served Mary sat at Jesus feet (v.3). This time there is no record of a complaint from Martha! At the table with Jesus was Lazarus, the very man Jesus had raised from the dead a few months earlier! What an encouragement it would have been to the heart of Jesus, to be reminded afresh of how God had recognized His glory in the raising of a dead man, and that shortly He would call forth the same glorious power again on the first day of the week! Lazarus naturally finds his place at the table, a picture of communion.

**Martha, Lazarus, and Mary.** In a dispensational sense, Lazarus pictures the nation of Israel, raised from a condition national death (Ezek. 37). In contradistinction from Martha, Lazarus represents those who will be raised from the death to participate in the kingdom, while Martha represents those who are preserved and enter the kingdom without seeing death. Mary represents the Church, or at least Christians, who have an intelligence far

beyond those of Israel. The three groups therefore are: (1) the earthly saints - Martha, (2) the heavenly saints - Lazarus, and (3) the assembly - Mary. In a moral sense, the three siblings picture various aspects of Christian activity: *service* with Martha, *communion* with Lazarus, and *worship* with Mary.

**3** Mary therefore, having taken a pound of ointment of pure nard of great price, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair, and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. **v.3** The Spirit of God never put a value on Mary sacrifice, it was Judas that came up with the figure of 300 pounds. The Spirit simply records that it was “*of great price*”.

In Matt. 26 and Mark 14, Mary pours the ointment on the Lord's head. In John 12 she pours it on His feet. In truth, she anointed the whole Person... every part of Him was precious to Mary; “*the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments*” (Psa. 133:2). See the Lord's response, “on my body” (Matt. 26:12). But why the difference between Matthew and John? Matthew views Christ in the aspect of a king, so he writes about the ointment being poured on the Lord's head because that is how kings were anointed. John presents Christ as Divine, so he writes about the feet being anointed, because it would not be fitting for men to anoint the head of God, but rather for us to take our place of submission at His feet.

Two individuals are contrasted in this account: Mary and Judas. The presence of the Lord manifests the hearts of each one, as the true Light, that coming into the world lightens every man; “*that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed*” (Luke 2:35). Notice that Mary used her hair to wipe the Lord's feet. Paul explains in 1 Cor. 11 that “*if a woman have long hair, it is a glory unto her*”. Mary honored the Lord in her place as a woman. As an application, we can say that in collective worship, the silent priesthood of Christian women “fills the house” with the fragrance!

**4** One of his disciples therefore, Judas son of Simon, Iscariote, who was about to deliver him up, says, **5** Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor? **6** But he said this, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief and had the bag, and carried what was put into it. **vv.4-6** Right in the middle of a beautiful expression of worship, Judas Iscariot makes a money grab. Judas voices the natural heart of man; to put service ahead of worship. He was a thief. We do read in Matt. 26 that the other disciples echoed Judas's words. Could it be that Judas was already stealing? He gives the lowest possible value on what Mary had offered; it has been suggested that the full price was more like 3000 denarii. It is possible that Judas would often steal by reporting a

different price than he really sold something for. The enemy always makes less of Christ. Judas had no love for the poor. He used them to his advantage. Christian charities have a way of losing money to men like Judas. Judas held the bag, and he was a thief. This reveals the common bane of Christian philanthropic efforts. A lot of money gets put in the bag, but somehow there are always holes in the bag. The money ends up lining the pockets of men like Judas. How different was Judas from Mary! She only thought of Jesus. Judas only thought of himself.

**7** Jesus therefore said, *Suffer her to have kept this for the day of my preparation for burial; 8 for ye have the poor always with you, but me ye have not always.* **vv.7-8** Judas put the worst possible construction on Mary's actions. The Lord defends her. Mary never says a word! He valued what she had done for Him. The Lord explains everything for her, and better than she could have said it. Mary anointed Jesus in view of His burial. She had been reserving this for a long time. Jesus had told His disciples numerous times that He was going to the cross; but they did not believe Him. We do not read of Jesus telling Mary, yet she knew! She was not a prophetess. Yet because her heart was attached to Him, she felt the cross pressing in on Him, and knew that His time was near.<sup>1</sup> As the hatred of His enemies rose, the devotion in Mary's heart grew proportionally. She knew what the others didn't. The Lord later said to the twelve, *"Whither I go ye know and the way ye know."* Thomas had an inkling, but Mary understood much better. The way of the cross leads home. Mary knew it was very near. Note that Mary of Bethany is conspicuously absent from the Lord's tomb when the other women came with spices. Mary of Bethany had already prepared Jesus' body for burial! Mary had intelligence about the Lord's death, and also about His resurrection, although only in a measure! But it was Mary's affection for Christ, coupled with what she knew, that motivated her to make this sacrifice. His time was near, and she couldn't wait any longer, so she gave everything she had for love (Song. 8:7). The Lord's response reveals the importance of prioritizing worship over service. There will always be the poor to serve, but the opportunity to honor the blessed Savior in this time of His rejection is closing quickly.

## **The Chief Priests Plot to Kill Lazarus and Jesus (12:9-11)**

**9** *A great crowd therefore of the Jews knew that he was there; and they came, not because of Jesus only, but also that they might see Lazarus whom he raised from*

among *the* dead. **10** But the chief priests took counsel that they might kill Lazarus also, **11** because many of the Jews went away on his account and believed on Jesus. **vv.9-11** The combined attraction of Jesus and the one He had raised from the dead brought many Jews to Bethany. The religious leaders had a keen ability to detect ANY public interest that did not involve THEM. Their conclusion? To kill Lazarus as well as Jesus. Their murderous agenda had expanded! Mary's intuition was correct. The religious leaders were poised to kill. Notice that we never read of one word Lazarus ever said, yet his testimony had a tremendous effect. The same will be true for us, if we walk in "newness" of life!

## The Appearing: The Triumphal Entry of the Son of David into Jerusalem (12:12-19)

### The Triumphal Entry.

The triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem is important for a number of reasons. First of all, it marked the beginning of the final week of our Lord's life, called the Passion Week. It would have taken place "*on the morrow*" (John 12:12) after "*six days before the passover*" (John 12:1); i.e. on the first day of the week. Secondly, the triumphal entry was the final presentation to Israel of their King, the Son of David, at His first coming. It was a final opportunity for them to receive Jesus as their Messiah. After rejecting Him formally this final time, the Lord pronounced "*your house is left unto you desolate*" (Matt. 23:38). Thirdly, the triumphal entry was prophesied about 550 years earlier by Zechariah the prophet (Zech. 9:9)! It is a clear fulfillment of Messianic prophecy. It also marks the end of Daniel's 69th week: "*unto the Messiah the Prince*" (Dan. 9:25). This event was so pivotal in the coming of our Lord that it is recorded in all four gospels.

Parallel passages are: Matt. 21:1-11; Mark 11:1-10, Luke 19:29-40.

**12** On the morrow a great crowd who came to the feast, having heard that Jesus is coming into Jerusalem, **13** took branches of palms and went out to meet him, and cried, "*Hosanna, blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord*" [Psa. 118:25-26], the King of Israel. **vv.12-13** **The crowd welcomes Jesus as Messiah.** The multitude was apparently caught up in the excitement of the Lord's entry to Jerusalem. There is no evidence that there was

genuine faith on the part of the multitude, because days later they were calling for the Lord's blood. But in the excitement, the crowd was moved to call out "*Hosanna*", applying Psalm 118:25-26 to the Lord. They were right to apply it to Him! However, the complete fulfillment will be at His second coming. The branches and garments were similar to modern confetti... they were decorating the path that descended the Mount of Olives with symbols of favor. On previous occasions the Lord had rejected such gestures (John 6:15), but here He was orchestrating the circumstances that He might enter as king. The word "hosanna" means "save now". In their excitement, they thought the moment had come to be delivered from the Romans. These events were under the control of Divine sovereignty. But rather than set up the kingdom at this time, He was going to the cross, to be bound to "the horns of the altar" (Psa. 118:27).

**14** And Jesus, having found a young ass, sat upon it; as it is written, **15** "Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt." [Zech. 9:9] **16** Now his disciples knew not these things at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things to him. **vv.14-16** **A scriptural entry.** The Lord's entry into Jerusalem was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy (Zech. 9:9). The colt represents the remnant of the Jews, naturally sinful (Job 11:12), but redeemed by the blood of Christ (Ex. 13:13; 34:20). The Lord riding the young ass pictures His reception by the faithful remnant of the Jews when He appears. It is through a remnant that the nation will be restored! It is mentioned that the disciples did not know that these events were the fulfillment of prophecy, and only after "*Jesus was glorified*" (and the Holy Spirit sent down consequently) did they connect the prophetic scriptures with what the people had unwittingly done to their King. Consistent with the gospel of John, this shows the perfect sovereignty that the Son had over all circumstances.

**Omissions.** Notice that in the quotation from Zech. 9:9 a phrase is left out; "*he is just, and having salvation*". The omissions have more to do with Christ's second coming than His first coming. It is at His second coming that He will set up a righteous kingdom ("*He is just*"), although certainly righteousness characterized Him personally at all times. Secondly, He did not come to deliver the Jews from their national enemies ("*having salvation*"). Instead, He came to pay the redemption price. What perfect accuracy can be observed in the selection and omission of words or phrases in the Old Testament quotations!

**17** The crowd therefore that was with him bore witness because he had called Lazarus out of the tomb, and raised him from among *the* dead. **18** Therefore also the crowd met him because they had heard that he had done this sign. **vv.17-18** **The added witness of Lazarus.** We have something added in John's account of the triumphal entry that isn't found

in the synoptic gospels. At this time the crowd publicly witnessed the Lord's resurrection power in the gate of Jerusalem. It was added proof that He was not only the Son of David, but also Son of God. This added witness of the raising of Lazarus speaks of the Messiah's unique ability to restore the nation of Israel. The same resurrection power the brought Lazarus forth from the tomb will be exercised at the return of Christ to raise up Zion from the dust of death.

**19** The Pharisees therefore said to one another, *Ye see that ye profit nothing: behold, the world is gone after him.* **v.19 The consternation of the Pharisees.** Although the crowd bore witness (v.17), there was really no evidence of a work of faith in their hearts. It was human belief rather than true faith. The crowd is rightly called, by the Pharisees; *"the world"*. Yet the Pharisees loved the world's applause, and so it bothered them greatly that a crowd would meet and welcome Jesus. To them it seemed like all their efforts to get rid of Jesus were profiting nothing. But Jesus was not here for men's applause. Instead He would say, *"Now is the judgment of this world"* (v.31). In a broader way, this scene is a picture of a coming Millennial day, as we will see more fully in the next section, when the world will go after Jesus, not merely as a popular attraction, but because *"the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea"* (Isa. 11:9).

## The Millennium: The Son of Man sought by Gentiles (12:20-36)

**The Son of Man.** In ch.11 we had Jesus as the *Son of God* raising Lazarus, a picture of Israel, from among the dead. Then in ch.12, vv.12-19 we had Jesus as the *Son of David* entering Jerusalem in the fulfillment of prophecy. But now we have Jesus as *Son of Man*, being sought by the Gentiles! It is a type of what the Lord will do. First, in Divine power He will revive the nation of Israel. Next, in royal dignity He will take His place as Messiah. Finally, as Son of Man over all creation, He will be owned as universal Lord!

"*Son of man*" is a title Christ has in special connection with mankind; as either the *rejected* sufferer at the hands of mankind and on behalf of mankind as the one who assumes the responsibilities of the whole human race, or as *exalted* heir and head of all that God has purposed for mankind. The Old Testament spoke of a coming "Son of Man" that would reign over all creation and have an everlasting kingdom (Psalm 8:4-8; Daniel 7:13-14). But "Son of man" is a title Christ took in rejection as well as in glorification. The connection between the

suffering and glory of the Son of man is beautiful.

[Read more...](#)

## The Hour of His Glory Foreshadowed by the Request of the Greeks (12:20-23)

**20** And there were certain Greeks among those who came up that they might worship in the feast; **21** these therefore came to Philip, who was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and they asked him saying, Sir, we desire to see Jesus. **vv.21-22** These “*certain Greeks*” were Gentiles, not like the Hellenized Jews that are sometimes called ‘Greeks’ in scripture. They apparently had come to faith in Jehovah, the God of Israel. They had come to worship – a term that is only otherwise used in John 4, speaking of the true worshippers – at the feast. They approached Philip, perhaps because he “*was of Bethsaida of Galilee*”. Bethsaida was also “*the city of Andrew and Peter*” (John 1:44), and was a place where Jesus had done many “*works of power*” (Matt. 11:21). Their desire was simple: “*Sir, we desire to see Jesus.*” It was His Person!

**22** Philip comes and tells Andrew, *and again Andrew comes and Philip, and they tell Jesus.* **v.22** Why does Philip tell Andrew instead of just telling the Lord directly? Perhaps Philip felt unsure if it was appropriate to speak to the Lord about the Greeks’ desire for an interview. Andrew, together with Philip, go and tell Jesus. It is a valuable thing to have fellow-servants to walk with. Sometimes we are cautious when we don’t need to be. It is wonderful to have a friend like Andrew who will take us to the Lord in prayer.

**23** But Jesus answered them saying, *The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified.* **v.23** As is indicated in the Lord’s response, the Greeks were a foreshadow of the coming day of glory in the Millennium, when the Gentiles will seek Him. He righteously looked forward to that day, when He will say; “*thou hast made me the head of the heathen: a people whom I have not known shall serve me*” (Psa. 18:43). When Jesus heard that those Gentiles were seeking Him, His heart went forward to the Millennial day. This small tribute was so similar in character that He could say, “*the hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified*”. Jesus speaks of seven different “[hours](#)” in [John’s Gospel](#). This hour refers to the coming day of glory.<sup>2</sup> But before that time, there must be another “hour” (see vv.27-28). The title “Son of man” is used in connection with the sufferings of Christ, and with His coming glory. [Read more...](#) A similar expression is found in John 13:31 in connection with the cross.



**Flash-forward.** Often in life we may witness some event in the present that triggers some similar memory from the past. We call that a back-flash, and it is even used in literature as a writing technique. But there are a number of times in the gospels when Jesus seemed to flash forward in His mind to a future point in time! As the omniscient Son of God He could do that. In Luke 10, when the disciples returned from their mission, and were rejoicing that the devils were subject unto them through the Lord's name, Jesus said "*I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven*" (Luke 10:18). Did Satan actually fall from heaven? No. That event will not take place until the middle of Daniel's seventieth week, when Michael and his angels defeat Satan and his demons (Rev. 12:7-9). He saw a little foreshadow of Satan's fall in what the disciples had experienced, and His thoughts leaped forward to the future, and rejoiced in it! In John 12, Jesus heard of the Greeks seeking Him at the feast, and said "*The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified*" (John 12:23). Had the Millennium arrived? No. But what took place at the feast was a foreshadow of the day when the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth. In that moment, the hour of His glory had come. But then He immediately comes back to the cross, and the necessity of sufferings before the glory.

## **The Hour of His Suffering: The Death and Resurrection of the Son of Man (12:23-36)**

**The Cross and Its Results.** In this section we have the cross and some of its results. The cross would mean *much fruit* for God (v.24), a *new order of service* for the disciples (vv.25-26), *suffering* to Christ (v.27), *glory* to the Father (v.28), *judgment* to the world (v.31), *defeat* to the Prince of this world (v.31), *attraction* to those who believe (v.32), and *darkness* to those who reject (v.35).

**24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except the grain of wheat falling into the ground die, it abides alone; but if it die, it bears much fruit. **v.24 Death the Cost of Much Fruit.** Jesus had spoken of the hour of His glory, but the sufferings must come before the glory. So much was this reality before the Lord, that the thought of glory brought Him back to the cross. The Lord used an example from agriculture; the germination of a seed must precede its bearing fruit. (Note: Paul refers to a similar thing in 1 Cor. 15:36, only there it is the growth of a seedling.) If a grain of wheat remains dry and protected, it will last for decades, but it will "*abide alone*". The only way for that grain to produce fruit, is for it to "*fall into the ground and die*"; i.e. germinate. In a similar way, Christ could not have others with Him in the glorified condition apart from death and resurrection. Christ as the corn of wheat, fell

into the ground and died (the cross), has sprung up again (resurrection), and has borne “much fruit” (new creation). The fruit are individual grains of wheat, individual Christians, who have the same life as the risen stalk. By the Holy Spirit, we share the risen life of Christ (John 20:22)! It is what John called “*life in the Son*” (1 John 5:11). We have that life derivatively, but Christ has it in Himself intrinsically. [Read more...](#) The other thing to note is that the “fruit” looks just like the grain that fell into the ground. God is so pleased with His Son that He wants to make many more sons just like Him! He is interested in “bringing many sons unto glory” (Heb. 2:10), and therefore it goes on to say “*we are all of one [kind]*” (Heb. 2:11). In the New Creation we are “one kind” with Christ. [Read more...](#)

**The Fruit of the Travail of His Soul.** It is wonderful to consider all the fruit that the cross has won, especially during the last 2000 years. It might be pictured in the “*heap of corn*” by which Boaz lay, when he had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, and Ruth approached him softly (Ruth 3:7). In a similar way, when the Jewish remnant (Ruth) draws near to the Lord, He will have already reaped a great harvest! “*He shall see a seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the fruit of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied*” (Isa. 53:11). Like Joseph who named his first son Manasseh, “*for God has made me forget all my toil*”, and His second he called Ephraim, “*for God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction*”. Surely, the fruitfulness of Christ’s labors will, in some way we cannot fully understand, cause Him to say that it was worth it all!

**25 He that loves his life shall lose it, and he that hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal. v.25 Sacrifice and its Results.** The Lord now applies the truth of v.24 to practical Christianity. The Lord had to lay down His life (a corn of wheat) to see fruit for eternity. He was willing to die rather than fail in His obedience to His Father. In the same way, we must be willing to give up our lives in order to keep them. Self-sacrifice is a necessity! We all have a natural instinct to preserve our own human life. But this verse deals with *loving* and *hating* our human life. The great principle is this: the natural life of man is If we love our life, we will live it for self. A life lived for self is lost. There is no fruit for God from a self-centered life. But if we hate our life - i.e. count it a worthy sacrifice - then we will live it for God. A life lived for God is preserved, not lost.<sup>3</sup> What does “*keep it to life eternal*” mean? The Lord explains in the following verse that He is referring to communion with Himself and with the Father, both now, in for eternity. [Read more...](#) What can we learn from this? Self-sacrifice is necessary to the *enjoyment* of eternal life.

**26 If any one serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there also shall be “my” servant. And if any one serve me, him shall the Father honour. v.26 Results of Serving**

**Christ.** Those who would be the servants of Christ must follow Him in His pathway of self-sacrifice. There are two results of serving Christ: (1) association with Christ in glory *“where I am, there also shall be my servant be”*, and (2) reward from the Father *“him shall the Father honour”*. The great principle is this: if we follow Christ in suffering here on earth, we will enjoy a place with Him in the time of His glory (future).

**27** Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But on account of this have I come to this hour. **28a** Father, glorify thy name. **vv.27-28a**

**Anticipating the Cross.** The thoughts of the previous verses bring the anticipation of the cross before the Lord. His soul was troubled, much like in the garden of Gethsemane. The expectation of suffering death, as well as of being made sin and judged as sin in God’s sight, weighed heavy on His soul. This is what we call [anticipative suffering](#). Three closely connected expressions summarize the state of Christ’s holy soul.

1. *“What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour.”* His anticipation of the cross caused the Lord to speak in such a way that we see His perfect humanity. *“What am I to say?”* He was pressed beyond measure. He considers asking to be saved from *“this hour”*; the hour of His sufferings and death. It is similar to Gethsemane where He said; *“My Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me; but not as I will, but as thou wilt”* (Matt. 26:39). In the Garden, Jesus asked for the cup to be removed, but only if possible, and if the Father’s will. Here in John 12, the Lord does not outright ask, but voices the thoughts of His troubled soul as a man
2. *“But on account of this have I come to this hour.”* Immediately after suggesting that the Father save Him from the hour of suffering, the Lord affirms His full intention to go through with it all. He would not draw back now. He calls to mind that the sacrifice of His own life was the *“cause”* for which He had come to *“this hour”*. The great purpose of the Son in coming into the world the first time was, not to receive a kingdom as Messiah, but to die. *“But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself”* (Heb. 9:26).
3. *“Father, glorify thy name.”* The simple prayer of the Son on earth to His Father is that His desire was for the Father’s glory. Cost what it may, Jesus was willing to bear it to glorify the Father’s name. This was the one, all-consuming object of our Lord’s life on earth: the glory of His Father. This was His perfection.

**28b** There came therefore a voice out of heaven, I both have glorified and will glorify it again. **v.28b The Father Answers His Beloved One.** The perfect expression of the Son’s

will to glorify His Father (v.28a) is immediately answered by the Father's voice from heaven. It is as if heaven could not be silent! In what way was the Father's name glorified already, and about to be glorified again? In John 17:4 we find that all of Christ's work on the earth had glorified the Father. That is a different thought than what we have in John 12:28. The language suggests two events. It would seem that the Father's name was glorified by the showing forth of resurrection power, first at the raising of Lazarus, and second at the raising of His own Son!<sup>4</sup> The exercise of resurrection power is what "*marked out*" the Son of God (Rom. 1:4), and it also demonstrated His perfect communion with the Father, as we see in the Lord's prayer in John 11:41-42. The Son on earth perfectly declared the Father (John 1:18), and the exercise of resurrection power was the proof that Jesus was truly the Son, and therefore also proof that what the Son revealed of the Father was true. In this way the Father's name had been once already, and would be yet again, glorified in resurrection.

**29** The crowd therefore, which stood *there* and heard it, said that it had thundered. Others said, An angel has spoken to him. **v.29 The Explanations of the Unbelieving**

**Crowd.** Nothing could be plainer than the voice which came from heaven, which the Jews heard. Unbelief blinded them to the meaning of the voice. Some tried to pass it off as a loud noise; they "*said that it had thundered*". They had a naturalistic explanation for what was a divine miracle. Others went a little farther and said, "*An angel has spoken to him*". But all fell short of what had really happened. The voice of the Father came out of heaven to His Son as a man on the earth! Only hard unbelief can twist or explain away such a clear testimony.

**30** Jesus answered and said, Not on my account has this voice come, but on yours. **v.30 Grace Rejected.** The voice from heaven was really God's grace to the crowd, "*Not on my account has this voice come, but on yours*"; i.e. giving them a plain witness that Jesus was truly the Son of God. That is what made their unbelief in v.29 so acute, because it was rejection of grace.

**31** Now is *the* judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out: **32** and I, if I be lifted up out of the earth, will draw all to me. **33** But this he said signifying by what death he was about to die. **vv.31-33 The Effects of the Cross.** Jesus continues to speak, bringing out the effects of the cross, of the death of the Son of Man. Concerning the great change that occurred at the cross, the Spirit thenceforward employed the word "now"; e.g. "*now is the judgment of this world*" and other similar expressions (see Rom. 3:21; 2 Tim. 1:9-10; Eph. 3:10; Heb. 9:26). A tremendous change occurred at the cross. You can't ignore what happened there. Three things

1. *Judgment to the world*. The present state of the world is that it is under the sentence of judgment. When the world cast out the Son of God, the world came into a place of irrevocable guilt. "*Now is the judgment of this world*". How important it is for believers to realize this! The judgment of the world took place at the cross, but the execution has been delayed for 2000 years. Once the mystery of iniquity is full, the sword will fall, so to speak.
2. *Defeat to the Prince of this world*. God does not exercise His power simply because He can. God is not a bully, like the pagan gods of Rome. When God uses His power, He does so on a moral basis. The cross was the moral basis for the eventual defeat of Satan, who is "*the Prince of this world*".

It would appear that the original creation (Gen. 1:1) was committed to the hands of angels, over which Satan was the chief. It was an earthly paradise, called "*Eden, the garden of God*". Satan was not a serpent then, but "*the anointed covering cherub*", clothed with the reflected glories of God (Ezek. 28:14). But when unrighteousness was found in Satan, his heart lifted up because of his beauty, he was ejected from the angelic company (Ezek. 28:17), taking with him his demons; "*the host of the high ones*" (Isa. 24:21). It would appear that, under Satan's influence, "*the earth became without form and void*" and remained so until God intervened. As soon as the reconstruction was complete, and Adam given the headship of creation, Satan immediately began his efforts to get the earth back under his influence.

When man fell, Satan laid claim to this world, usurping the Son's inheritance. The world fell under Satan's power through man's disobedience. Christ suffered on the cross to bear man's sin, and satisfy every claim that a righteous God had on man. Satan was "cast out" in a moral sense, because the grounds of his claim were totally annihilated! The cross outwardly appeared to be the casting out of the Son, but really it was the casting out of the prince of this world.<sup>5</sup> Satan awaits a coming day when he will be literally *cast* out of the heavenly places, then *cast* into the abyss, and finally *cast* into the lake of fire. But while he awaits that day, he falsely continues in a role to which he has no claim.

[Read more...](#)

3. *Attraction to all who believe*. In death, the Son would become the attractive center for "all men". He would be lifted up between heaven and earth, between God and the world. Those who would approach God must come unto God by the Son. It was not limited to Israel, but; "*I, if I be lifted up out of the earth, will draw all to me*".<sup>67</sup>

In addition to His becoming the attractive center for all men, the expression *“lifted up”* was an indication *“by what death he was about to die”*; i.e. by crucifixion. We have a similar expression in John 3:14.

**34** The crowd answered him, We have heard out of the law that the Christ abides for ever; and how sayest thou that the Son of man must be lifted up? Who *“is”* this, the Son of man?  
**v.34 Failure to See the Death of the Son.** The Jews were puzzled by the words of Christ, because He claimed to be Messiah, and also the Son of man, who would be lifted up in death. They understood from the Old Testament that Messiah would live forever (1 Chron. 17:12; Psa. 89:29; Isa. 9:7; Ezek. 37:25; Dan. 7:14; Micah 4:7). They knew very little of the title Son of man, but they were familiar with it. It comes out most notably in Psa. 8 and Dan. 7. In those passages, the title Son of man is connected with a much broader sphere than the tribes of Israel. The Jews were puzzled because they had ignored the scriptures that speak of the death of Christ; *“how sayest thou that the Son of man must be lifted up?”* Yet the scriptures do speak of His death (Isa. 53:8). The Jews were blind to the truth of His death, because it was incompatible with their state.

**35** Jesus therefore said to them, Yet a little while is the light amongst you. Walk while ye have the light, that darkness may not overtake you. And he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes. **36** While ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may become sons of light. Jesus said these things, and going away hid himself from them.  
**vv.35-36 The Light to be Replaced by Darkness.** Jesus does not answer their question, *“Who is this, the Son of man?”* He goes to the heart of matter. The testimony as to the Son of man was sufficient. It was as plain as the noon-day sun. He was the true Light of God among them! But the light would only be among them for *“a little while”*. Jesus was going back to the Father. The opportunity to *“walk”* according to the mind of God was limited. Once the light was gone, darkness would overtake them. We understand walking to a physical destination at dusk. There is a sense of urgency, because once the sun goes down, we will be overtaken by darkness, and we will lose our way; *“he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes”*. In what way would darkness overtake those who rejected the light? There would be a judicial blinding of those who rejected the light, much the way Pharaoh’s heart was hardened by God after he hardened his own heart. The Lord’s desire was that they would use the opportunity to *“believe in the light”*, and if they did, to become *“sons of light”*. To be *“sons of light”* is to be characterized by the light, so as to represent the light. The Lord then hid Himself from them, and this closes His public ministry, except for one final message (vv.44-50).

## Summary of Israel's Response to the Lord's Ministry (12:37-50)

**vv.37-50** In this final section, we have a summary given by the evangelist through the inspiration of God, of the Lord's whole ministry, and Israel's response to it. At the end, we have the final public address of Christ to the Jews.

### Impediments to Belief (12:37-43)

**37** But though he had done so many signs before them, they believed not on him, **38** that the word of the prophet Esaias which he said might be fulfilled, "Lord, who has believed our report? and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" [Isa. 53:1] **39** On this account they could not believe, because Esaias said again, **40** "He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, that they may not see with their eyes, and understand with their heart and be converted, and I should heal them." [Isa. 6:10] **41** These things said Esaias because he saw his glory and spoke of him. **vv.37-41 Judicial Blindness.** The Spirit of God draws together two scriptures from Isaiah to show that, because the full testimony of God's revelation in the Son had been rejected, God had judicially blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts. The order is important. Isaiah speaks in ch.53 on behalf of all the prophets which God raised up to speak to Israel. "Who has believed *our* report?" The crowning act of unbelief was rejecting the Son, "though he had done so many signs before them". The "Arm of Jehovah" is a symbol of the power of God, and here it is personified in the Lord Jesus Christ. The "Arm of Jehovah" — God's purpose to bring in the Kingdom through a rejected Messiah — is revealed to those who receive the prophets' report. God's strength is perfected in weakness! John shows that, although the miracles Jesus did were proof that He could bring in the kingdom, nevertheless they would not believe on Him. Because they chose to not believe on Him, they were judicially blinded, as the next quotation shows. Isaiah 6 is quoted from, where the occasion was when Isaiah "saw his glory". Whose glory did Isaiah see? The Spirit connects "Jehovah, high and lifted up" (Isa. 6) with the suffering Servant (Isa. 53), and also with Jesus on earth! He shows that they are all the same Person! It is abundant proof that Jesus is Divine!

**Two Isaiahs?** In the days of the higher critics, a notion was developed that there were two Isaiahs. The evidence put forward to support this claim was that ch.1-39 have a different tone and style compared to ch.40-66. The claim is that one man wrote the first part, and another man wrote the second part. It was part of a broader movement to make the Word of

God more less credible. These two quotations in John 12, one from the early part and the second from the later part of Isaiah, are both attributed to the same writer; i.e. Isaiah. "*Esaias said again, etc.*" is proof that it was the same man who wrote the whole book.

**42** Although indeed from among the rulers also many believed on him, but on account of the Pharisees did not confess *him*, that they might not be put out of the synagogue: **43** for they loved glory from men rather than glory from God. **vv.42-43 Love for Men's Glory.** The Spirit of God reveals that judicial blindness was not the only reason for the rejection of the Son. There were some who had no intellectual impediment; "*indeed from among the rulers also many believed on him*". These were ones who knew the scriptures, and they believed in a human way on the Lord Jesus. There is a great difference between human belief and real faith (see John 2:23-25). Not only is belief required for salvation, but confession of God's Son (Rom. 10:10). They were unwilling to confess Him, because their motivations were corrupt; "*they loved glory from men rather than glory from God*". The religious world had a hold on these men. They feared the Pharisees, and the threat of excommunication. True faith is exemplified by the blind man in John 9, who unabashedly faced the Pharisees and was excommunicated, but found salvation in the rejected Son.

## Final Message: To Believe on Jesus is to Believe on the One Who Sent Him (12:44-50)

**44** But Jesus cried and said, He that believes on me, believes not on me, but on him that sent me; **45** and he that beholds me, beholds him that sent me. **vv.44-45 The Father Declared by the Son.** The Son alone is the revealer of the Father. God can only be seen by looking at the Son, who is the perfect manifestation of God's heart. It is not merely what Jesus said *about* the Father when He was here on earth, but in His walk and character He *demonstrated* the Father to man. Therefore, to believe on the Son is to believe on the Father, who sent the Son. As the Lord had previously said in John 10:30; "*I and the Father are one*". This is a concise summary of John's gospel from a doctrinal standpoint, but especially ch.1-2.

**46** I am come into the world *as light*, that every one that believes on me may not abide in darkness; **v.46 The Son as Light.** Further, the Son has been manifested to meet man's need. Man is born in a condition of darkness, but Christ as the light of the world shines into the hearts of men *the knowledge of God's character* revealed in the Son. It is a knowledge that opens the spiritual eyes of a person to see the truth, so that they remain no longer in darkness. The light is for the whole world, not restricted to Israel. But men must believe on



Him, the Person of the Son, in order to be saved. We have more details of this in ch.9.

**47** and if any one hear my words and do not keep *them*, I judge him not, for I am not come that I might judge the world, but that I might save the world. **48** He that rejects me and does not receive my words, has him who judges him: the word which I have spoken, that shall judge him in the last day. **vv.47-38 Salvation and Judgment.** Christ, at His first coming, was not come to judge the world, but rather to save the world. Nevertheless, the word of Christ is sure, and God will judge all men by it in the last day. When men stand before the Son of man, they will be judged by what they have done with the claims of Christ. Did they believe on the name of the only-begotten Son of God? If not, they are judged already (John 3:18). The Son, whose claims are denied and refused by most today, will be vindicated when He judges men by those claims. We have more details of this in ch.3 and ch.5.

**49** For I have not spoken from myself, but the Father who sent me has himself given me commandment what I should say and what I should speak; **50** and I know that his commandment is life eternal. What therefore I speak, as the Father has said to me, so I speak. **vv.49-50 The Father's Faithful Witness.** Jesus had not spoken "from" himself, or on His own authority, as if He were seeking His own glory. The Father gave His commands what to "say" and "speak". What Jesus said were thoughts, and abstract realities. What He spoke were words. All of it was from the Father! In the flow of communication through the Son, from the Father to man, at no point did the Son insert His own will. It came perfectly from the Father. This was perfect subjection! As a side note, this is a vital principle concerning the inspiration of scripture. Not only are the concepts inspired ("*what I should say*") but the words are also inspired ("*what I should speak*"). The fact that the Son had never, and would never, speak on His own authority bolsters the fact that His Words are unquestionable. But those words were more than judgment to the unbeliever; they were "*life eternal*" for all who would believe!

## Footnotes

1. *Here is the truth said in Divine love. Not, indeed, that Mary had received any prophetic intimation. It was the spiritual instinct of a heart that had found the Son of God in Jesus, of a heart that felt the danger that hung over Him as man. Others might think of His miracles, and hope that murderous intents might pass away at Jerusalem as at Nazareth. Mary was not so easily satisfied, though she had witnessed His resurrection power with as deep feelings as any soul on earth. And she was led of God to do what had a weightier import by far in the Lord's eyes than in her own.* - Kelly, W. *An Exposition of the Gospel of John.*
2. *"...it was the glory to come — His glory as the head of all men, and, in fact, of all things."* - Darby, J.N. *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible.* John 13.
3. To "hate" our life is not to hate the body, or to practice self-mutilation. This verse has been used incorrectly to support

heathen religious practices such as walking on hot coals, licking the dust, or whipping one's own back, etc. By contrast, the Word of God teaches us to honor the human body, inasmuch as God will redeem our bodies, and raise them glorified when Christ returns!

4. *I believe that He had glorified it in the resurrection of Lazarus; He would do so again in the resurrection of Christ — a glorious resurrection which, in itself, implied ours; even as the Lord had said, without naming His own. - Darby, J.N. Synopsis of the Books of the Bible. John 12.*
5. *By death He morally and judicially destroyed him who had the power of death. It was the total and entire annihilation of all the rights of the enemy, over whomsoever and whatsoever it might be, when the Son of God and Son of man bore the judgment of God as man in obedience unto death. All the rights that Satan possessed through man's disobedience and the judgment of God upon it, were only rights in virtue of the claims of God upon man, and come back to Christ alone. - Darby, J.N. Synopsis of the Books of the Bible. John 12.*
6. *But grace makes Him manifest thus lifted up, the attractive centre for all, Gentile or Jew, spite of their sins, which He was to bear in His own body. - Kelly, W. Exposition of the Gospel of John.*
7. *Some writers take a different position, that this refers to a gathering together for judgment. He does not speak of salvation but of judgment: His death brings all under His authoritative judgment: He has the right to judge as regards all: none can escape having to do with Him. - Grant, L.M. Comments on the Gospel of John.*