SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

John 12

The Hour Has Come — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

The hour has come: the King rides in on a donkey and the grain of wheat goes into the ground to bear much fruit. I can pour out my life on Him like Mary, or hold it back like the rulers who loved men's approval.

00 The Text

JOHN 12 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.

2 So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him.

3 Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

4 But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, who was intending to betray Him, said,

5 "Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to poor people?"

6 Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it.

7 Therefore Jesus said, "Let her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of My burial.

8 "For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have Me."

9 The large crowd of the Jews then learned that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead.

10 But the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death also;

11 because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and were believing in Jesus.

12 On the next day the large crowd who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

13 took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and began to shout, "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the King of Israel."

14 Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written,

15 "FEAR NOT, DAUGHTER OF ZION; BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING, SEATED ON A DONKEY'S COLT."

16 These things His disciples did not understand 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.

17 So the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, continued to testify about Him.

18 For this reason also the people went and met Him, because they heard that He had performed this sign.

19 So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are not doing any good; look, the world has gone after Him."

20 Now there were some Greeks among those who were going up to worship at the feast;

21 these then came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and began to ask him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

22 Philip came and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip came and told Jesus.

23 And Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

25 "He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal.

26 "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

27 "Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour.

28 "Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

29 So the crowd of people who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, "An angel has spoken to Him."

30 Jesus answered and said, "This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes.

31 "Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

32 "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself."

33 But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die.

34 The crowd then answered Him, "We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"

35 So Jesus said to them, "For a little while longer the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes.

36 "While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light." These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself from them.

37 But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him.

38 This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?"

39 For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again,

40 "HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART, SO THAT THEY WOULD NOT SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND PERCEIVE WITH THEIR HEART, AND BE CONVERTED AND I HEAL THEM."

41 These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him.

42 Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue;

43 for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.

44 And Jesus cried out and said, "He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me but in Him who sent Me.

45 "He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me.

46 "I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.

47 "If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for

△ I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.

48 “He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings,
has one who judges him; ⚠ the word I spoke is what will
judge him at the last day.

49 “For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the
Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a
commandment as to what to say and what to speak.

50 “I know that ☆ His commandment is eternal life;
therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father
has told Me.”

Marked in the text

- **v1** “six days before the Passover” — Time / place / contrast
- **v3** “a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard” — Command / instruction
- **v3** “the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume” — Promise / blessing
- **v6** “he was a thief” — Sin / warning
- **v7** “keep it for the day of My burial” — Time / place / contrast
- **v8** “you do not always have Me” — Time / place / contrast
- **v10** “planned to put Lazarus to death also” — Sin / warning
- **v13** “BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD” — God — His character & actions
- **v13** “the King of Israel” — God — His character & actions
- **v15** “BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING” — Promise / blessing
- **v16** “when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered” — Time / place / contrast
- **v19** “the world has gone after Him” — Time / place / contrast
- **v21** “Sir, we wish to see Jesus” — Command / instruction
- **v23** “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified” — Time / place / contrast
- **v24** “unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies” — God — His character & actions
- **v24** “it bears much fruit” — Promise / blessing
- **v25** “he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal” — Command / instruction
- **v26** “he must follow Me” — Command / instruction
- **v26** “the Father will honor him” — Promise / blessing
- **v27** “for this purpose I came to this hour” — God — His character & actions
- **v28** “Father, glorify Your name” — God — His character & actions
- **v31** “the ruler of this world will be cast out” — God — His character & actions
- **v32** “will draw all men to Myself” — Promise / blessing
- **v35** “Walk while you have the Light” — Command / instruction
- **v36** “believe in the Light” — Command / instruction
- **v37** “they were not believing in Him” — Sin / warning
- **v40** “HE HAS BLINDED THEIR EYES AND HE HARDENED THEIR HEART” — Sin / warning
- **v41** “he saw His glory” — God — His character & actions
- **v43** “they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God” — Sin / warning
- **v46** “I have come as Light into the world” — God — His character & actions
- **v47** “I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world” — God — His character & actions
- **v48** “the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day” — Sin / warning
- **v50** “His commandment is eternal life” — Promise / blessing
- **v35** “Light” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v35** “darkness” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v23** “hour” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

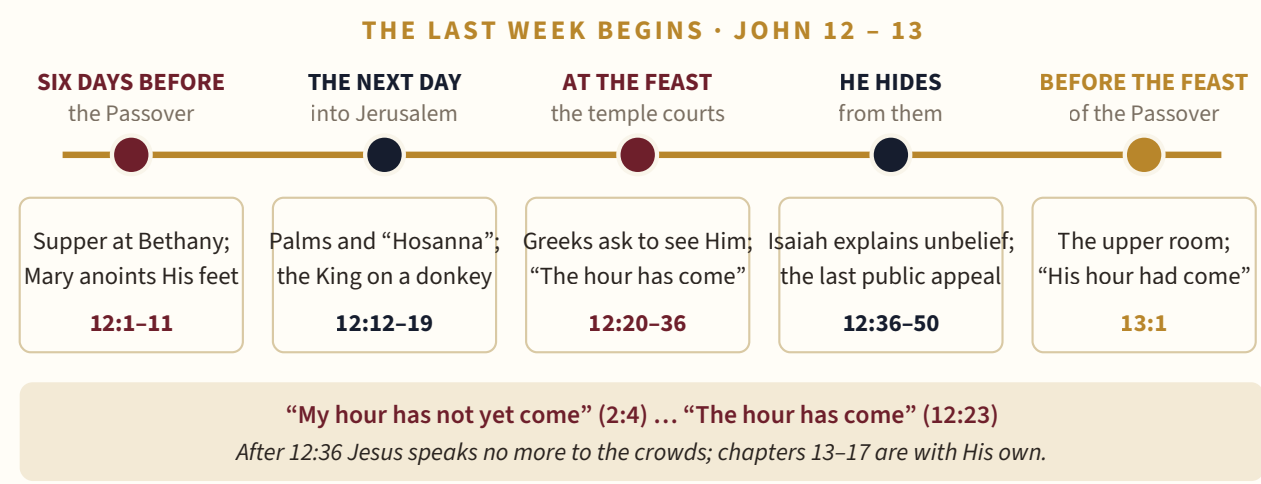
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 12:23

"And Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.""

FIGURE · THE LAST WEEK BEGINS



Follow the days from Bethany to the upper room: chapter 12 is the turn from Jesus' public ministry to His hour.

Setting. Six days before the Passover, after the council's death sentence (11:53) and the retreat to Ephraim (11:54). Jesus comes back to Bethany, then into Jerusalem, crowded with festival pilgrims. This is the last chapter of His public ministry in John; from 13:1 He is alone with His disciples.

Structure:

- vv1–11 — **the supper at Bethany:** Martha serving, Lazarus at the table (v2); Mary's pound of pure nard on His feet, wiped with her hair, "the house was filled with the fragrance" (v3); Judas's objection — three hundred denarii — and John's verdict, "he was a thief" (vv4–6); "Let her alone … for the day of My burial" (vv7–8). The crowd comes to see Lazarus; the chief priests plan to kill him too (vv9–11).
- vv12–19 — **the entry:** palm branches and "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel" (vv12–13); a young donkey, Zechariah 9:9 (vv14–15); understood only after He was glorified (v16); the Lazarus witnesses testify (vv17–18); "the world has gone after Him" (v19).
- vv20–26 — **the Greeks and the grain:** "Sir, we wish to see Jesus" (v21); "The hour has come" (v23); the grain of wheat (v24); loving and hating one's life (v25); serving and following (v26).
- vv27–36 — **the troubled soul:** "Now My soul has become troubled" (v27); "Father, glorify Your name" — the voice from heaven, heard as thunder (vv28–30); judgment, the ruler cast out, "lifted up … draw all men" (vv31–33); the crowd's question about the Son of Man (v34); walk in the Light while you have it (vv35–36); He hides Himself.

- vv37–43 — **John's verdict on unbelief:** so many signs, yet not believing (v37); Isaiah 53:1 (v38) and 6:10 (vv39–40); "Isaiah … saw His glory" (v41); rulers who believed but would not confess, loving men's approval (vv42–43).
- vv44–50 — **the last public cry:** believing and seeing Him is believing and seeing the Father (vv44–45); "I have come as Light" (v46); not to judge but to save; the word will judge at the last day (vv47–48); He speaks the Father's commandment, which is eternal life (vv49–50).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "believe / believed / believes / believing" ×9 — vv11, 36, 37, 38, 39, 42, 44 (×2), 46.
- "die / dies / death / dead" ×8 — vv1, 9, 10, 17, 24 (×2), 33 (×2).
- "world" ×7 — vv19, 25, 31 (×2), 46, 47 (×2).
- "Light" ×6 — vv35 (×2), 36 (×3), 46; "darkness" ×3 — vv35 (×2), 46.
- "glory / glorify / glorified" ×6 — vv16, 23, 28 (×3), 41.
- "Father" ×5 — vv26, 27, 28, 49, 50.
- "judge / judges / judgment" ×5 — vv31, 47 (×2), 48 (×2).
- "Lazarus" ×5 — vv1, 2, 9, 10, 17.
- "life" ×4 — vv25 (×3), 50.
- "hour" ×3 — vv23, 27 (×2); "Son of Man" ×3 — vv23, 34 (×2).
- "serves / servant" ×3 — v26; "sent" ×3 — vv44, 45, 49; "Isaiah" ×3 — vv38, 39, 41; "poor" ×3 — vv5, 6, 8.
- "approval" ×2 — v43; "King" ×2 — vv13, 15; "lifted up" ×2 — vv32, 34; "commandment" ×2 — vv49, 50.

Contrasts: Mary's extravagance ⟷ Judas's calculation (vv3–6). The poor always with you ⟷ "you do not always have Me" (v8). Palms of a conqueror ⟷ a donkey's colt (vv13–15). A grain that remains alone ⟷ a grain that dies and bears much fruit (v24). Loving one's life ⟷ hating one's life (v25). "Save Me from this hour" ⟷ "for this purpose I came to this hour" (v27). Thunder ⟷ a voice from heaven (vv28–29). Light ⟷ darkness (vv35–36, 46). The approval of men ⟷ the approval of God (v43). Not to judge ⟷ to save (v47).

Shape of the chapter: a supper (1–11), a procession (12–19), a request (20–26), a prayer and a voice (27–36), a verdict on unbelief (37–43), and a final cry (44–50). It moves from a house filled with fragrance to a world left in darkness — and the hinge is "The hour has come."

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus is the King who comes humble and the grain of wheat that must die. His hour of death is His hour of glory, and the only right response is the one Mary gave — pour it all out — not the silence of the rulers who loved men's approval.

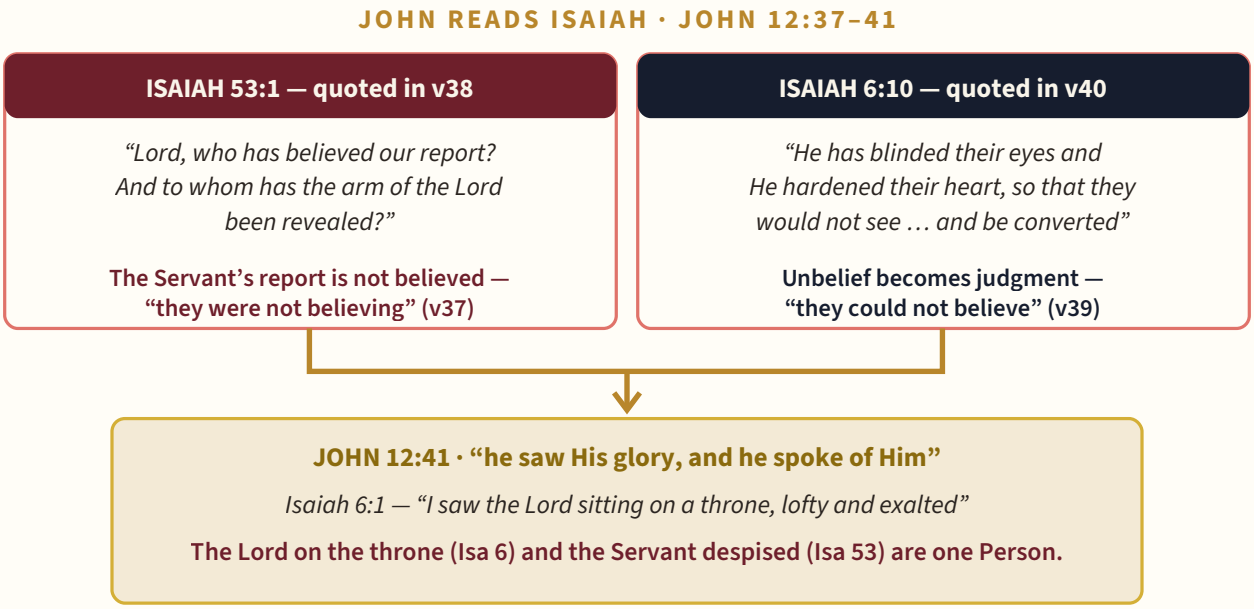
02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 12:32

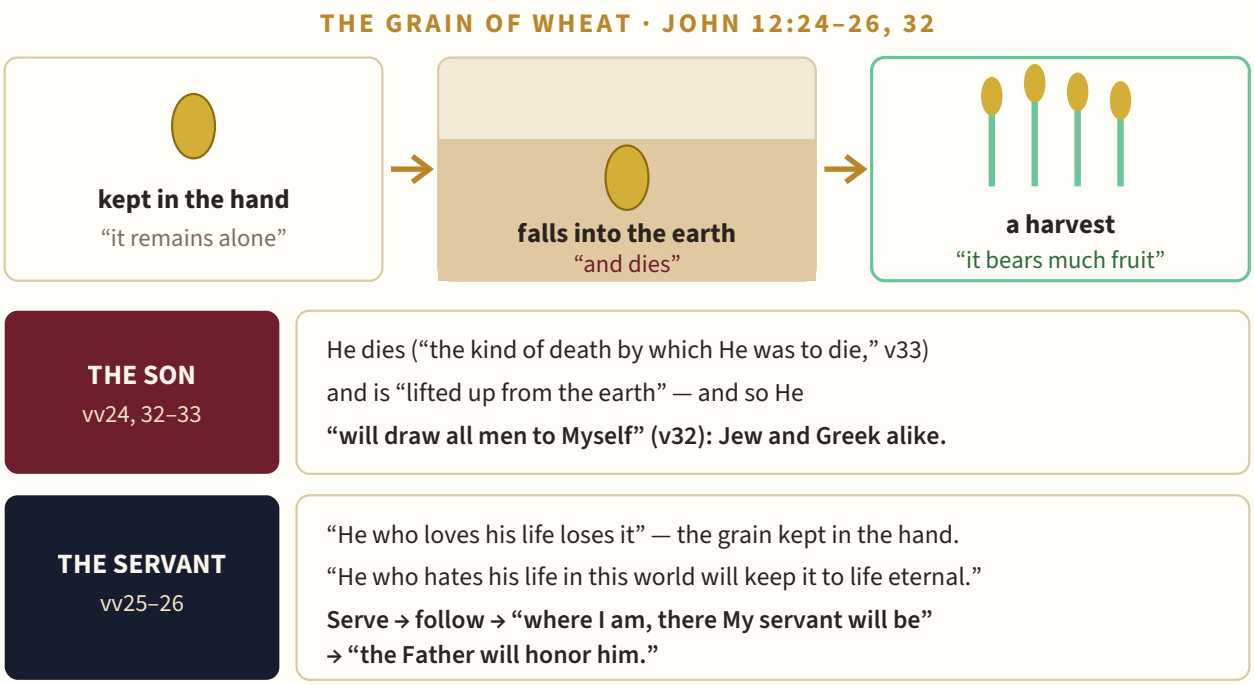
"And I, if I am △lifted up from the earth, ☆will draw all men to Myself."

FIGURE · ISAIAH SAW HIS GLORY



John joins two passages of Isaiah to explain unbelief — and then says both were about the One whose glory Isaiah saw on the throne.

FIGURE · THE GRAIN OF WHEAT



Read the top row as the parable, then the two rows below as its two applications: the Son who dies and draws, and the servant who loses his life to keep it.

Why did Mary anoint His feet (vv3, 7)? A pound of pure nard was worth three hundred denarii — about a year's wages. Jesus interprets it: she kept it "for the day of My burial." Sproul sets her beside Caiaphas in one sermon, "Expediency & Extravagance": the council calculated, Mary worshiped — "a reckless manifestation of extravagant love and worship." Guzik: "Judas successfully hid the darkness of his heart from everyone except Jesus." Henry: "Christ would not have those censured nor discouraged who sincerely design to please him." Mark 14:9 adds that her act will be told wherever the gospel is preached.

Does "the poor you always have" excuse neglecting them (v8)? No. Jesus is quoting Deuteronomy 15:11, which goes on to command open-handed giving. His point is timing: the poor would always be there to help; He would not. Judas's "concern" was a cover (v6).

What kind of King (vv12–16)? The palms said national victory (Sproul: "The palm branch became their national symbol of victory"); "Hosanna" means "save now." Guzik: "The crowd looked to Jesus as a political and national savior, but not so much as a spiritual savior." Jesus answers with Zechariah 9:9 — humble, on a donkey. I believe the crowd's words were true even if their timing was off: He is "the King of Israel" (v13), and the same Zechariah who saw Him on a donkey saw Him standing on the Mount of Olives as King over all the earth (Zech 14:4, 9). The first coming was on a colt; the second will be in glory.

Why do the Greeks matter (vv20–23)? Gentiles who could go no farther than the outer court (Sproul) ask to see Jesus — and that is His signal: "The hour has come." Henry sees them as firstfruits of the Gentiles. The answer to "we wish to see Jesus" is the cross: "if I am lifted up from the earth, [I] will draw all men to Myself" (v32).

The grain of wheat (vv24–26). First about Jesus: His death bears the harvest. Sproul presses it — "It is not possible, not even theoretically possible, that the atonement of Christ could go without fruit" (a Reformed reading; others

frame the atonement more broadly). Then about us: the self-protected life "remains alone." Spurgeon: "Death precedes growth." Guzik, quoting Spurgeon: "We are not saved by service, but we are saved to service."

John's Gethsemane (vv27–28). *Tetaraktai* — "My soul has become troubled." Jesus faces the cup days before the garden. Guzik: "Jesus received this crucial hour, yet it troubled Him." Sproul: "Jesus expresses the horror that grabs His soul." He considers asking to be saved from the hour and instead prays, "Father, glorify Your name." Being troubled is not sin; refusing the Father's will would be.

Who is drawn, and who is cast out (vv31–32)? The cross is the judgment of this world and the defeat of its ruler (Heb 2:14; Col 2:15). "Draw" (*helkō*) is strong — the Father's drawing of 6:44. Teachers differ on "all men": all kinds of people (Jews and the Greeks who asked), or all people without exception, drawn but not all coming. Spurgeon preached it as the heart of preaching: "He was never so lifted up as when he was cast down." Henry: to some a stumbling-stone, to others "a loadstone."

"They could not believe" (vv37–40). This is the hardest part of the chapter. They kept on not believing (v37); then they could not (v39). Sproul: "If people do not want to hear, God stops their ears." Guzik, with Morris: the blinding does not take place "without the will or against the will of these people." Henry: a settled moral refusal met by God's just judgment. I hold this beside Romans 11: the hardening of Israel is partial and temporary, "until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; and so all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:25–26). God is not finished with the nation.

"Isaiah … saw His glory" (v41). Isaiah 6 — "I saw the Lord sitting on a throne." John says that was Jesus. Sproul: "Isaiah saw Christ on the throne in His glory before Christ was even born." The Lord on the throne and the Servant despised in Isaiah 53 are one Person (see the figure).

Secret believers (vv42–43). Barclay (in Guzik): "Secret discipleship is a contradiction in terms." Trench (in Guzik): "Is there no smoking flax?" Henry holds both: love of praise is "a very great prejudice" to godliness, yet "Some are really better than they seem to be." Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea (19:38–39) show that secret believers can come into the open.

The last appeal (vv44–50). Guzik: "These are the last words in John's gospel from Jesus to the public," and (Morris) "His last word is not one of condemnation. It is one of tender appeal." He came to save, not to judge; but the word rejected becomes the judge at the last day.

Word study (Greek):

- **pure nard — *nardos pistikē* (G3487, G4101):** genuine spikenard, nothing added; only here and Mark 14:3.
- **money box — *glōssokomon* (G1101):** Judas's box; only 12:6; 13:29.
- **Hosanna — *hōsanna* (G5614):** "Save, we pray!" from Ps 118:25; only at the entry.
- **palm branches — *baia* (G902):** only here.
- **young donkey — *onarion* (G3678):** a little donkey; only here.
- **grain — *kokkos* (G2848):** a single seed; "remains alone" or "bears much fruit."
- **loves / hates — *phileō* (G5368) / *miseō* (G3404):** clutching the self-life vs. loving it less than Christ.
- **troubled — *tarassō* (G5015):** stirred, agitated; perfect tense in v27; compare 14:1.
- **lifted up — *hypsoō* (G5312):** in John always the cross, always exaltation (3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 34).
- **draw — *helkō* (G1670):** to haul, drag; 6:44; 12:32.
- **cast out — *ekballō* (G1544):** the ruler of this world thrown out (v31).

- **blinded — *typhloō* (G5186) / hardened — *pōroō* (G4456):** judicial blinding and callousing (v40).
- **put out of the synagogue — *aposynagōgos* (G656):** John only (9:22; 12:42; 16:2).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Love is extravagant; calculation is Judas's language** (Sproul).
2. **Pure nard, nothing cut into it** — genuine worship.
3. **Hosanna means "Save us now"** — they meant Rome.
4. **The palms and the donkey argue with each other** — "The ass speaks of peace."
5. **"The hour has come"** — after "not yet" all through John.
6. **A seed kept is a seed lost** — "Death precedes growth" (Spurgeon).
7. **Troubled and obedient at once** — John's Gethsemane.
8. **Lifted up means both cross and throne.**
9. **Isaiah saw Jesus** (v41).
10. **Glory from men or glory from God** (v43).

Cross-references: Num 21:8–9; Deut 15:11; Ps 118:25–26; Isa 6:1–10; 53:1; Zech 9:9; 14:4, 9; Matt 20:2; 26:6–15; Mark 8:36; 14:3–9, 32–36; Luke 14:26; John 2:4; 3:14; 6:44; 7:30; 8:12, 20, 28; 13:1; 17:1; 19:38–39; Rom 11:7, 25–26; 1 Cor 15:36; 2 Cor 4:4; Phil 2:8–9; Col 2:15; Heb 2:14.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · JOHN 12:26

"If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him."

Example to follow — Mary's pound of nard. Mary didn't calculate. A year's wages, poured on His feet, wiped with her hair, and the whole house smelled like it. I've spent a lot of my life doing the math Judas did — what's it worth, what do I get back. This week I want to "waste" something on Jesus: an hour in worship I would have spent on myself, a gift I can feel, an act of service nobody will thank me for.

Command to obey — "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me." Following Jesus in John 12 means following Him toward a cross. The grain kept in the hand stays safe — and alone. Some of the men I walk with have survived by holding everything tight: trust no one, need nobody. Jesus says that life stays alone. Letting go — of control, of image, of the old self — is how fruit comes. I will name one thing I'm holding in my fist and open my hand.

Sin to confess — loving the approval of men. The rulers believed and said nothing because they were afraid of losing their seat. I confess the rooms where I go quiet about Jesus — the job site, the family table, the guys from the old life. And I confess that I sometimes measure myself by who claps for me. The *doxa* of men or the *doxa* of God — I can't live for both.

Promise to trust — "I will draw all men to Myself." Jesus didn't say He might. The cross is the magnet. When I pray for a man who seems too hard, too far gone, too long in the dark, I remember that the lifted-up Christ draws, and the ruler of this world has been cast out.

Truth to live in — troubled is not the same as disobedient. Jesus said, "Now My soul has become troubled," and then, "Father, glorify Your name." I don't have to fake calm to be faithful. I can bring a troubled soul to the Father and still say yes.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. What would it look like for me to "waste" something costly on Jesus this week — time, money, pride — without calculating the return? (12:3–8; Mark 14:9) *Mary poured out about a year's wages; Judas priced it.*
2. Like the crowd, what "private agenda" have I brought to Jesus — and how have I been disappointed when He came on a donkey instead of a warhorse? (12:12–16; Zech 9:9) *Sproul: the King God appointed, not the king we conjure up.*
3. What part of my life am I keeping "in the hand" so it stays safe — and alone? What would it mean to let it fall into the ground? (12:24–25) *A seed kept is a seed lost; death precedes growth.*
4. Jesus said, "Now My soul has become troubled," and still obeyed. Where is my soul troubled right now, and what would "Father, glorify Your name" sound like in that place? (12:27–28; 14:1) *Troubled and obedient at once.*
5. Whose approval am I most afraid to lose if I openly confess Christ — at work, at home, on the yard, with old friends? (12:42–43; Matt 10:32) *They loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God.*

6. Jesus' last public words were an appeal, not a threat. Who do I know who is walking in darkness, and how can I point him to the Light while there is time? (12:35–36, 46–47) *"Walk while you have the Light."*

Worship. Isaiah saw Him high and lifted up on the throne. John saw Him lifted up on a cross. Same glory, same Lord. The King of Israel rode in on a borrowed colt, went into the ground like a grain of wheat, and is bearing a harvest from every nation — Greeks, Jews, and men like me.

Prayer. Father, glorify Your name in me. Lord Jesus, You came as Light into the world so that I would not remain in darkness. Make my worship like Mary's — pure, costly, and unashamed. Break my love for the approval of men. Teach me to let my life fall into the ground so it can bear fruit, and to follow You where You lead, even when my soul is troubled. Draw the men I love to Yourself. Amen.

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