



The Dynamic Gospel Study Guide – Book of John

Chapter 12

1 With only six days to go before the Passover feast began, Jesus returned to Bethany - the same town where Lazarus lived, having been resurrected earlier.

2 His friends prepared Jesus dinner. Martha, as usual, busied herself serving the guests while Lazarus reclined at the table with Jesus.

3 While they were finishing their meal, Mary was overcome with gratitude and did something irrational. She opened a large jar of extremely costly perfume and used it to clean and soothe Jesus' feet. In this emotional outpouring, Mary let down her hair and used it to wipe clean her Master's feet. The room was filled with the sweet-smelling aroma.

4 The students of Jesus were shocked, especially Judas Iscariot. His disgust was apparent. This was the same Judas who was shortly to betray Jesus in the worst way, by giving Him up to the authorities.

5 "She just wasted God knows how much precious perfume and for what?" He asked. "It was probably worth a year's wages. At the very least it could have been sold to help the poor."

6 This statement was particularly hypocritical. Judas didn't care one iota for the poor. Being an unrepentant thief, he embezzled ministry funds frequently. He was the one who looked after the money bag and the only one of the students who knew precisely what was in there. Mary had stolen a golden opportunity for him to line his pockets further.

7 "Let up, will you?" Jesus said. "She's done the best thing - preparing Me for My own burial. She intended it for that purpose all along.

8 "Not a day will go by without an opportunity to help the poor - and you should do so. But My time with you is all too short."

9 Word got around the whole region that Jesus was back. Many, many people made the trek over to see for themselves, and to catch a glimpse of this Lazarus who had come back from the dead.

10 Of course, the chief priests started plotting ways to take care of Lazarus, too.

11 They were furious that his supposed resurrection had driven thousands more to follow Jesus.

12 The very next morning all the religious pilgrims heard that Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem as well.

13 Quickly they gathered palm fronds and lined the streets with them. Before Jesus even arrived a large shout went up from the crowd, using an old Hebrew word - "Hosanna!" meaning "Praise to the Deliverer!" They also cried out "We've been blessed with a true Savior. He shall be Lord and King of all Israel!"

14 When He arrived, Jesus was seated on the foal of a donkey, just as it is written in the words of the prophets:

15 “No need to fear His wrath, daughter of Zion! Your King arrives humbly riding a young donkey.”

16 “Jesus' students didn't consider the prophetic value of this strange scene at the time. Later, once Jesus had returned to His glory, they understood that all of those prophecies of the Messiah were played out in the life of Jesus exactly as written.

17 All the people traveling with Jesus from Bethany were eyewitnesses both to the resurrection of Lazarus and the words of prophecy coming to life.

18 By their word had all the enthusiasm started in the streets of Jerusalem. There was far too much excitement and expectation to keep quiet any longer.

19 “The religious experts threw up their hands, saying “Good Lord! Is all lost? Everyone in the world is going after Jesus. What can we possibly do?”

20 Among the throng were a group of pilgrims from Greece intending to join the Passover celebrations and worship at the Temple.

21 These Greeks were bold enough to corner one of Jesus' students, Philip of the Galilean town of Bethsaida, saying “Wow! This is exciting! If this Jesus is truly the Master, we would most definitely like to meet Him ourselves!”

22 Philip took the news to Andrew; together they brought the news to Jesus.

23 Jesus answered “Now I know the time has come for the Son born to man to be glorified! All the pieces are in place.

24 “Pay attention here: A wheat seed will always be alone unless it is planted in the ground. In doing so it dies that new life can grow. That life will produce much more fruit just like the original seed.

25 “Love your own life too much and you destroy it. Hate a worldly life and you'll enter into real living, and you'll never have to give up that kind of life - it will last forever.

26 “If anyone intends to serve Me, then simply follow My example. Go where I go. You'll never get left behind or cut out. And never fear! Good servants will be richly rewarded by My Father with high honors.

27 “But this next step troubles Me greatly - I cannot lie. What should I say? “Father save Me from this?” No, not on your life. This is the supreme moment of opportunity. Everything I am and have done lead to this one thing.

28 “Father! Show how worthy You are!” Jesus shouted at the heavens. Just then a voice called back for all to hear. “I have, I do, and I will again.”

29 Many in the crowd tried to explain it away as thunder; others said it was the voice of a powerful angel speaking to Jesus.

30 Jesus addressed the murmuring crowd. “The voice didn't call out to convince Me, but to convince **you!**

31 “Now the judgment begins and the prince of this world is about to be dethroned.

32 “I'll be lifted up, alright. And when I am, everyone will be drawn to Me.”

33 This Jesus said as a prophecy of how He would die.

34 Confused, the crowd peppered Jesus with questions. “Doesn't the Law teach that the Deliverer will never die? What's this about the 'Son born to man?' If He's already the Deliverer, why does He have to be 'lifted up?' And who is this 'Son born to man?'”

35 Jesus paused a moment then answered His own way. “You've only got a few more hours of light. If you intend to make any progress, best to get moving while you can still see. You don't

want to get caught out in the dark. It will pull you down and completely disorient you. You'll have no idea where you're going.

36 "If you've got the light, trust it! Then the light will drive the darkness from you. You'll be 'children of light.'" Then Jesus finished speaking and disappeared into the crowd.

37 Though they'd all seen so many miracles and heard so many words, the crowd still couldn't comprehend Jesus for who He really was.

38 This was all just as Isaiah foretold, saying "Will any believe once they've heard? Even when the Lord demonstrates how powerful He really is?"

39 The prophecy told it like it was - they just could not truly believe. As Isaiah continues:

40 "He has blinded their eyes and like a hardened callous made their hearts insensitive. They had grown incapable of changing their ways or receiving God's healing."

41 Isaiah was able to say these things because he had experienced God's glory firsthand.

42 Yet there **were** some - even among the chief religious officials - that understood the Truth and responded to it in their hearts. But it cannot be said that they were courageous. They still feared being thrown out of high society and banished,

43 "for they still craved the esteem of men more than the praise of God." They had a long way to go.

44 Jesus had cried out in a loud voice time and again, "It's not just Me you honor by believing - It's the One who sent Me that is doubly honored.

45 "See Me for who I am, and you see the One sending Me for who He is.

46 "I'm blasting light into the world. If you have eyes to see it, you'll never be afraid of the dark again. My Light drives it right out. And that's the gospel truth.

47 "Still, if anyone hears what I say from My own mouth and refuses to believe, I'm not going to judge him. Judgmentalism won't save anyone. And saving the world is precisely what I came to do.

48 "The one who repudiates Me or twists My words will pay the piper eventually. The same words they despise so much will come back as a witness for the prosecution and prove **them** to be unrepentant liars. There will be no escaping the Truth on the Last Day.

49 "I don't just make up babbling nonsense. Each and every word was thought out very carefully by the Father who sent Me. With solemn command He entrusted to Me what needed to be said. I did exactly as I was told.

50 "And My experience is this: Every word that flows out of His mouth is vibrant with life. The words are eternal and so is the life they bring. So I didn't hold back a single one of them. What the Father said to speak, I spoke."

Explain the Context:

From your reading provide a short answer to the following:

What is the theme of this chapter?	What is the BIG Idea?
What is something that surprised you?	What is this chapter <i>not</i> saying?

Take a moment to consider these questions:

- 1) What did Jesus say was the significance of Mary anointing him with costly perfume?
- 2) How does John characterize Judas in this scene?
- 3) Why did the chief priests want to kill Lazarus?
- 4) What is the significance of the palm branches and the fact that Jesus rode on a young donkey rather than a horse?
- 5) How does the story of a grain of wheat point to Jesus' death?
- 6) What did the crowd think God's voice was?

- 7) Jesus speaks a lot about the “light”. What does he tell them about walking in the light while he is still with them?
- 8) Write Isaiah’s prophecy here (verse 40):
- 9) Why did the Jewish leaders who believed in Jesus, refuse to speak up on his behalf?
- 10) Who does Jesus refer to when he says the “One who sent me”?

Apply the Scripture

Write the verse that stood out to you while reading [in this translation or your favorite].

How does this verse challenge you? Does it reveal an attribute of God's character?

For further study:

- Deuteronomy 15:11
- Isaiah 6:10
- Isaiah 55:5
- Zechariah 9:9
- Psalm 118:25-26
- Revelation 7:9