

## John Chapter Twelve

Read **John 12:1-8** – Mary Anoints Jesus Feet

**v.1** “THEN JESUS SIX DAYS BEFORE THE PASSOVER CAME TO BETHANY, WHERE LAZARUS WAS WHICH HAD BEEN DEAD, WHOM HE RAISED FROM THE DEAD.”

Jesus has now concluded his earthly ministry and returns to Bethany in preparation for the Passover feast. John, in his record, has now verified, confirmed and anchored for all time the fact that Jesus was indeed the Son of God, the Messiah promised in prophecy; through whom all nations of the world would be blessed. As we study the next several chapters it would also be good for us to focus on the fact that this is a very special passover; the passover where the lamb to be sacrificed is the Lamb of God. John the Baptizer had referred to him as the Lamb of God the first time he saw him.

**John 1:29** “THE NEXT DAY JOHN SEETH JESUS COMING UNTO HIM, AND SAITH, BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD, WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD.”

John the apostle also refers to the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead; again providing undeniable proof of the divinity of Jesus, the basic purpose behind the writing of the fourth gospel. Giving evidence that Jesus could be none other than who he claimed that he was:

**John 10:36** “SAY YE OF HIM, WHOM THE FATHER HATH SANCTIFIED, AND SENT INTO THE WORLD, THOU BLASPHEMEST; BECAUSE I SAID, I AM THE SON OF GOD?”

**v.2** “THERE THEY MADE HIM A SUPPER; AND MARTHA SERVED: BUT LAZARUS WAS ONE OF THEM THAT SAT AT THE TABLE WITH HIM.”

We find again Jesus enjoying the company of Lazarus and his sisters at a supper provided for him. The setting is the house of Simon the Leper (**Matthew 26:6, Mark 14:3**), Martha is working in her usual role, serving, or helping to serve the dinner guests. This is the last mention of Lazarus in scripture. We do not know how long he lived, what role he played, if any, in the Lord's church or what eventually became of him.

**v.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.”

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To categorize spikenard as very costly is an understatement. It is made from a flowering plant that grows in China, India and Nepal and its products had to be obtained in trade from one of those countries. The rhizomes of the plant, that's part of the root, are crushed and distilled to make a very thick, aromatic, amber colored oil that was used for various purposes, primarily in perfume and incense. To use a whole pound of it for any purpose was an extravagance. Mary used it to anoint the feet of Jesus and it is easy to understand that its aroma would fill the entire house where they were.

**v.4** "THEN SAITH ONE OF HIS DISCIPLES, JUDAS ISCARIOT, SIMON'S *son*, WHICH SHOULD BETRAY HIM,"

John, writing some 55-60 years later specifically identifies Judas Iscariot as the one who "SHOULD BETRAY HIM." According to Barnes in his commentary, a literal translation of the Greek here would be "WHO WAS TO BETRAY HIM". Since this event occurred in the house of Simon the Leper the phrase "SIMON'S SON" when speaking of Judas Iscariot seems to indicate that he was the son of Simon the Leper, however, we're not told for sure and to contend that would be based upon an assumption not on a provable fact.

**v.5** "WHY WAS NOT THIS OINTMENT SOLD FOR THREE HUNDRED PENCE, AND GIVEN TO THE POOR."

Judas, in his complaint, gives the value of the spikenard that Mary put on Jesus feet as three hundred pence. This refers to the common coins in circulation at that time and a penny or pence was the same as a Greek denarius or denarion and was worth about seventeen cents. This would then be about \$51 and doesn't seem like much in today's world but in the first century was a year's wages for a working man.

**v.6** "THIS HE SAID, NOT THAT HE CARED FOR THE POOR; BUT BECAUSE HE WAS A THIEF, AND HAD THE BAG, AND BARE [took away] WHAT WAS PUT THEREIN."

What do the words "THE BAG" refer to in this verse? The disciples of Jesus apparently pooled what little money that they had and it was entrusted to Judas to carry. What does the word "BARE" indicate? Just by itself it could mean to carry something but there is an alternate meaning that is used here as John explains. It also meant to carry away or steal which is exactly what Judas was doing. What does Paul tell us about money and covetousness in I Timothy?

**I Timothy 6:9** "BUT THEY THAT WILL BE RICH FALL INTO TEMPTATION AND A SNARE, AND *into* MANY FOOLISH AND HURTFUL LUSTS, WHICH DROWN MEN IN DESTRUCTION AND PERDITION."

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Is it any different today? Not at all. It is not uncommon for members of the church, even church leaders, preachers or anyone else that has access to money without the proper checks and balances to be tempted and bring reproach on the cause of Christ.

**v.7** “THEN SAID JESUS, LET HER ALONE: AGAINST THE DAY OF MY BURYING HATH SHE KEPT THIS.”

Did Mary or the disciples of Jesus understand what kind of a service that she was doing for the Son of God? No. There are times when we don't know just how far reaching, how much good we are doing when we do a simple act of benevolence or a good deed for someone. How do we know that this is true? In Jesus teaching:

**Matthew 25:34-35** “THEN SHALL THE KING SAY UNTO THEM ON HIS RIGHT HAND, COME, YE BLESSED OF MY FATHER, INHERIT THE KINGDOM PREPARED FOR YOU FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD: FOR I WAS AN HUNGERED, AND YE GAVE ME MEAT: I WAS THIRSTY, AND YE GAVE ME DRINK: I WAS A STRANGER AND YE TOOK ME IN:”

And he goes on to describe their service for his nakedness, sickness, and imprisonment, but they ask when did we do this? And his answer?

**Matthew 25:40** “AND THE KING SHALL ANSWER AND SAY UNTO THEM, VERILY I SAY UNTO YOU, INASMUCH AS YE HAVE DONE *it* UNTO ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE MY BRETHREN, YE HAVE DONE *it* UNTO ME.”

**v.8** “FOR THE POOR ALWAYS HE HAVE WITH YOU; BUT ME YE HAVE NOT ALWAYS.”

Is Jesus saying that we do not have some obligation to the poor? Not at all, but that whatever other obligations we might have, to the poor, or to anyone else; our greatest obligation, our most important work is that which we do for Christ.

Read **John 12:9-11** – Lazarus in Danger

**v.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 RAISED FROM THE DEAD.”

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Jesus, due to the works that he performed, drew people to himself in just about any setting. Many times in his ministry he would simply go away for a while to pray and to recover from the constant pressure of the crowds. But in this case Jesus is not the only attraction. The resurrection of Lazarus from the dead after four days made him a curiosity that people would flock to see.

**v.10** “BUT THE CHIEF PRIESTS CONSULTED THAT THEY MIGHT PUT LAZARUS ALSO TO DEATH.”

Why and what relationship might it have to this event that Jesus said:

**Matthew 7:6** “GIVE NOT THAT WHICH IS HOLY UNTO THE DOGS, NEITHER CAST YE YOUR PEARLS BEFORE SWINE, LEST THEY TRAMPLE THEM UNDER THEIR FEET, AND TURN AGAIN AND REND YOU.”

When men become enemies of God, refuse his word, stand against Him in all ways; there is no limit to the extremes that they will go to destroy anything and anybody that stands in their way. It is also virtually impossible to reach them with reason or with the Word of God, thus Jesus' observation. Lazarus was living proof of the power of Jesus over death. He represented the result of a miracle that they could not deny. So what do they do, they contemplate murder of an innocent man to try to destroy the effect of his resurrection.

**v.11** “BECAUSE THAT BY REASON OF HIM MANY OF THE JEWS WENT AWAY, AND BELIEVED ON JESUS.”

Because of the resurrection of Lazarus many of the Jews believed Jesus. This was a condition that the chief priests of Judea just could not tolerate.

Read **John 12:12-19** – Jesus Triumphant Entry

**v.12** “ON THE NEXT DAY MUCH PEOPLE, THAT WERE COME TO THE FEAST, WHEN THEY HEARD THAT JESUS WAS COMING TO JERUSALEM,”

Matthew records that a great multitude of people had already followed him from Perea by way of Jericho to the region near to Jerusalem. With the added attraction of being able to see Lazarus and the fact that the entire nation was gathering for the feast of the Passover we can readily understand that there would be “MUCH PEOPLE”. Though scholars have recorded that the Jewish historian Josephus likes to stretch things just a little they generally accept his contention that upwards of 2-3 million people would come into Jerusalem for the Passover feast.

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**v.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.”

The people literally took their outer garments, and palm branches and covered the way for Jesus to enter the city. They hungered for the Messiah to come because they anticipated that he would free them from the bondage of Rome. The miracles and signs that Jesus had displayed had convinced them that He was the one promised. So they meet him on the Mount of Olives and gave him honor as a king as he enters the city. Their words refer to the Psalm of triumph given as thanksgiving for the Lord's salvation:

**Psalms 118:25-26** “SAVE NOW, I BESEECH THEE, O **LORD**: O **LORD**, I BESEECH THEE, SEND NOW PROSPERITY. BLESSED **be** HE THAT COMETH IN THE NAME OF THE **LORD**: WE HAVE BLESSED YOU OUT OF THE HOUSE OF THE **LORD**.”

**v.14** “AND JESUS, WHEN HE HAD FOUND A YOUNG DONKEY, SAT THEREON; AS IT IS WRITTEN.”

As we studied the other gospels we saw that John gives a very short synopsis of the events leading up to this point in time. We must always remember that this does not mean that there is a conflict within the scripture but rather that some of the writers chose different things to detail, and different things to emphasize as others.

**v.15** “FEAR NOT, DAUGHTER OF SION: BEHOLD, THY KING COMETH, SITTING ON A DONKEY'S COLT.”

This is a paraphrase and a direct reference of:

**Zechariah 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 A DONKEY AND UPON A COLT THE FOAL OF A DONKEY.”

Jesus is indeed a king, a king that will rule over Israel: not physical, earthly Israel but rather spiritual Israel, the kingdom of God.

**v.16** “THERE 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.”

His disciples did not understand these things. This was the case with much of his teaching throughout His entire ministry. We find:

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**John 7:39** “BUT THIS SPAKE HE OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH THEY THAT BELIEVE ON HIM SHOULD RECEIVE: FOR THE HOLY GHOST WAS NOT YET *given*; BECAUSE THAT JESUS WAS NOT YET GLORIFIED.”

Jesus reassures His disciples again before he departs this earth that they would be given the help they needed to carry out the commission that he was giving them:

**John 14:26** “BUT THE COMFORTER, *which is* THE HOLY GHOST, WHOM THE FATHER WILL SEND IN MY NAME, HE SHALL TEACH YOU ALL THINGS, AND BRING ALL THINGS TO YOUR REMEMBERANCE, WHATSOEVER I HAVE SAID UNTO YOU.”

What does it mean when it says “WHEN JESUS WAS GLORIFIED”? When did the Comforter come? He was glorified fifty days after the Passover (**Acts 2:2-3**) and 10 days (**Acts 1:3**) after his ascension. So how was he glorified? He had returned to heaven, been seated on the right hand of God and given the power and authority that had been reserved for him.

**v.17** “THE PEOPLE THEREFORE THAT WAS WITH HIM WHEN HE CALLED LAZARUS OUT OF HIS GRAVE, AND RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD, BARE RECORD.”

They could say: Oh, yes, this man is our Messiah, I was there when he raised Lazarus from the dead. I saw it with my own eyes. Human nature never changes does it? Jesus is in the spotlight and anyone who has even the remotest relationship with him now wants to share in His glory.

**v.18** “FOR THIS CAUSE PEOPLE ALSO MET HIM, FOR THAT THEY HEARD THAT HE HAD DONE THIS MIRACLE.”

To those we add others who had only heard about the miracle he performed but want their share of the spotlight.

**v.19** “THE PHARISEES THEREFORE SAID AMONG THEMSELVES, PERCEIVE YE HOW YE PREVAIL NOTHING? BEHOLD, THE WORLD IS GONE AFTER HIM.”

As far as his enemies are concerned, the situation has just gotten a lot worse. It doesn't seem to matter what they do, Jesus still continues to increase in the eyes of the people. They whine that “THE WORLD IS GONE AFTER HIM.” As we saw their fears in the prior chapter:

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**John 11:48** “IF WE LET HIM THUS ALONE, ALL *men* WILL BELIEVE ON HIM: AND THE ROMANS SHALL COME AND TAKE AWAY BOTH OUR PLACE AND OUR NATION.”

Read **John 12:20-26** – The Greeks’ Request

**v.20** “AND THERE WERE CERTAIN GREEKS AMONG THEM THAT CAME UP TO WORSHIP AT THE FEAST.”

The commentators don't agree concerning who these Greeks might be. Some contend that they were Grecian Jews who had made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the Passover, others that they were proselytes, Gentiles who had accepted the Jewish religion and been circumcised, some even that they were men like Cornelius who believed in God who were neither Jews nor proselytes. The scripture doesn't tell us.

**v.21** “THE SAME CAME THEREFORE TO PHILIP, WHICH WAS OF BETHSAIDA OF GALILEE, AND DESIRED HIM, SAYING, SIR, WE WOULD SEE JESUS.”

These Greeks came to Philip perhaps because he was a Galilean with a Greek name. This would explain the significance of John including the fact in this verse that Philip was “OF BETHSAIDA OF GALILEE.” They wanted to “SEE” Jesus and I'm sure that they are using the word the same way we would today. They actually wanted to meet and talk with Him.

**v.22** “PHILIP COMETH AND TELLETH ANDREW: AND AGAIN ANDREW AND PHILIP TELL JESUS.

Why Philip would not go directly to Jesus we're not told. Perhaps he may have thought that Andrew was closer to Jesus than he was and could get his attention. But Andrews takes the lead and they approach Jesus together.

**v.23** “AND JESUS ANSWERED THEM, SAYING, THE HOUR IS COME, THAT THE SON OF MAN SHOULD BE GLORIFIED.”

We do not know what question that they asked Jesus, but we do know his answer. The time has come that He will be glorified. As we saw back in verse 16 that this glorification did not come until Jesus returned to heaven.

**v.24** “VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, EXCEPT A CORN [grain] OF WHEAT FALL INTO THE GROUND AND DIE, IT ABIDETH ALONE: BUT IF IT DIE, IT BRINGETH FORTH MUCH FRUIT.”

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Before Jesus can be glorified, before he can take his place at the right hand of God he must first die. He uses the analogy of a grain of wheat to illustrate his point. No seed, whether it be of grain, herbs, flowers, trees, etc. can produce anything unless it first dies. Paul uses the same analogy to explain the resurrection to the church at Corinth:

**I Corinthians 15:36** “*thou* FOOL, THAT WHICH THOU SOWEST IS NOT QUICKENED (made alive), EXCEPT IT DIE.”

**v.25** “HE THAT LOVETH HIS LIFE SHALL LOSE IT; AND HE THAT HATETH HIS LIFE IN THIS WORLD SHALL KEEP IT UNTO LIFE ETERNAL.”

Jesus had taught his disciples this same principle in an earlier setting.

**Mark 8:35** “FOR WHOSOEVER WILL SAVE HIS LIFE SHALL LOSE IT; BUT WHOSOEVER SHALL LOSE HIS LIFE FOR MY SAKE AND THE GOSPEL’S THE SAME SHALL SAVE IT.”

Most often I’ve heard, and done so myself, that applied to dying in the cause of Christ, or because of persecution as a Christian. However, the meaning here is much broader than that. We also can lose our lives by giving them up to Christ in service, putting the gospel above our own wants and wishes or even as is the case with many of our missionaries some of our very needs. When we do indeed commit our lives to Jesus; living to “SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGOM OF GOD”, we “lose” our lives, give them over to the service of God.

**v.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.”

If we are indeed his faithful servants Jesus has assured us that:

**John 14:3** “AND IF I GO AND PREPARE A PLACE FOR YOU, I WILL COME AGAIN, AND RECEIVE YOU UNTO MYSELF; THAT WHERE I AM, *there* YE MAY BE ALSO.”

And the Apostle Paul describes in his writing to the church at Thessalonica:

**I Thessalonians 4:17** “THEN WE WHICH ARE ALIVE *and* REMAIN SHALL BE CAUGHT UP TOGETHER WITH THEM IN THE CLOUDS, TO MEET THE LORD IN THE AIR: AND SO SHALL WE EVER BE WITH THE LORD.”



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Read **John 12:27-30** – Jesus' Hour of Trouble

**v.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."

Being both deity and human the humanity of Jesus is dreading the horrible death that he is facing in a very short time, his soul is troubled. He asks what can he say? What prayer could he present to his Father for the strength to endure? But he takes comfort in the fact that all of the events, his birth, his teaching, his miracles and his life that have preceded this time all serve one purpose: to bring him to the point of offering his life as atonement for the sins of mankind. As he told Pilate:

**John 18:37** "PILATE THEREFORE SAID UNTO HIM, ART THOU A KING THEN? JESUS ANSWERED, THOU SAYEST THAT I AM A KING. TO THIS END WAS I BORN, AND FOR THIS CAUSE CAME I INTO THE WORLD, THAT I SHOULD BEAR WITNESS UNTO THE TRUTH. EVERY ONE THAT IS OF THE TRUTH HEARETH MY VOICE."

**v.28** "FATHER, GLORIFY THY NAME. THEN CAME THERE A VOICE FROM HEAVEN, *saying*, I HAVE BOTH GLORIFIED *it*, AND WILL GLORIFY *it* AGAIN."

So instead of praying for anything for himself, for strength to face death Jesus instead prays that God would glorify His own name. This statement is similar to that made by Jesus:

**Luke 22:42** "SAYING, FATHER, IF THOU BE WILLING, REMOVE THIS CUP FROM ME: NEVERTHELESS NOT MY WILL, BUT THINE, BE DONE."

**v.29** "THE PEOPLE THEREFORE, THAT STOOD BY, AND HEARD *it*, SAID THAT IT THUNDERED: OTHERS SAID, AN ANGEL SPAKE TO HIM."

The people heard the voice of God. However, some understood it as some natural phenomenon such as thunder while others thought that an angel spake to him. This wasn't the first time that the voice of God had been heard during Jesus ministry. He spoke out at Jesus baptism:

**Matthew 3:17** "AND LO A VOICE FROM HEAVEN, SAYING, THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED."

The second being His correction of Peter on the Mount of Transfiguration (**Luke 9:35**).

**v.30** "JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID, THIS VOICE CAME NOT BECAUSE OF ME, BUT FOR YOUR SAKES."

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The voice of God came not to strengthen or encourage Jesus even though he had just voiced concern. But rather it was to convince those within hearing that God had indeed spoken to His Son, verifying the relationship between Jesus and God.

Read **John 12:31-36** – Jesus Prophesies His Death

**v.31** “NOW IS THE JUDGMENT OF THIS WORLD: NOW SHALL THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD BE CAST OUT.”

What kind of judgment is Jesus talking about in this verse? That the world will be judged at the end of time is fact; declared and verified by the Word of God. But that isn't the subject here. Barnes, in his commentary, says that the word translated “JUDGMENT” could also be translated “CRISIS”. The world is about to face a crisis, a contest between good and evil, a contest between Christ and Satan. He is about to enter the realm of the evil one, the grave. It is in the grave that his battle was fought and it is in the grave that Jesus triumphs over Satan and over death as we see:

**Hebrews 2:14** “FORASMUCH THEN AS THE CHILDREN ARE PARTAKERS OF FLESH AND BLOOD, HE ALSO HIMSELF LIKewise TOOK PART OF THE SAME; THAT THROUGH DEATH HE MIGHT DESTROY HIM THAT HAD THE POWER OF DEATH, THAT IS, THE DEVIL;”

**v.32** “AND I, IF I BE LIFTED UP FROM THE EARTH, WILL DRAW ALL *men* UNTO ME.”

At the very beginning of his ministry Jesus had taught his disciples that the time would come when:

“AND AS MOSES LIFTED UP THE SERPENT IN THE WILDERNESS, EVEN SO MUST THE SON OF MAN BE LIFTED UP:” **John 3:14**

The time for this to be brought to actuality has now arrived. The promise made to Eve in the garden when sin was brought into the world will now be fulfilled:

**Genesis 3:15** “AND I WILL PUT ENMITY BETWEEN THEE AND THE WOMAN, AND BETWEEN THY SEED AND HER SEED; IT SHALL BRUISE THY HEAD, AND THOU SHALT BRUISE HIS HEEL.”

The authority of Christ will be bruised in that he would die but that “BRUISE” would be light as the bruise to someone's heel. However, the “BRUISE” that Satan would endure would be a “BRUISE” to his head. The head of Satan here represents authority. Satan will no longer have control over the souls of mankind because the means of redemption of their souls will now be available.

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The judgment that had condemned men for 4,000 years would now be replaced by a free gift through the grace of God:

**Romans 5:18** "THEREFORE AS BY THE OFFENCE OF ONE *judgment came* UPON ALL MEN TO CONDEMNATION; EVEN SO BY THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF ONE *the free gift came* UPON ALL MEN UNTO JUSTIFICATION OF LIFE."

Through His death the curse of spiritual death could now be removed from those who choose to become the children of God:

**Hebrews 2:9** "BUT WE SEE JESUS, WHO WAS MADE A LITTLE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS FOR THE SUFFERING OF DEATH, CROWNED WITH GLORY AND HONOUR; THAT HE BY THE GRACE OF GOD SHOULD TASTE DEATH FOR EVERY MAN."

So by this means Satan as king of this world was removed from his throne; this power over the souls of men can now be remedied, if they choose to accept God's remedy.

**v.33** "THIS HE SAID, SIGNIFYING WHAT DEATH HE SHOULD DIE."

Jesus has now told them how he must die. He is to be "LIFTED UP", indicating that he will be crucified. Paul writes to the church at Colossae that also symbolically the old law was also "NAILED" to his cross, thereby becoming dead in the sight of God.

**Colossians 2:14** "BLOTTING OUT THE HANDWRITING OF ORDINANCES THAT WAS AGAINST US, WHICH WAS CONTRARY TO US, AND TOOK IT OUT OF THE WAY, NAILING IT TO HIS CROSS;"

**v.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?"

His hearers challenge Jesus with a question out of the prophets. Since they wrote that the Christ, the Messiah promised would abide forever, first David:

**Psalms 110:4** "THE LORD HATH SWORN, AND WILL NOT REPENT, THOU *art* A PRIEST FOR EVER AFTER THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK."

Then probably the most famous of the Messianic prophets:

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**Isaiah 9:7** “OF THE INCREASE OF *his* GOVERNMENT AND PEACE *there shall be* NO END, UPON THE THRONE OF DAVID, AND UPON HIS KINGDOM, TO ORDER IT, AND TO ESTABLISH IT WITH JUDGMENT AND WITH JUSTICE FROM HENCEFORTH EVEN FOR EVER. THE ZEAL OF THE **LORD** OF HOSTS WILL PERFORM THIS.”

And then we have the very important prophecy of Daniel:

**Daniel 7:14** “AND THERE WAS GIVEN HIM DOMINION, AND GLORY, AND A KINGDOM, THAT ALL PEOPLE, NATIONS, AND LANGUAGES, SHOULD SERVE HIM: HIS DOMINION *is* AN EVERLASTING DOMINION, WHICH SHALL NOT PASS AWAY, AND HIS KINGDOM *that* WHICH SHALL NOT BE DESTROYED.”

They are still looking for a physical kingdom of Israel and the Messiah to reign in Jerusalem on the throne of David. So then if Jesus is raised up, crucified, and dies how is it that his kingdom could last forever? They don't understand the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, nor that God would raise him from the dead.

**v.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.”

Jesus is the light of the world; John had declared that very early in his writing:

**John 1:9** “*that* WAS THE TRUE LIGHT, WHICH LIGHTETH EVERY MAN THAT COMETH INTO THE WORLD.”

While Jesus is here teaching and ministering to them the light is available for them to see and hear. But the time is coming when they would have to walk by the light of faith. If they did not take advantage of the opportunity to believe when he was present then they would not have the faith they needed to walk in the light when he was gone and they would be trying to walk in darkness.

**v.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.”

Jesus is the light, the Messiah, but that light was going to be taken away shortly by his death. Then John records that Jesus left and hid himself. Again the proper time is not yet come for his enemies to take him. Lipscomb states in his commentary that the Jews did not see him again until he was a prisoner in the hands of the Sanhedrin. Barnes in his commentary says that he went to Bethany, referencing:

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**Luke 21:37** “AND IN THE DAY TIME HE WAS TEACHING IN THE TEMPLE: AND AT NIGHT HE WENT OUT AND ABODE IN THE MOUNT THAT IS CALLED *the mount* OF OLIVES.”

Read **John 12:37-43** – The Jews Unbelief

**v.37** “BUT THOUGH HE HAD DONE SO MANY MIRACLES BEFORE THEM, YET THEY BELIEVED NOT ON HIM.”

We know that many did indeed believe on Jesus so John is not speaking of those people but rather the Jews as a nation, as a people. He did not enjoy the approval of the majority of the Jews, and many who did believe did not exhibit that belief because of their fear of retaliation by their rulers as we will see in a few more verses.

**v.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 points this out to us as a fulfillment of prophecy:

**Isaiah 53:1** “WHO HATH BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM IS THE ARM OF THE **LORD** REVEALED?”

But we also need to remember that the Jews did not believe on Jesus just so the prophecy could be fulfilled, that's not what John is saying. But rather, the prophet could see through the revelation given him by God that the same condition would exist when Jesus came to earth as did in his day when Judea refused to believe and follow His teaching that was directed by the Holy Spirit and that we have recorded in the book of Isaiah.

**v.39** “THEREFORE THEY COULD NOT BELIEVE, BECAUSE THAT ESAIAS SAID AGAIN.”

Again do not misunderstand the language, it wasn't that God removed their capability to believe, nor did he directly cause them to not believe. But rather the failure was due to the nature of man and the refusal of the Jews to accept Jesus as the Messiah. With this mindset it was impossible for them to believe.

**v.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.”

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Again John refers to the words of the prophet that were used to describe the condition of Judea during his time. So let's look at that reference and see more clearly that God has done and what God has allowed:

**Isaiah 6:9-10** "AND HE SAID, GO, AND TELL THIS PEOPLE, HEAR YE INDEED, BUT UNDERSTAND NOT; AND SEE YE INDEED, BUT PERCEIVE NOT. MAKE THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE FAT, AND MAKE THEIR EARS HEAVY, AND SHUT THEIR EYES; LEST THEY SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART, AND CONVERT, AND BE HEALED."

The blindness of the people, their refusal to hear will be brought about in Isaiah by his going and telling. They would not accept his word. They would physically hear the word of God but refuse to accept it. Just like the old adage that there are "none are so blind as those who will not see, nor none so deaf as those who will not hear." Thus by bringing the word of God to them he has caused them to become blind and deaf to the will of God. Likewise with Christ, because he brought the Word of God to them, he has caused them to be blind and deaf because they refuse to see and hear. The world is no different today.

**v.41** "THOSE THINGS SPOKE ESAIAS, WHEN HE SAW HIS GLORY, AND SPAKE OF HIM."

John refers to the fact that Isaiah did indeed receive this revelation direct from God in a vision and he saw the glory of the Lord in this vision:

**Isaiah 6:1** "IN THE YEAR THAT KING UZZIAH DIED I SAW ALSO THE **LORD** SITTING UPON A THRONE, HIGH AND LIFTED UP, AND HIS TRAIN FILLED THE TEMPLE." **v.8** "ALSO I HEARD THE VOICE OF THE **LORD**, SAYING, WHOM SHALL I SEND, AND WHO WILL GO FOR US? THEN SAID I, HERE **am** I; SEND ME."

**v.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:"

In spite of their opposition to Jesus John records that many of the chief priests did actually believe that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God. But they refused to allow their belief to be made known for the same reasons that we studied in earlier chapters:

**John 7:13** "HOWBEIT NO MAN SPAKE OPENLY OF HIM FOR FEAR OF THE JEWS."

And as we are told at the time of the healing of the blind man:

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**John 9:22** “THESE *words* SPAKE HIS PARENTS, BECAUSE THEY FEARED THE JEWS: FOR THE JEWS HAD AGREED ALREADY, THAT IF ANY MAN DID CONFESS THAT HE WAS CHRIST, HE SHOULD BE PUT OUT OF THE SYNAGOGUE.”

Even those that understood who Jesus was were like many that live in the world today. They have higher priorities, they are blind to the consequences of their conduct and/or have been deluded into believing that obedience to God isn't essential for eternal life.

**v.43** “FOR THEY LOVED THE PRAISE OF MEN MORE THAN THE PRAISE OF GOD.”

Thus we see the reason for the downfall of many in this world. They love the praise and approval of men and will seek that above the approval of God. Jesus asked in an earlier study:

**John 5:44** “HOW CAN YE BELIEVE, WHICH RECEIVE HONOR ONE OF ANOTHER, AND SEEK NOT THE HONOR THAT *cometh* FROM GOD ONLY?”

Read **John 12:44-50** – Jesus Regarding Belief

**v.44** “JESUS CRIED AND SAID, HE THAT BELIEVETH ON ME, BELIEVETH NOT ON ME, BUT ON HIM THAT SENT ME.”

Jesus is the Son of God. If we believe on Him we believe on God. If we reject Him and his teaching we reject God the Father as well. This is not the first time that Jesus has taught this principle:

**Mark 9:37** “WHOSOEVER SHALL RECEIVE ONE OF SUCH CHILDREN IN MY NAME, RECEIVETH ME: AND WHOSOEVER SHALL RECEIVE ME, RECEIVETH NOT ME, BUT HIM THAT SENT ME.”

The Apostle Peter, in his writing of the first general epistle tells us that God redeemed us with the precious blood of Christ so that we:

“WHO BY HIM DO BELIEVE IN GOD, THAT RAISED HIM UP FROM THE DEAD, AND GAVE HIM GLORY; THAT YOUR FAITH AND HOPE MIGHT BE IN GOD.” **I Peter 1:21**

**v.45** “AND HE THAT SEETH ME SEETH HIM THAT SENT ME.”

John also records Jesus words concerning seeing God, if they had seen them then they had seen God because He and God are one. As Jesus tells Philip when he asked Jesus to “SHOW US THE FATHER”

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**John 14:9** "JESUS SAITH UNTO HIM, HAVE I BEEN SO LONG TIME WITH YOU, AND YET HAST THOU NOT KNOWN ME, PHILIP? HE THAT HATH SEEN ME HATH SEEN THE FATHER; AND HOW SAYEST THOU *then*, SHOW US THE FATHER?"

**v.46** "I AM COME A LIGHT INTO THE WORLD, THAT WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH ON ME SHOULD NOT ABIDE IN DARKNESS."

Again Jesus uses the illustration of being light and that whoever believes walks in light but those who do not walk in darkness. John uses this concept in his first epistle:

**I 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."

**v.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."

Again, just as we studied in earlier chapters, Jesus did come into the world to judge the world because the world was not ready to be judged. Mankind had to be given the opportunity to make their decision to accept or reject the salvation offered by the grace of God.

**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."

**v.48** "HE THAT REJECTETH ME, AND RECEIVETH NOT MY WORDS, HATH ONE THAT JUDGEH HIM: THE WORD THAT I HAVE SPOKEN, THE SAME SHALL JUDGE HIM IN THE LAST DAY."

How will we be judged? I have a picture in my mind, as I assume many people do concerning the scene we will see when:

**Revelation 20:12** "AND I SAW THE DEAD, SMALL AND GREAT, STAND BEFORE GOD; AND THE BOOKS WERE OPENED: AND ANOTHER BOOK WAS OPENED, WHICH IS *the book* OF LIFE: AND THE DEAD WERE JUDGED OUT OF THOSE THINGS WHICH WERE WRITTEN IN THE BOOKS, ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS."

My mental picture of judgment is seeing God with the books open, looking from one to the other, comparing what is recorded in our "BOOK OF LIFE" with what is recorded in the book we call the Bible.



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**v.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.”

Just as God had promised them through the words of Moses:

**Deuteronomy 18:18** “I WILL RAISE THEM UP A PROPHET FROM AMONG THEIR BRETHREN, LIKE UNTO THEE, AND WILL PUT MY WORDS IN HIS MOUTH; AND HE SHALL SPEAK UNTO THEM ALL THAT I SHALL COMMAND HIM.”

Jesus emphasized that very fact at various times during his teaching and as is recorded in several places in the gospel of John. And then he closes with these words of confirmation:

**v.50** “AND I KNOW THAT HIS COMMANDMENT IS LIFE EVERLASTING: WHATSOEVER I SPEAK THEREFORE, EVEN AS THE FATHER SAID UNTO ME, SO I SPEAK.”