

John 12:12-50

In last week's lesson, Jesus was in Bethany at the home of His friends, but only two miles away, His enemies were plotting against Him ---"**Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him.**"

Yes, they had His reception all ready, but God had other plans.

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Even though Jesus had arrived six days early, His visit would be as short as it was sweet.

You see, the very next day, that is the fifth day before Passover, was very special. In fact, the prophet Zechariah had foreseen that day about 500 years ago.

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 an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."**

Yes, the time had finally arrived for Jerusalem to welcome their King.

But His subjects were ill prepared to receive Him.

In fact, the **"daughter of Jerusalem"** wasn't rejoicing at all.

Nevertheless, God would see to it that His Son received a royal welcome.

John 12:12-15 **"On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,**

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.

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

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

If we read carefully, we will discover that it
wasn't the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but
rather the **"people that were come to the
feast"** that welcomed Him.

Yes, the country folk and the inhabitants of
the other towns and villages throughout
the nation provided His royal welcome.

And amazingly, these people seemed to be fully
aware of the spiritual significance of
this event.

For V 13 says, they **"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."

And even though the main populace were unprepared, and no doubt unwilling to greet Him, there were some from that city who joined in.

V 17-18 **"The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.**

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

Well, that explains their enthusiasm, but what about the visitors to Jerusalem?

Not only were they enthusiastic, but they seemed to possess a special insight into the significance of this event.

Why did they suddenly take it into their heads to give Jesus such a royal welcome, even

spreading their garments and palm
branches in the way?

And not only that, but they cried out,

**"Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel
that cometh in the name of the Lord."**

Had they actually connected Zechariah's
prophecy to this day?

Well, that's entirely possible, for the Gospel
of Luke calls them *disciples*, or
followers of Jesus.

However, there might be another explanation.
Remember Jesus' response in Luke 19:40 when
the Pharisees wanted Him to shush up
these people?

He said --- **"I tell you that, if these should
hold their peace, the stones would
immediately cry out."**

Yes, the time had come, and one way or
another, Jesus would receive His royal
welcome.

God had already spoken through Caiaphas
concerning His Son's crucifixion.

Is it not possible that He might have simply
implanted the desire to welcome His Son
in the hearts of these faithful
followers?

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But what about the other part of Zechariah's
prophecy --- **"Rejoice greatly, O
daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of
Jerusalem?"**

This was the day of rejoicing. This was their
promised Messiah.

However, their leaders had managed to rob them
of their most precious possession.

Instead of eagerly looking for their King,
they were keeping an eye out for a
fugitive from justice.

No, there was no rejoicing, and as it turned
out, no recognition of their King.

Matthew 21:10 **"And when he was come into
Jerusalem, all the city was moved,
saying, Who is this?"**

Yes, that was their response --- **"Who is
this?"**

There's no doubt in my mind that they would
have recognized Jesus.

After all, He has spent a good deal of time in
their city, and much of it in the public
eye.

Nevertheless, when He rode into Jerusalem on a
young ass, being heralded as a King,
they simply said, **"Who is this?"**

And not only that, but this Pharisee-
dominated city seems to have dampened
the resolve of the enthusiastic crowd
that accompanied Him.

On their way up to Jerusalem, they had cried -
-- **"Blessed is the King of Israel that
cometh in the name of the Lord."**

But now, in answer to the question, **"Who is this?"** they simply replied, --- **"This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee."**

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Jesus had no illusions about the welcome He would receive.

In fact, Luke 19:41-42 tells us "--- **when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,**
42: Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day," (Yes, this was their day) **"If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes."**

In the other Gospels, we discover that not only had Jesus entered Jerusalem as a

King, but He entered the temple in the same manner.

When Jesus began His public ministry, He cleansed the temple saying, --- **"make not my Father's house an house of merchandise."**

Yes, He was defending the honour of His Father.

However, this time, at the end of His public ministry, He cleansed His own house.

Luke 19:46 **"--- My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves."**

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The day was now far spent, and Jesus' coronation had passed almost without notice.

Many centuries will roll by before Israel would have another opportunity to recognize their Messiah.

Matthew 23:38-39 **"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. (which is their present condition) For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."**

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In order to appreciate Jesus' triumphal entry more fully, we have drawn information from the other Gospels.

It is now time to return to our lesson in John chapter 12.

V 19 **"The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him."**

Even though Jesus' reception was grossly inadequate, as far as the Pharisees were concerned, it was way over the top --- **"behold, the world is gone after him."**

No, this wasn't the kind of reception they had planned, but it was the kind of reception God had insisted upon.

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V 20-22 **"And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:**

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

22: Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus."

Who where these Greeks?

Probably, they were Gentile proselytes, for they had come **"up to worship at the feast."**

And, even if they hadn't taken the irrevocable step of being adopted into the Jewish religion, they would still be

accommodated in the court of the
Gentiles.

Possibly, being a little hesitant, they sought
out the help of Philip.

Philip was a Jew, but he had a Gentile name,
and perhaps could even speak Greek.

No doubt their interest in Jesus was connected
to their search for the Messiah.

However, their inquiry was too late.

Israel's opportunity, and consequently their
opportunity to accept the King, was
gone.

And there wouldn't be another opportunity in
their lifetime.

However, a new day was dawning, a day that
they and all Gentiles could share in.

Not as proselytes to the Jewish religion, but
as members of the Church of Jesus
Christ.

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No, Israel's Messiah was no longer available. Jesus was already preparing Himself for the next step in His Father's plan.

V 23 **"And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified."**

Once again, Jesus was looking at His watch, and **"The hour"** had come.

Many times in the past, God had protected His Son because **"his hour was not yet come."**

But now it was.

Tomorrow would be the fourth day before Passover, the very day that the Passover lambs would be set aside in preparation for the upcoming sacrifice.

Yes, the day of Israel's King was drawing swiftly to a close, and the day of the preparation was almost at hand.

According to the Jewish calendar, the fourth day would begin at sundown, and Jesus

was already fastening His full attention on His new role.

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

His role as the King of Israel would have involved power and majesty.

His new role as **"the Lamb of God"** would involve suffering and death, but it would bring **"forth much fruit."**

And it would also bring forth victory --- **"The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified."**

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The same principle holds true for His followers.

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."**

The world always holds out the carrot of wealth, power, and enjoyment, but true success is found in following Jesus.

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."**

Take the apostle Paul, for instance.

I'm sure we would all agree that his life was a success.

But I'm not sure we would all be willing to follow in his footsteps.

Remember what God told Ananias concerning His servant Paul **"-- for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:**

16: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake."

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Certainly, it is a mercy that we cannot see
the trials that await us.

However, Jesus could always see His future,
and at this particular time, it was very
distressing.

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."**

Jesus had just said, **"The hour is come, that
the Son of man should be glorified."**

Was He still talking about the same hour?

Yes, the same hour that would eventually
glorify Him was the very one that was
troubling Him.

However, He had no intention of avoiding this
hour.

No, **"--- for this cause came I unto this
hour."**

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Scripture doesn't give this hour a special name.

It is simply called "**The hour.**"

However, for this particular lesson, I would like to refer to it as --- **History's Greatest Hour.**

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I'm sure we are all familiar with graphs.

And if you have ever owned mutual funds, I'm sure you are familiar with descending graphs.

Graphs are often used to chart quantity against time.

Along the bottom line, you have days, months, or years.

Up the side, you have whatever quantity you wish to depict.

When it comes to the history of mankind, our scholars would like to convince us that the chart is always ascending.

They claim we started out as monkeys, and some day we will be as gods.

Not only is that view unbiblical, but it is absolute nonsense.

In actual fact, the graph goes in the opposite direction.

We started out in a literal paradise, as a man made in the image of God, and apart from Jesus Christ, we will finally descend into a lost eternity.

However, Christ has completely changed the shape of this graph.

If you can imagine a graph that looks like the outline of a mountain, you will have a pretty idea of human history as far as the believer is concerned.

And it might also be helpful to visualize this graph as the outline of Mount Calvary where God willingly offered His Son.

Yes, when God wrote history, He put the end in the middle.

Hebrews 9:26 "--- **but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.**"

As a result, we now have a graph shaped like a mountain, with the cross of Christ at the very top.

Through the sacrifices, the Old Testament saints looked ahead to History's Greatest Hour.

And we, who live on the other side of the mountain, look back to "**the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.**"

Yes, that's God's graph of human history, and in John chapter 12, Jesus has almost reached the summit.

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."

We can only imagine the feelings that were welling up in Jesus' heart when He said --- **"Now is my soul troubled."**

Physically speaking, crucifixion is a horrible death!

But it was the spiritual implications of the cross that troubled Jesus.

In 2 Corinthians 5:21, the Holy Spirit gives us a little glimpse of the spiritual suffering that was troubling Him.

"For he (that is God) hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

God the Father, who cannot look upon sin, would be required to turn His back on His Son, hearing the agonizing cry ---

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Yes, Jesus was **"troubled,"** but He was willing.

V 28-29 **"Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.**

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

Up to this point, it had been a private conversation between Jesus and His Father.

But then God thundered from heaven --- **"I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."**

Why did God do that?

Well, Jesus explains His Father's rationale in the next verse.

V 30 **"--- This voice came not because of me,
but for your sakes."**

Jesus had done much the same thing when He stood outside Lazarus' tomb.

Speaking to His Father in a voice that could be heard by all, He said --- **"Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me."**

And then, no doubt in a much softer tone, He said --- **"And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me."**

Yes, it was important that the people understand the inseparable connection between the Father and the Son.

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V 31 **"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out."**

We can delay payment on an item by purchasing it on credit, but there will always be a day of reckoning.

In the Old Testament economy, the sacrifices covered sin.

Because they spoke of Christ, God could delay judgment, but He could not eliminate it.

Now, the day of reckoning was at hand.

As Jesus said, **"Now is the judgment of this world."**

The good news is, when the Day of Judgment arrived, so did the Son of God.

Hebrews 9:26 **"--- but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."**

Yes, God had put the end in the middle.

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But this same hour would usher in another day of reckoning.

Jesus said, "-- **now shall the prince of this world be cast out.**"

Yes, Satan, who is "**the prince of this world,**" would finally meet his defeat at Calvary.

His head would be bruised, and he would never fully recover.

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V 32-33 "**And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.**"

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

No, it wouldn't be stoning, as you might expect. That was the Jewish method of execution, and Jesus had escaped stoning several times, but only because His hour had not yet come.

Now it had come.

Just as the brazen serpent had been lifted up in the wilderness to save Israel from

God's judgment, so Jesus would be lifted up upon a Roman cross so that we could look and live.

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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?"**

They had a point there, even a scriptural point.

There is a well-known passage in Isaiah 9:6-7 that says, **"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 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."**

So the question was, *If you are Christ, why
are you talking about your death?*

They had the proof they wanted.

However, they had conveniently ignored many
other scriptures.

Scriptures like Daniel 9:26, where it says
"Messiah" shall "be cut off."

And then there's Isaiah 53: 12 which says, "--
he hath poured out his soul unto death:"

And again Psalm 22:16 "-- **they pierced my
hands and my feet."**

As we now know, Isaiah 9:6-7 refers to the
millennial kingdom, which is still in
the future, when Jesus will reign over
Israel.

And that kingdom will be without end.

However, the other scriptures that didn't support their argument referred to the subject Jesus was presently addressing, that is, the hour when He would become God's Passover Lamb.

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It's interesting to note that Jesus didn't answer their question.

Actually, it had only manifested their spirit of criticism, and time was running out.

V 35-36 **"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. 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."

Yes, while they criticized what they didn't really understand, the opportunity to **"believe in the light"** walked away from them.

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"Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you."

And darkness did come upon them.

In spite of Jesus' warnings, the nation descended into their long night.

They were to stumble into war with Rome, a confrontation that ended with disastrous consequences.

And one day they will stumble into the arms of the anti-Christ.

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V 37 **"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him."**

When we get down to V 44, we will find that Jesus gave them one more chance to believe.

However, V 37 seems to summarize their overall response to His ministry --- **"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him."**

And do you know what the problem is with unbelief?

Today it is merely a choice, but tomorrow it can be a judgment.

V 37-41 **"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:**

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?

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

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.

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

No, we mustn't presume upon God's mercy.

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However, there were some in Jerusalem, who paid attention to Jesus' warning.

V 42-43 **"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:**

**43: For they loved the praise of men
more than the praise of God."**

We have just considered the end of the
unbelieving. Now we must consider the
uncommitted.

As we have previously discovered, being "**put
out of the synagogue**" was a serious
business.

However, that was the path the blind man took,
and, for him, it became a path of
blessing.

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Certainly their unbelief, which is recorded so
graphically in V 37, could have spelled
the end.

But in His mercy, Jesus made one more appeal.

V 44-46 "**Jesus cried and said, He that
believeth on me, believeth not on me,
but on him that sent me.**

45: And he that seeth me seeth him that

sent me.

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

Why wouldn't everyone want to walk in the
light?

After all, it's no fun stumbling around in the
dark.

Well, there's a problem.

John 3:19-20 says **"And this is the
condemnation, that light is come into
the world, and men loved darkness rather
than light, because their deeds were
evil.**

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

A light will illumine the way, but it also
illuminates the one who is carrying it.

Yes, you must confess and forsake your sins
when you come to Jesus.

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V 47-50 "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.

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

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.

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

Yes, Jesus left heaven in order to become our
Saviour, not our Judge.

And His words are life.

♪ "Sing them over again to me,
wonderful words of life;
let me more of their beauty see,
wonderful words of life;"

However, if we reject God's offer of mercy,
those same words will be used in
evidence against us.

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