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By Dan Maines

## John 12

### John 12:1-2

Now, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So they made Him a dinner there, and Martha was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him.

† The setting emphasized the miracle's reality: Lazarus, once dead, was alive and dining with Jesus. Bethany became a testimony to His authority over death.

### **John 12:3**

Mary then took a pound of very expensive 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.

† Mary's devotion anticipated His burial. Her costly act revealed extravagant love, filling the house with both fragrance and testimony.

† Pliny the Elder (Natural History 12.26) notes the high value of Indian nard, confirming its expense.

### **John 12:4-6**

But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, the one who intended to betray Him, said, *"Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and the proceeds given to poor people?"* Now he said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he kept the money box, he used to steal from what was put into it.

† Judas cloaked greed in false piety. His objection revealed hypocrisy.

† Augustine noted that Judas loved money more than the Lord, showing divided hearts betray Christ.

### **John 12:7-8**

Therefore Jesus said, "Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of My burial. For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have Me."

† Jesus defended Mary. The act pointed to His coming burial, revealing spiritual discernment beyond ordinary hospitality.

### **John 12:9-11**

The large crowd of the Jews then learned that He was there; and they came, not on account of Jesus only, but so that they might also see Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead. But the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death also, because on

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

† Lazarus became living proof of Jesus' power, so leaders sought to silence him too. Their hostility grew more irrational.

### **John 12:12-15**

On the next day, when the large crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, they took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and began shouting: "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, indeed, the King of Israel!" Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: "Do not fear, daughter of Zion; behold, your King is coming, seated on a donkey's colt."

† The Triumphal Entry fulfilled Zechariah 9:9. The people hailed Him as King, though their understanding was political rather than spiritual.

† Josephus (Wars 6.9.3) notes the fervor of Jewish crowds at festivals, underscoring the scene's intensity.

### **John 12:16**

These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him, and that they had done these things for Him.

† Fulfillment was only fully grasped after His resurrection, when the Spirit opened their understanding.

### **John 12:17-19**

So the crowd, who had been with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, continued to testify about Him. For this reason also the crowd went to meet Him, because they heard that He had performed this sign. So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are not

accomplishing anything; look, the world has gone after Him!"

† The raising of Lazarus fueled the public celebration. The leaders despaired, exaggerating that "the world" was turning to Him.

### **John 12:20-22**

Now there were some Greeks among those who were going up to worship at the feast; these then came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and were making a request of him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." Philip came and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip came and told Jesus.

† The arrival of Greeks symbolized the gospel's reach beyond Israel. The nations were beginning to come to Christ.

### **John 12:23-26**

But Jesus answered them by saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 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. The one who loves his life loses it, and the one who hates his life in this world will keep it to eternal life. 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."

† His glorification came through death, like a grain that bears fruit only when buried. True discipleship requires self-denial and following Him.

### **John 12:27-28**

"Now My soul has become troubled; and what am I to say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came out of heaven: "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

† Jesus faced deep anguish but submitted to the Father's will. The divine voice affirmed the certainty of His glorification.

### **John 12:29-30**

So the crowd who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, "An angel has spoken to Him!" Jesus responded and said, "This voice has not come for My sake, but for yours."

† The heavenly voice confirmed His mission to the crowd, though some dismissed it as natural sound.

### **John 12:31-33**

"Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to Myself." Now He was saying this to indicate by what kind of death He was going to die.

† The cross was both judgment on the world and defeat of Satan. Being "lifted up" meant crucifixion and exaltation.

### **John 12:34-36**

The crowd then answered Him, "We have heard from the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how is it that You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?" 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; also, the one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the Light, believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light." These things Jesus proclaimed, and He went away and hid Himself from them.

† They misunderstood Scripture, expecting an eternal political Messiah, not a suffering one. Jesus urged them to believe while the Light was present.

† The Dead Sea Scrolls (1QS 3.13-21) often contrast light and

darkness, matching His imagery.

### **John 12:37-41**

But though He had performed so many signs in their sight, they still were not believing in Him. This happened so that the word of Isaiah the prophet would be fulfilled, which he spoke: "Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, "He has blinded their eyes and He hardened their heart, so that they will not see with their eyes and understand with their heart, and be converted, and so I will not heal them." These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke about Him.

† Isaiah foresaw unbelief, and John declared that Isaiah saw Christ's glory. Refusal to believe fulfilled prophecy.

### **John 12:42-43**

Nevertheless many, even of the rulers, believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, so that they would not be excommunicated from the synagogue; for they loved the approval of people rather than the approval of God.

† Some rulers believed secretly but feared man's approval more than God's.

### **John 12:44-46**

Now Jesus cried out and said, "The one who believes in Me, does not believe only in Me, but also in Him who sent Me. And the one who sees Me sees Him who sent Me. I have come as Light into the world, so that no one who believes in Me will remain in darkness."

† Believing in Christ is believing in the Father. His mission was to bring light into darkness.

## **John 12:47-50**

"And if anyone hears My teachings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. The one who rejects Me and does not accept My teachings has one who judges him: the word which I spoke. That will judge him on the last day. For I did not speak on My own, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me."

† Christ's mission was salvation, not condemnation, yet rejection leaves one judged by His very word.

## **How it applies to us today**

† Christ is the resurrection and the life, and His triumph over death assures our hope.

† True discipleship requires costly devotion, like Mary's act of worship.

† The cross was victory over Satan and judgment on the world.

† Believing in Christ is believing in the Father; rejecting Him is rejecting God.

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

## **Source Index**

† Pliny the Elder, Natural History 12.26 – costliness of nard

† Josephus, Wars 6.9.3 – fervor of Jewish festival crowds

† Dead Sea Scrolls, 1QS 3.13-21 – imagery of light and darkness

† Chrysostom, Homilies on John – Christ's tears and humanity

† Augustine, Homilies on John – Judas and the love of money

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