

<sup>1</sup>Six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany where Lazarus was, the one Jesus had raised from the dead. <sup>2</sup>So they gave a dinner for Him there; Martha was serving them, and Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him. <sup>3</sup>Then Mary took a pound of fragrant oil—pure and expensive nard—anoined Jesus’ feet, and wiped His feet with her hair. So the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

<sup>4</sup>Then one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot (who was about to betray Him), said, <sup>5</sup>“Why wasn’t this fragrant oil sold for 300 denarii and given to the poor?” <sup>6</sup>He didn’t say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief. He was in charge of the money-bag and would steal part of what was put in it.

<sup>7</sup>Jesus answered, “Leave her alone; she has kept it for the day of My burial. <sup>8</sup>For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have Me.”

<sup>9</sup>Then a large crowd of the Jews learned He was there. They came not only because of Jesus, but also to see Lazarus the one He had raised from the dead. <sup>10</sup>Therefore the chief priests decided to kill Lazarus also <sup>11</sup>because he was the reason many of the Jews were deserting them and believing in Jesus.

<sup>12</sup>The next day, when the large crowd that had come to the festival heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, <sup>13</sup>they took palm branches and went out to meet Him. They kept shouting: “*Hosanna!* He who comes in the name of the Lord is the blessed One—the King of Israel!”

<sup>14</sup>Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, just as it is written: <sup>15</sup>Fear no more, Daughter Zion. Look, your King is coming, sitting on a donkey’s colt.

<sup>16</sup>(His disciples did not understand these things at first. However, when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about Him and that they had done these things to Him.) <sup>17</sup>Meanwhile, the crowd, which had been with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, continued to testify. <sup>18</sup>This is also why the crowd met Him, because they heard He had done this sign.

<sup>19</sup>Then the Pharisees said to one another, “You see? You’ve accomplished nothing. Look—the world has gone after Him!”

<sup>20</sup>Now some Greeks were among those who went up to worship at the festival. <sup>21</sup>So they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and requested of him, “Sir, we want to see Jesus.”

This is a few months after the preceding chapter. We are now entering the final week prior to Jesus’ death.

The inclusion of Lazarus participating in this event shows the audience that he truly had been raised and made well. Similar to Jesus asking for food after His own resurrection (Lk. 24:41-43). This is no ghost/specter.

Mary took the best gift she could offer and applied it to a part of the body associated with slaves’ work, using her “glory” (her hair, cf 1 Cor. 11:18) to perform the task.

Contrast Mary and Judas here:

- Mary selflessly gave something very costly and precious on behalf of the Savior.
- Judas selfishly took from the Lord and His followers on behalf of himself.

Mary has once again chosen the “better things” and Jesus commends her for it. This is the nature of the Lord’s blessing: we offer ourselves and our possessions for His glory and we gain His approval. No amount of money – stolen or given to the poor – could ever match that gift.

Of note: many of the chief priests are Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection. Lazarus, then, presents a great threat to their philosophy and credibility. Thus, he is seen as a threat to be eliminated, rather than as a sign of misguided teaching that needs to be corrected.

Palm branches – an symbol of honor for a victorious person.

- When Simon Maccabaeus drove out the foreigners in Judea and refortified Jerusalem after the Maccabean revolt, the people waved palm branches as he entered the city (1 Macc. 13).

Psa. 118:25-26 → Last of the Hallel psalms, which were sung at the great feast days.

Zech 9:9 → the Divine King, triumphant and victorious, would arrive in this manner

- The King entering in to his people on a donkey is not without precedent (1 Kg. 1:32-33, 38-40).

John parenthetically notes that their understanding of Jesus’ nature and mission is expanded when viewed through the lens of the cross (similar statements in 2:17, 22).

The growing response of the crowds leads to the unease of the Pharisees.

- They have reached a point of desperation.
- The accusatory use of “you” may indicate finger-pointing by differing factions with different schemes to trap Jesus.

These Greeks are most likely proselytes.

- Fitting that John alone mentions this group since he is most likely writing to a Greek audience.
- Interesting that their appearance occurs directly after the statement that “the world” is going after Jesus.

<sup>22</sup> Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. <sup>23</sup> Jesus replied to them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."

<sup>24</sup> "I assure you: Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains by itself. But if it dies, it produces a large crop. <sup>25</sup> The one who loves his life will lose it, and the one who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. <sup>26</sup> If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me. Where I am, there My servant also will be. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him."

<sup>27</sup> "Now My soul is troubled. What should I say— Father, save Me from this hour? But that is why I came to this hour. <sup>28</sup> Father, glorify Your name!"

Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again!"

<sup>29</sup> The crowd standing there heard it and said it was thunder. Others said that an angel had spoken to Him.

<sup>30</sup> Jesus responded, "This voice came, not for Me, but for you. <sup>31</sup> Now is the judgment of this world. Now the ruler of this world will be cast out. <sup>32</sup> As for Me, if I am lifted up from the earth I will draw all people to Myself." <sup>33</sup> He said this to signify what kind of death He was about to die.

<sup>34</sup> Then the crowd replied to Him, "We have heard from the scripture that the Messiah will remain forever. So how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"

<sup>35</sup> Jesus answered, "The light will be with you only a little longer. Walk while you have the light so that darkness doesn't overtake you. The one who walks in darkness doesn't know where he's going. <sup>36</sup> While you have the light, believe in the light so that you may become sons of light." Jesus said this, then went away and hid from them.

This statement marks a turning point in the book: like the chime of a clock, Jesus states very simply that His hour has now come. The events of the rest of the book will lead Jesus to the cross and then to glory.

The glory of the Messiah is tied to death.

- In order for wheat to germinate, the seed must first die in the ground. Otherwise it simply remains a seed and, thus, completely useless. However, one grain can grow in fertile ground and produce more like itself over and over.

What does it mean to lose one's life?

- In true service to the Lord – by giving up our own sense of importance in everything else. As we Jesus has said, true belief requires us to continually pursue Him without distraction so that we can both come to know Him and strive to be like Him. In so doing, we gain the Father's favor (blessing).
- The cross looms. The disciples haven't yet grasped what their service will entail..

...but Jesus knows what is coming and He is emotionally affected.

- The word "soul" (GR, *psyche*) is the same word translated "life" in verse 25, describing the part of man that is concerned with desires/wishes. It is this part that is attempting to conflict with Jesus' sense of duty.
  - He is about to give His life, even though He internally struggles against His human instinct of self-preservation.
    - John doesn't give us a narrative in Gethsemane, but we definitely see Jesus' same inner conflict here.

He remains resolute, though: His zeal for the Father and His will supersede His fear.

- (Would that we all had this kind of steadfastness to our intended purpose...)

This is the third time in the gospels that a voice from heaven has been heard (Mt. 3:17; 17:5).

- In each instance the voice was meant to be heard by the onlookers; and in each instance, the Father directly validates the Son.
  - This glory is referred to here in two tenses: past and future.
    - Past – 7:16-18; 11:4, 40-42; et al
    - Future – 13:31-32; 15:8; 16:14; 17:1-5
- The Father has been glorified by the work of the Son and He will continue to be glorified as the Son fulfills His purpose:
  - In judgment of sin.
  - In victory over the evil one.
  - In paying the price for sin through His death on a cross... (cf 3:14-15)
  - ...and subsequent ascension to the Father, where believers will be "raised up with Him and [seated] with Him in the heavenly places" (Eph. 2:6).

To answer the crowd's inquiry, Jesus refers back to the very Psalm they quoted as He entered the city - Psa. 118:25-26 – applying the context:

- 118:27 – "The Lord is God and has given us light. Bind the festival sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar."
  - The Light has come and the time to believe in Him is now...
  - ...because the "sacrifice" is about to be bound.

The meaning and implications of "walking in the light" will be the theme of 1 Jn. 1-3.

Jesus' sudden departure here underlines the point and marks the end of His public ministry in John's gospel.

<sup>37</sup> Even though He had performed so many signs in their presence, they did not believe in Him.

<sup>38</sup> But this was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet, who said:

Lord, who has believed our message?  
And who has the arm of the Lord  
been revealed to?

<sup>39</sup> This is why they were unable to believe, because Isaiah also said:

<sup>40</sup> He has blinded their eyes  
and hardened their hearts, so that they  
would not see with their eyes or  
understand with their hearts,  
and be converted, and I would heal  
them.

<sup>41</sup> Isaiah said these things because he saw His glory and spoke about Him.

<sup>42</sup> Nevertheless, many did believe in Him even among the rulers, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, so they would not be banned from the synagogue. <sup>43</sup> For they loved praise from men more than praise from God.

<sup>44</sup> Then Jesus cried out, "The one who believes in Me believes not in Me, but in Him who sent Me.

<sup>45</sup> And the one who sees Me sees Him who sent Me. <sup>46</sup> I have come as a light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me would not remain in darkness. <sup>47</sup> If anyone hears My words and doesn't keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. <sup>48</sup> The one who rejects Me and doesn't accept My sayings has this as his judge: The word I have spoken will judge him on the last day. <sup>49</sup> For I have not spoken on My own, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a command as to what I should say and what I should speak. <sup>50</sup> I know that His command is eternal life. So the things that I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me."

Confirming the thought of 1:10-11.

John affirms that Jesus was the Suffering Servant that Isaiah had prophesied (52:13-53:12).

- The simple reference to the rhetorical question in 53:1 implies that the Servant would face unbelief, even after "the arm of the Lord" had been "revealed" through Him (cf 1:18).

He then elaborates on this unbelief by referring back to Isaiah's original call to prophesy to those who would ultimately not believe his message (Isa. 6:8-10).

- But why? – Jesus has already answered this in the gospel:
  - 5:41-44
  - 6:26, 63-65
  - 8:42-47

Isaiah knew that the Lord who had spoken to him in chapter 6 was the same Lord who would suffer and die for the sins of mankind, as described in chapter 53.

Notice the stress on outward expression of inward belief.

- Belief is not valid if it is not confessed or professed!
- Our hearts are revealed by our willingness to speak the Truth.
  - Whose approval are we seeking: man's or God's?

This final proclamation serves to:

- a) Serve as an "invitation" of sorts, with one final public call to heed His message,
  - *"It is particularly striking that John ends his final summary of the public ministry on this note. Jesus is not a figure of independent greatness; He is the Word of God, or He is nothing at all."*

- which brings us to -

- b) To summarize the teaching of Jesus throughout the book of John by hearkening back to :
  - 44 → 6:38
  - 45 → 1:18
  - 46 → 8:12
  - 47 → 3:17
  - 48 → 3:18
  - 49 → 7:16
  - 50 → 8:28