

# THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

## JOHN 12.12-26



**T. M. Moore**

*A Scriptorium Study*

*And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets,*

*He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Luke 24.27*

**The Fellowship of Ailbe**

The Gospel of John: John 12.12-26  
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## Introduction to *John 12.12-26*

Jesus' "triumphal entry" to Jerusalem signaled the arrival of His "hour" – the hour when He would reveal the glory of God most powerfully.

It was an hour of celebration, but an hour of foreboding, as Jesus used the occasion to talk about death and dying – His. We should not be naïve about what it means to follow Jesus. He died, so that He might glorify God. We cannot glorify God unless we, too, die to ourselves and bear fruit for the Kingdom.

Has Jesus entered triumphantly into your heart? Then get ready to die, and look forward to really living in Him.

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## 1 The King in His Coming

Read and meditate on John 12.12, 13.

The multitudes of those following Jesus had grown steadily over the course of His public ministry. Now the people were gathered for Passover, and when they knew Jesus was coming, they went out to greet Him with shouts of triumph.

*<sup>12</sup>The next day He began to go unto Jerusalem. A great assembly, who had come to celebrate the feast, when they heard He was coming to Jerusalem, <sup>13</sup>took palm leaves, and went to Him, crying, "Save us, Lord! And blessed be the King of Israel, He Who comes to free us in the Lord's Name!"*

- John 12.12, 13

Reflect

1. Here was a multitude to make any mega-church pastor proud. And they were saying and shouting all the right things. But how *real* were these professions? Explain. Complete this prayer: *Lord, You're looking for more than the occasional joyous celebration from us, Your people. What You seek is...*
2. Palm trees played an important role in Israel's history. For example, look at 1 Kings 6.29, 32, 35, and 1 Kings 7.36. When the people of Israel gathered in Solomon's temple to worship, they were surrounded by palm trees! God recalled this decoration to Ezekiel, in the vision of the new temple (Ezek. 40.22, 26, 31, 34; see also Ezek. 41). Perhaps as significant were the 70 palms of Elim, where Israel was refreshed as they began their journey toward Mt. Sinai (Ex. 15.27). There they found 70 palms, the same as the number of those who had originally gone down to Egypt, and 12 wells, the number of tribes not coming forth from Egypt. So if we ask, "Why palm branches to celebrate Jesus' entry to Jerusalem?" what significance might we attach to this gesture? What was this *great multitude* saying? *Lord, You are pleased with our symbolic gestures of loyalty and love. May we do them wholeheartedly, such as when...*
3. Meditate on Psalm 118.24-29. The multitude chose from this passage to celebrate Jesus' entry to Jerusalem. Though they only chose a couple of verses, the entire passage would have been in their minds, even if they didn't understand the full significance of it (by the way, when the Lord and the disciples left the upper room and headed for Gethsemane, they probably were [singing this psalm](#), Matt. 26.30; Mk. 14.26). For a variety of reasons, this was a most appropriate passage for announcing Jesus' arrival. Explain. *I praise You, Lord, for the gift of salvation, and pray that I might know more of our great salvation, so that...*
4. Psalm 118 does not mention the phrase, "The King of Israel," which the people here proclaimed. How shall we explain their unanimity in proclaiming Jesus with this title? *You are the King of Israel, Lord Jesus, and King of...*
5. There was a certain inevitability about this welcome. Even though the multitude may not have understood all the significance of what they were saying, and most of them would be clamoring for Jesus' blood in just a few days, still, this raucous, joyous celebration of Jesus' coming to His hour of glory was inevitable, as He Himself explained in Luke 19.39, 40. Why? What does this portend (cf. Phil. 2.5-11; Ps. 96.10-13)? Bring together into one the prayers you composed for questions 1-4.

*Summary*

“As, therefore, hosanna is said in the psalm we are considering, which is translated ‘Save us now,’ and the Hebrew has ‘Lord, save us,’ and the words ‘blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord’ are taken from the same psalm, and these words can only refer to the Christ of God, we naturally apply the rest of the prediction to him as well.” *Eusebius of Caesarea (260-340 AD)*

As jubilant and glorious as was this welcoming celebration, it was but the announcement of greater glory to come. And this makes the multitude’s use of Psalm 118 all that much more significant. Explain.

*Closing Prayer*

This *is* the day the LORD has made;  
We will rejoice and be glad in it.  
Save now, I pray, O LORD;  
O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.  
Blessed *is* he who comes in the name of the LORD!  
We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.  
God *is* the LORD,  
And He has given us light;  
Bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar.  
You *are* my God, and I will praise You;  
You *are* my God, I will exalt You.  
Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for *He is* good!  
For His mercy *endures* forever.

Psalm 118.24-29

**Psalm 118.19-29** (*St. George’s Windsor: Come, Ye Thankful People, Come*)

All who know Christ’s righteousness, His great Name now thank and bless!  
Though His gate full righteous is, He our saving mercy is.  
Cast aside and left alone, Christ is now our Cornerstone!  
God has made His Son and Word our salvation: Praise the Lord!

Blessed are they who in His Name come and Jesus’ grace proclaim.  
God His light upon us shines in the Savior’s sacrifice.  
Praise and thanks to You, O Lord; we extol Your holy Word!  
Thanks to You, for You are good! Thanks to our great loving God!

## 2 On a Donkey

Read and meditate on John 12.14, 15.

Here is a scene of great majesty and humility, celebration and foreboding, prophetic fulfillment and glorious hope, and Jesus is at the center of it all.

*<sup>14</sup>And when Jesus knew that they were coming, and what He must do, then He sat on a donkey He had found, as it is written, <sup>15</sup>“Let not fear surround you, Zion. See, your King is coming! He is sitting on a donkey’s colt.”*

- John 12.14, 15

*Reflect*

1. Meditate on Zechariah 9.9-11. Looking at Zechariah, as John intended we should, what did Jesus’ entry to Jerusalem signify? What did it portend? Complete this prayer: *Lord, let me be found always at Your feet, for...*
2. Compare John’s account with Matthew’s in Matthew 21.1-7. What differences can you identify? Does this necessarily mean that one or the other of the evangelists got the story wrong? Explain. *Thank You, Lord, for four gospels, to give us a rich and varied portrait, and to prepare us...*
3. Let’s assume that Matthew’s account is more complete than John’s. John’s is true, but Matthew gives us more details. However, from John, as well as Mark (Mk. 11.1-7) and Luke (Lk. 19.29-35), Jesus appears to have sat only on the colt, with the mother donkey accompanying. This would seem to be in line with Zechariah’s prophecy. What significance should we attach to this? *Lord, as You humbled Yourself to come amongst us in the flesh, and humbled Yourself to enter Your city on a donkey’s colt, so let me...*
4. Jesus’ entry to Jerusalem on the back of a donkey was the announcement that Israel’s King had arrived, and with Him, His Kingdom (v. 15). Review John 1.49, 3.3-5, and look at John 18.36. What is the Kingdom of God? Given the large amount of teaching Jesus offered on the Kingdom, especially in Matthew and Luke, why do you suppose there are so few references to the Kingdom in John’s account? *Lord, John seems almost to direct us to the other gospels for more details about Your Kingdom. You have commanded us to seek Your Kingdom, Lord, and I...*
5. John, quoting Zechariah, focuses us on one large consequence of the coming of our King. What is it? What fears does the King’s coming banish in His people? Do you experience this freedom from fears? Explain. Bring together into one prayer the prayers you wrote from questions 1-4.

*Summary*

“Zechariah gave this prophecy after the return from Babylon toward the conclusion of prophecy. But there is no record of a Jewish king since that time, such as the prophecy predicts, except our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, in whom this prediction was fulfilled.... But what was his riding on a donkey meant to show but the lowly and humble manner that marked his first coming?” *Eusebius of Caesarea (260-340 AD)*

Jesus came to earth under the most lowly of circumstances. He would gain His great victory and Kingdom by an act of supreme lowliness. So it made sense for Him to enter Jerusalem in such a humble and lowly manner. He is King, and we are His ambassadors. But He counsels humility and lowliness as the proper demeanor for

His citizens. Explain.

*Closing Prayer*

You who fear the LORD, praise Him!  
All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him,  
And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!  
For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;  
Nor has He hidden His face from Him;  
But when He cried to Him, He heard.  
My praise *shall be* of You in the great assembly;  
I will pay My vows before those who fear Him.  
The poor shall eat and be satisfied;  
Those who seek Him will praise the LORD.  
Let your heart live forever!  
All the ends of the world  
Shall remember and turn to the LORD,  
And all the families of the nations  
Shall worship before You.  
For the kingdom *is* the LORD's,  
And He rules over the nations.

Psalm 22.23-28

**Psalm 22.23-28** (*Darwall: Rejoice, the Lord is King*)

All you who fear the Lord, now praise His holy Name!  
You children of His glorious Word, declare His fame!  
We stand in awe of our eternal God, and on His mercy call.

For He has not despised the anguish of our King,  
Nor from Him hid His eyes, Who knew such suffering.  
Let praise arise from all who love and serve the Ruler of the skies!

The suffering King shall eat and praise with us the Lord.  
Forever we His praise repeat and trust His Word.  
Praise God above, all you who keep His vows and who His mercies love!

All nations shall repent and hasten to the Lord;  
All those to whom His truth is sent shall praise His Word.  
The Lord is King! His sovereign rule on high now we His people sing!

### 3 Point of Clarification

*Read and meditate on John 12.16.*

John clarifies what he had written in the previous verse. While he cites the Old Testament prophecy concerning Christ's triumphal entry as King of Israel, this is only in retrospect. At the time, he and the other disciples didn't understand the meaning of Jesus' actions. This would only come to them once Jesus had risen from the dead.

*<sup>16</sup>Now these things His disciples did not understand at first. But they remembered and began to know them after He was glorified, that is, once Jesus had been crucified, and resurrected. They remembered what was written about Jesus, namely, that the Jews would do these things to Him.*

- John 12.16

*Reflect*

1. John feels the need to clarify his account. Especially in the light of subsequent events, it makes sense that he would want us to know that he and the others did not yet understand the meaning of what Jesus was doing. Explain. Complete this prayer: *Lord, I don't understand everything, either, but what I do understand, help me to...*

2. We note that Jesus did not bother to explain to the disciples what He was doing or why. Why do you think He didn't? *Teach me to wait on You, Lord, for Your perfect timing and will, and let me...*

3. John mentions Jesus' being glorified in relation to what the Jews did to Him. He doesn't tell us at this point what that was, but only that this was when Jesus was glorified. To what is he referring? How was Jesus glorified in these events? *In this is Your true glory, Lord, that...*

4. Something about those events made things come together for John and the others. They had been with Jesus for three years, yet, despite their close association and faith, they all deserted Him. But a new understanding of their Master – and of themselves – began to coalesce in them after He was glorified. Seeing Jesus in His glory has transforming power, as Paul indicates in 2 Corinthians 3.12-18 and 4.6. How does Jesus in His glory affect you in your mind (thought life), heart (affections), and conscience (values and priorities)? *Lord Jesus, show me Your glory, and work in me as I work out my salvation, so that...*

5. What does it mean to say that Jesus was “glorified”? What is the “glory of God” that we see in Scripture, and in the face of Jesus revealed there? How do you know when you're in the presence of God's glory, and how should that affect you? Bring together into one prayer the prayers you wrote for questions 1-4.

*Summary*

“he Evangelist does not hesitate to mention the ignorance of the disciples, nor their subsequent understanding, since he did not care about the respect of people but pleads for the glory of the Spirit and shows what kind of men the disciples were before the resurrection and what sort of men they had become after the resurrection.” *Cyril of Alexandria (374-444 AD)*

We have only truly learned anything when what we are learning derives from and leads to Christ being

glorified. The highest and most acclaimed expressions of secular learning are half-truths at best, unless they derive ultimately from God's treasury of wisdom and knowledge, and contribute to our better knowing, loving, and serving His King. Better to admit our ignorance, our failures, our confusion, and our uncertainties, and to acknowledge that we are on a journey of learning, than to parade mere head knowledge as true learning, when it may be – as in the case of Judas – nothing of the sort. What are the keys to learning like this?

*Closing Prayer*

Teach me Your way, O LORD;  
I will walk in Your truth;  
Unite my heart to fear Your name.  
I will praise You, O Lord my God, with all my heart,  
And I will glorify Your name forevermore.  
For great *is* Your mercy toward me,  
And You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.  
O God, the proud have risen against me,  
And a mob of violent *men* have sought my life,  
And have not set You before them.  
But You, O Lord, *are* a God full of compassion, and gracious,  
Longsuffering and abundant in mercy and truth.  
Oh, turn to me, and have mercy on me!  
Give Your strength to Your servant,  
And save the son of Your maidservant.  
Show me a sign for good,  
That those who hate me may see *it* and be ashamed,  
Because You, LORD, have helped me and comforted me.

Psalm 86.11-17

**Psalm 86.10-17** (*Andrews: Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven*)

For You are great, You wondrous deeds do;  
You are the only and sovereign Lord.  
Teach me Your way, let me give heed to,  
With all my heart, Savior, all Your Word!  
Lord, be gracious to me, Lord, be gracious to me,  
Praise Your Name forever, Lord!

Great is Your mercy, Lord, toward me;  
You have delivered my soul from hell.  
Though dreadful foes and threats arrayed be,  
You will Your grace and Your mercy tell!  
Lord, be gracious to me, Lord, be gracious to me,  
Slow to anger, loving well!

Turn to me, Lord; be gracious to me;  
Grant me Your strength; save Your servant, Lord!  
Let me a sign of something good see;  
Shame all who hate me beneath Your Word.  
Lord, be gracious to me, Lord, be gracious to me,  
For You help me, sovereign Lord!

## 4 A Great Draw

Read and meditate on John 12.17-19.

John continues to set the stage and the mood for the events by which Jesus will be glorified.

<sup>17</sup>Therefore,  
the people who were with Him witness bore –  
they who were there when He raised Lazarus from  
the dead. <sup>18</sup>And others, hearing this, had come  
to meet Him also. <sup>19</sup>Then the Pharisees  
complained among themselves: “And now you see  
that you accomplish nothing. Look now! All  
the world has gone out to Him!”

- John 12.17-19

Reflect

1. John identifies more specifically the people who were accompanying Jesus as He entered Jerusalem. The first group consisted of those who were with Jesus when He raised Lazarus from the dead. What were these people doing? Of what did that consist? Complete the following prayer: *Lord Jesus, I can't explain everything about You or the Gospel, but what I do know and have experienced, let me...*

2. My sense of this situation is this: As Jesus was coming to Jerusalem from Bethany, the people who had witnessed Him raise Lazarus from the dead accompanied Him. That would have been a small company, but conspicuous. As Jesus mounted the donkey's colt for the last leg of His journey, this would have piqued the curiosity of others, and those accompanying Jesus would have said something like, “This is Jesus, Who called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead.” Their witness would have increased the excitement about Jesus, and the crowd accompanying Him would have grown, as this witness spread to others (cf. Matt. 21.10, 11). Perhaps someone in the crowd cried out, “O save us! Blessed is He Who comes in the Name of the Lord!” This would have triggered huzzahs and similar cries from others, since everyone would have been familiar with this line from Psalm 118. As the chant spread through the crowd, and the clamoring increased, more people would have gathered, joining in the chant, caught up in the excitement of the moment, but not really understanding the significance of what they were witnessing. People got excited about Jesus, and even hailed Him as Savior and King, but mainly because of the situation, not because of any true understanding or sincere faith. Is there a danger of such being the case in churches today? Explain. *Give me grace, Lord, to know You truly, and to grow in my relationship with You, and not merely to...*

3. The noise and crowd attracted the attention of the religious leaders. First, they went straight to Jesus, and demanded He tell the people to desist (Lk. 19.39). That failing, the procession went on further into the city, ending at the temple (Mk. 11.11), where Jesus surveyed the situation, then left to return to Bethany. Rebuffed by Jesus, as the multitudes passed them by, the Pharisees were left embarrassed and angry, lashing out at one another. Here is where verse 19 fits. Their bitter words are stunningly accurate: “The world (*kosmos*) has gone out after Him!” If the world was going after Jesus, where did that leave the Pharisees? How did this make them feel? Is there any sense in which this situation exists yet today? *Lord, You challenge every vain pretense of authority and power, so I should not be surprised when...*

4. The Pharisees' word was true in two senses. First, they were indeed accomplishing nothing – that is, in the way of silencing Jesus. That was a terrible admission for them to have made. But would that stop them from trying harder? How does this counsel us as witnesses to Jesus? *Lord, I know that some people will only get angry as I bear witness to them, and that they may go further and...*

5. Second, look at John 12.32. In the Greek, the word *peoples* is not present. The text reads, literally, “I will draw all things [that is, the entire *cosmos*] to Myself.” The Pharisees were exaggerating out of frustration, but Jesus meant what He said. In what sense were they both right? Bring together your prayers from questions 1-4 into one prayer.

*Summary*

“Even though they did not know it, the Pharisees were telling the truth when they said, ‘Look, the world has gone after him,’ for not only Jews but Gentiles as well were destined to accept the faith.” *Cyril of Alexandria (375-444 AD)*

Jesus, as is evident, was a “great draw.” Should we expect as much today? What causes the world and everything in it to “go out” after Jesus?

*Closing Prayer*

What shall I render to the LORD  
For all His benefits toward me?  
I will take up the cup of salvation,  
And call upon the name of the LORD.  
I will pay my vows to the LORD  
Now in the presence of all His people.  
Precious in the sight of the LORD  
Is the death of His saints.  
O LORD, truly I *am* Your servant;  
I *am* Your servant, the son of Your maidservant;  
You have loosed my bonds.  
I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving,  
And will call upon the name of the LORD.  
I will pay my vows to the LORD  
Now in the presence of all His people,  
In the courts of the LORD house,  
In the midst of you, O Jerusalem.  
Praise the LORD!

Psalm 116.12-19

**Psalm 116.7-19** (*Mit Freuden Zart: All Praise to God, Who Reigns Above*)

Full well the Lord has dealt with me; my soul from death He delivered.  
My weeping eyes, my stumbling feet, He has redeemed forever.  
Forever I before His face shall walk with those who know His grace,  
And dwell with them forever.

Afflicted, I believe His Word, though lying men would undo me.  
What shall I render to the Lord for all His blessings to me?  
Salvation’s cup I lift above and call upon the God of love  
And pay my vows most truly.

How sweet to Him when saints depart – save me, Your servant, Savior!  
From sin You loosed my wand’ring heart; I praise Your Name forever!  
On You I call, my vows to pay; here in Your presence I would stay  
Your praise to offer ever.

## 5 To See Jesus

*Read and meditate on John 12.20-22.*

John is the only evangelist who reports this incident, so he must have seen in it some lesson for us, or hold some portent of things to come.

*<sup>20</sup>And a small contingent from the Gentiles – Greeks – had come there. <sup>21</sup>They to Philip came, for he was from a town in Galilee. They said unto him, “Sir, we would see Jesus.” <sup>22</sup>He went to tell Andrew, and in turn, the two of them told Jesus.*

- John 12.20-22

*Reflect*

1. It's not clear whether these people were true Greeks or Greek-speaking Jews from beyond the traditional land of Israel. My sense is they were true Greeks, since Luke refers to Greek-speaking Jews as Hellenists – more a philosophical than an ethnic term – not Greeks (Acts 6.1). Apparently, they were drawn to Jesus by the witness of the crowd. It was not uncommon in those days to find Gentiles attaching themselves to Jewish communities (cf. Acts 10). What about Judaism might have appealed to Greeks, more than any of the pagan religions of their world? Are people in the world today still attracted to such things? Explain. Complete this prayer: *Lord, I understand that everyone is religious at heart, even those whose religion is secularism or materialism. But no religion except the true religion can satisfy the need in the human soul for...*

2. Of all the people acclaiming Jesus' arrival, and proclaiming Him King of Israel and so forth, apparently only these Greeks sought an audience with Him. How does this make them stand out from the rest of the great multitude of those who were escorting Jesus into Jerusalem? Is there a lesson in this for us? *It's not enough, Lord, just to gather with Your people to worship, or to be part of a Bible study group or other activity. What I want, Jesus, is...*

3. They first came to Philip. Why? Did they see something in Philip with which they could identify? Do the people in your Personal Mission Field see anything in you that might cause them to want to see Jesus, or feel like they could talk with you about Him? *Lord Jesus, help me to be the kind of person who...*

4. Philip relayed the request to Andrew, before they both went to Jesus. Why? Couldn't Philip have gone to Jesus on His own? Does this suggest some structure to the band of Jesus' disciples? Do you see any evidence of such a structure in any other places in the gospels? If so, how does this guide us in thinking about the work of making disciples? *Thank You, Lord, that we can come directly to You for all our needs. But thank You also that You have set up Your church for disciple-making so that...*

5. Can you see a lesson on prayer in this incident? For example, what might you learn from this story about praying for lost friends or co-workers? Is there more power in prayer when two agree, and go to the Lord together? Bring together into one your prayers from questions 1-4.

*Summary*

“This approach of the Greeks [to Philip] happened at that time as a sort of firstfruits. And the Galileans came to Philip as being himself a Galilean, asking him to show them Jesus whom they wanted to see because they were continually hearing good things about Jesus. They wanted to worship him and attain the object of their desires. But Philip remembered what the Lord had said to them, ‘Do not go into any area of the Gentiles or

enter any city of the Samaritans.' And so Philip was afraid that he might give offense by bringing to Christ those who had not believed, not realizing that it was for a set purpose that the Lord had forbidden the disciples to approach the Gentiles until the Jews should first have rejected the grace given to them. And so Philip tells Andrew, who was more disposed for and accustomed to such things, and then, with his approval they both carry the message to the Lord." *Cyril of Alexandria (375-444 AD)*

Jesus often draws people to Himself in stages, or by degrees, and with the intercession or mediation of others. How can you see that in this story? How should this help us to think about our own witness for the Lord?

*Closing Prayer*

Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised  
In the city of our God,  
*In* His holy mountain.  
Beautiful in elevation,  
The joy of the whole earth,  
Is Mount Zion *on* the sides of the north,  
The city of the great King.  
God is in her palaces;  
He is known as her refuge.  
For behold, the kings assembled,  
They passed by together.  
They saw it, *and* so they marveled;  
They were troubled, they hastened away.  
Fear took hold of them there,  
*And* pain, as of a woman in birth pangs,  
*As when* You break the ships of Tarshish  
With an east wind.  
As we have heard,  
So we have seen  
In the city of the LORD of hosts,  
In the city of our God:  
God will establish it forever.  
Selah  
We have thought, O God, on Your lovingkindness,  
In the midst of Your temple.  
According to Your name, O God,  
So *is* Your praise to the ends of the earth;  
Your right hand is full of righteousness.

Psalm 48.1-10

**Psalm 48.1-11** (*Cwm Rhondda: Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehova*)

Great is God, now greatly praise Him in the city of the Lord.  
Holy she, His lovely mountain, great and glorious by His Word!  
God her King is great within her, He, her Stronghold ever sure!  
He, her Stronghold ever sure!

Earthly kings, amazed and wond'ring, look upon the Church with fear.  
See them flee in dread and anguish, knowing that the Lord is near.  
For the city of the Savior God will keep forevermore!  
God will keep forevermore!

*The Gospel of John: John 12.12-26*

For Your grace and lovingkindness we proclaim Your matchless worth!  
As Your Name is, great and boundless, let Your praise fill all the earth.  
Let Your people sing rejoicing for the judgment of Your truth;  
For the judgment of Your truth.

## 6 The Hour Has Come

Read and meditate on John 12.13-26.

Jesus' "hour" has been often mentioned in John's narrative, but always as a coming event. Now that hour has come.

*23 And then Jesus answered them and said, "The hour has come; the Son of Man will now be glorified. 24 But understand, unless a grain of wheat is buried in the ground and dies, it is alone. But when it dies, it brings forth much more grain. 25 And he who loves his life will lose it, although he who hates his life in this world will preserve it unto life eternal. 26 All who serve Me, let them follow Me; and where I am, My servant will be also with Me. Him who serves and follows Me, My Father on him honor will bestow."*

- John 12.23-26

Reflect

1. We use the word *hour* to indicate something of great moment or significance: Their *finest hour*, the *eleventh hour*, and so forth. How was Jesus using this idea? What did He mean by His "hour"? Had Jesus not been glorified to this point? What was different about this? Complete this prayer: *Lord, every hour of my day is Your hour, Your time. Help me to use each hour...*
2. Immediately, Jesus associated His hour for being glorified with death (v. 24). He was obviously looking forward to His own death, but not merely *to* His death, but *through* it, to what was beyond. Explain. How does this counsel us to look at death, both our daily *dying to self* and our final *departure from this life*? *Thank You, Jesus, that death is not the end, but...*
3. What did Jesus mean by the metaphor of *grain* and *grains* in verse 24. How does this apply to your life as a disciple of Jesus? *You have called me to bear much fruit, Lord, so...*
4. In verse 25, Jesus turned from thinking about His own death to the implications of that for others. How was Jesus using the ideas of "love" and "hate" in this verse? How was He using the ideas of "lose" and "keep"? How would you explain the meaning of this verse to a non-Christian friend? *You have promised that I might truly live, O Lord, but for that to happen...*
5. In the immediate context – verses 23-26 – what did Jesus mean by "follow Me"? What did He mean by "where I am"? What about "serves Me"? What *honor* may we expect from the Father for being Jesus' followers? Is this worth following Jesus into death? Explain. Bring together into one your prayers from questions 1-4.

Summary

"We listen to the voice of the cornerstone.... Did he think of himself as glorified because the Gentiles wished to see? No. But he saw that after his passion and resurrection, the Gentiles in all lands would believe in him ... and took occasion from this request of some Gentiles to see him to announce the approaching fullness of the Gentiles. For the Gentiles would believe that the hour of his being glorified was now at hand and that

after he was glorified in the heavens the Gentiles would believe, as it is written in the psalm, 'Set yourself up, O God, above the heavens, ... and your glory above all the earth.' ... But it was necessary that his exaltation and glory should be preceded by the humiliation of his passion." *Augustine (354-430 AD)*

What does it mean to follow Jesus? What may we hope for who follow Him?

*Closing Prayer*

You will guide me with Your counsel,  
And afterward receive me *to* glory.  
Whom have I in heaven *but You?*  
And *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire besides You.  
My flesh and my heart fail;  
*But* God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.  
For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish;  
You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry.  
But *it is* good for me to draw near to God;  
I have put my trust in the Lord GOD,  
That I may declare all Your works.

Psalm 73.24-28

**Psalm 73.21-28** (*Ellacombe: Hosanna, Loud Hosanna*)

When my poor sad, embittered heart was pierced within by grace,  
I saw how beastly was the part I chose before Your face.  
But I am ever with You, Lord, You hold me by the hand,  
And guide me daily by Your Word; in glory I e'er shall stand.

Then what have I in heav'n above but You, my God and Lord?  
And on this earth what shall I love besides You and Your Word?  
My flesh and heart shall surely fail, and death my soul release;  
Your strength for me shall e'er avail and grant eternal peace.

Then let them perish who depart from You and from Your Word.  
All those unfaithful in their heart You shall destroy, O Lord!  
But as for me, Your nearness, Lord, is where I e'er will dwell!  
I hide myself within Your Word, Your wondrous works to tell.

## 7 Triumphal Entry

*Read and meditate on John 12.12-26.*

All Jesus' earthly sojourn has been moving toward this "hour." As He has held this hour off, so now He enters it, so that He might be glorified.

<sup>12</sup>The next day He began to go unto Jerusalem. A great assembly, who had come to celebrate the feast, when they heard He was coming to Jerusalem, <sup>13</sup>took palm leaves, and went to Him, crying, "Save us, Lord! And blessed be the King of Israel, He Who comes to free us in the Lord's Name!" <sup>14</sup>And when Jesus knew that they were coming, and what He must do, then He sat on a donkey He had found, as it is written, <sup>15</sup>"Let not fear surround you, Zion. See, your King is coming! He is sitting on a donkey's colt." <sup>16</sup>Now these things His disciples did not understand at first. But they remembered and began to know them after He was glorified, that is, once Jesus had been crucified, and resurrected. They remembered what was written about Jesus, namely, that the Jews would do these things to Him.

<sup>17</sup>Therefore, the people who were with Him witness bore – they who were there when He raised Lazarus from the dead. <sup>18</sup>And others, hearing this, had come to meet Him also. <sup>19</sup>Then the Pharisees complained among themselves: "And now you see that you accomplish nothing. Look now! All the world has gone out to Him!"

<sup>20</sup>And a small contingent from the Gentiles – Greeks – had come there. <sup>21</sup>They to Philip came, for he was from a town in Galilee. They said unto him, "Sir, we would see Jesus." <sup>22</sup>He went to tell Andrew, and in turn, the two of them told Jesus. <sup>23</sup>And then Jesus answered them and said, "The hour has come; the Son of Man will now be glorified. <sup>24</sup>But understand, unless a grain of wheat is buried in the ground and dies, it is alone. But when it dies, it brings forth much more grain. <sup>25</sup>And he who loves his life will lose it, although he who hates his life in this world will preserve it unto life eternal. <sup>26</sup>All who serve Me, let them follow Me; and where I am,

*My servant will be also with Me. Him who serves and follows Me, My Father on him honor will bestow."*

- John 12.12-26

*Reflect*

1. Jesus certainly knew what awaited Him in Jerusalem. He had been preparing for this "hour" for a long time, and was already looking past His suffering to His glorification and the coming of His Kingdom. What do you think was going on in Jesus' mind, as He entered the city of Jerusalem? What was He thinking? How was He able to do this? Complete this prayer: *Lord, You knew the Scriptures and the promises of the Father, and You clung to these in the face of danger. Help me also to...*

2. We have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2.16). Sadly, we do not always *yield* to the mind of Christ when we're facing difficult situations, potential trials, temptations, or the fear of others. Why? What keeps us from "seeing through" such challenges to the promises of God, like Jesus did? *Give me grace, Lord, so that I'm always thinking, planning, and going forward according to...*

3. The disciples, John tells us, didn't understand all this. Did they understand that going to Jerusalem was fraught with danger? But did they go anyway? How were they able to do this? What can we learn from them? *Lord, help me to be as close to You as the disciples were, so that, even though I don't understand everything...*

4. The multitude cried out for Jesus to save them. This is the meaning of *Hosanna!* What do you think they understood by *salvation*? What kind of king did they think Jesus would be? Were they right? Do we sometimes fall into thinking the way the multitude was thinking? Explain. *I must follow You, Lord, on Your terms, according to Your agenda and purpose, and this means...*

5. This passage is full of portent. John sowed the seeds of many things that were yet to come, but which were all on stage as Jesus rode into Jerusalem on that Sunday. How do you see that? What does this suggest about the purpose of John's gospel? About the purpose of the New Testament? Bring together into one prayer the prayers you composed for questions 1-4.

*Summary*

"Christ's servants are those who look out for his things rather than their own. 'Let him follow me' means 'Let him walk in my ways and not in his own,' as it is written elsewhere. ... For if he supplies food for the hungry, he should do so in the way of mercy, not to brag about it. He should be looking for nothing else there but to do good and not letting his left hand know what his right hand does. In other words, any work of charity should be utterly devoid of any thought of 'what's in it for me.' The one who serves in this way serves Christ and will have it rightly said to him, 'Inasmuch as you did it unto one of the least of those who are mine, you did it unto me.' ... And the one who serves Christ in this way will be honored by his Father with the peculiar honor of being with his Son and having nothing lacking in his happiness ever again. And so, when you hear the Lord saying, 'Where I am, there shall also my servant be,' do not think merely of good bishops and clergy. But you yourselves should also serve Christ in your own way by good lives, by giving to the poor, by preaching his name and doctrine as best as you can too. Every father [or mother] ... too will be filling an ecclesiastical and episcopal kind of office by serving Christ in their own homes when they serve their families so that they too may be with him forever." *Augustine (354-430 AD)*

What are the most important lessons for you from this story of Jesus' triumphal entry? His entry portends a greater "triumphal entry" yet to come (cf. Pss. 47, 110). Explain.

*Closing Prayer*

I have set the LORD always before me;

Because *He is* at my right hand I shall not be moved.  
Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices;  
My flesh also will rest in hope.  
For You will not leave my soul in Sheol,  
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.  
You will show me the path of life;  
In Your presence *is* fullness of joy;  
At Your right hand *are* pleasures forevermore.

Psalm 16.8-11

**Psalm 16.8-11** (*All to Christ: Jesus Paid It All*)

You are ever with me, Lord; in You I shall not fall.  
But rejoicing in Your Word, I abide within Your call.  
    Make me know life's way! Pleasures fill Your hand;  
    Fill my life with joy each day! Before Your face I stand.

Soon Your glory I shall see, for as Jesus rose again,  
You will go gather me to my home with You in heav'n.  
    Make me know life's way! Pleasures fill Your hand;  
    Fill my life with joy each day! Before Your face I stand.

*The Gospel of John: John 12.12-26*

*Questions for reflection or discussion*

1. Why is this incident referred to as Jesus' "triumphal" entry to Jerusalem?
2. What was Jesus' "hour"? How would He be glorified in it? What lesson is there here for us, who are called to do all things for God's glory (1 Cor. 10.31)?
3. From what we see in this passage, who are the true disciples of Christ, and who are not?
4. Why was all the world going after Jesus at this time? Why is the world not going after Jesus like this today? Or is it?
5. What's the most important lesson you've learned from John 12.12-26? How are you putting that lesson to work in your walk with and work for the Lord?

*Items for prayer:*

## The Fellowship of Ailbe

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