JOHN 12

The Hour Has Come

perfume at Bethany, palms on the road, Greeks at the feast — and a grain of wheat that must die

> *"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."*
> JOHN 12:24

A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · FOUR VOICES: GUZIK · SPROUL · SPURGEON · HENRY

Where we are in John

1. John 11 ended with a death warrant: “from that day on they planned together to kill Him” (11:53), and orders that anyone who knew where He was should report it (11:57).

2. Chapter 12 closes the first half of John — what many call the Book of Signs.

3. The Passover drew pilgrims by the hundreds of thousands — Sproul cites Josephus’s figure of about 2.7 million people at one Passover in the 60s.

Six Days Before the Passover

A supper at Bethany — Mary's extravagance, Judas's complaint, and a plot against Lazarus

JOHN 12:3

Mary then took a pound of very costly 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.

DAVID GUZIK

Half the Gospel is this week; Judas hid his heart from all but Jesus.

R.C. SPROUL

Expedience vs extravagance; a year's wages poured out in worship.

C.H. SPURGEON

Better to be Lazarus and commune than Martha and serve.

MATTHEW HENRY

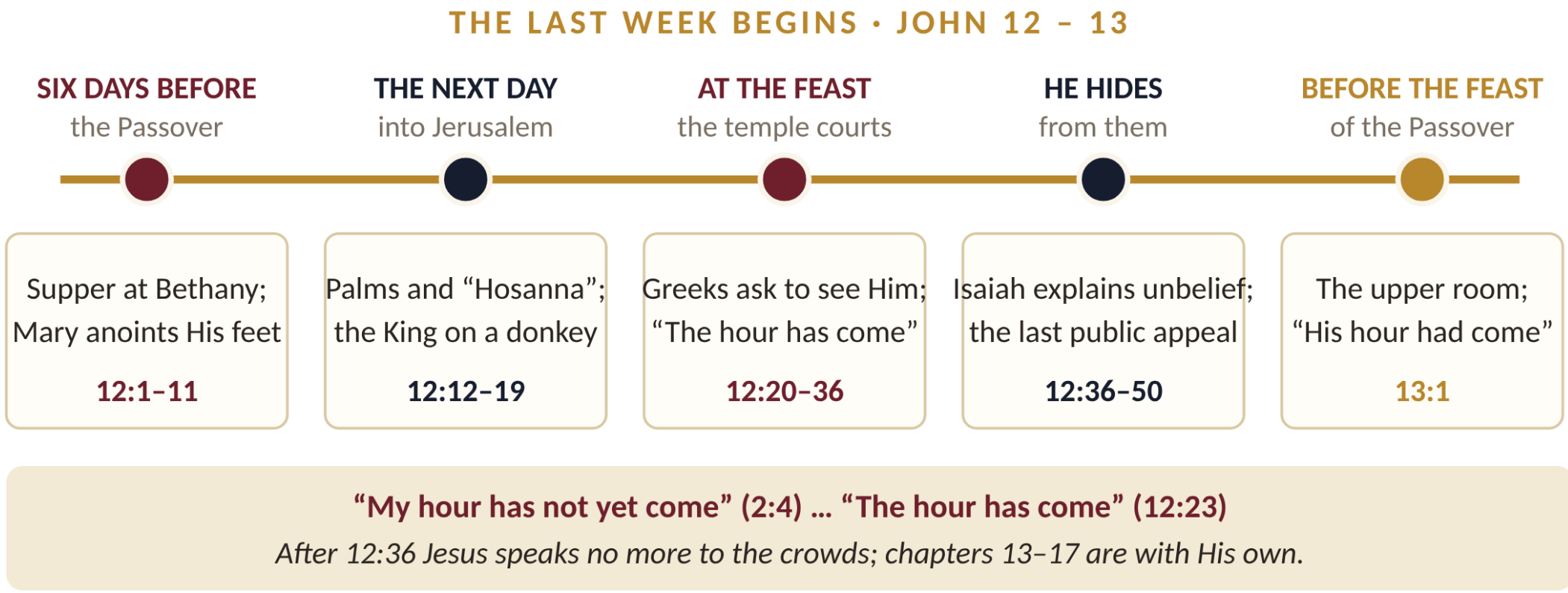
Proud men think all ill-advised who do not advise with them.

νάρδου πιστικῆς

NARDOU PISTIKĒS · "PURE NARD"

Nardos is spikenard, an aromatic oil from the root of a plant that grows in the Himalayas — imported across half the known world.

The last week begins



Follow the days from Bethany to the upper room: chapter 12 is the turn from Jesus' public ministry to His hour.

Your King Is Coming

Palms, "Hosanna!" and a young donkey — the King God sent, not the king they wanted

JOHN 12:13

took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and began to shout, "Hosanna! BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD, even the King of Israel."

DAVID GUZIK

A political savior wanted; the ass speaks of peace.

R.C. SPROUL

Hosanna = save now; the King God appointed, not the one they conjured.

C.H. SPURGEON

Poverty enthroned on Poverty's own beast; the gospel makes a stir.

MATTHEW HENRY

Nothing is got by opposing Christ.

ὡσαννά

HŌSANNA · "HOSANNA"

From the Hebrew hôshîʿāh nāʾ of Psalm 118:25 — yasha', "save," and na', "please, now": "Save us, we pray!"

Unless a Grain of Wheat Dies

Greeks ask to see Jesus — and He answers with a seed, a death and a harvest

JOHN 12:23

And Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

DAVID GUZIK

Glory in what the world sees as humiliation; saved to service.

R.C. SPROUL

The wheat that dies must bear fruit; the hour of suffering is the hour of glory.

C.H. SPURGEON

Christ cannot bear to be alone; death precedes growth.

MATTHEW HENRY

Those who would know Christ must seek Him.

κόκκος τοῦ σίτου

KOKKOS TOU SITOU · "A GRAIN OF WHEAT"

Kokkos is a single grain or kernel — the same word as the "mustard seed" of the parables (Matthew 13:31) and Paul's bare seed in 1 Corinthians 15:37.

The grain of wheat

THE GRAIN OF WHEAT · JOHN 12:24–26, 32



THE SON vv24, 32–33	He dies (“the kind of death by which He was to die,” v33) and is “lifted up from the earth” — and so He **“will draw all men to Myself” (v32): Jew and Greek alike.**
THE SERVANT vv25–26	“He who loves his life loses it” — the grain kept in the hand. “He who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal.” **Serve → follow → “where I am, there My servant will be”** **→ “the Father will honor him.”**

Read the top row as the parable, then the two rows below as its two applications: the Son who dies and draws, and the servant who loses his life to keep it.

If I Am Lifted Up

A troubled soul, a voice from heaven, the ruler of this world cast out — and a warning to walk in the Light

JOHN 12:35

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; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes.

DAVID GUZIK

He received the hour yet was troubled; the cross is the magnet.

R.C. SPROUL

Horror grabs His soul; some hear only thunder.

C.H. SPURGEON

Never so lifted up as when cast down; preach Christ crucified.

MATTHEW HENRY

Holy mourning and joy together; a stumbling-stone or a loadstone.

τετάρακται

TETARAKTAI · "HAS BECOME TROUBLED"

From tarassō, to stir up, agitate — the word for water roiled at the pool (5:7).

They Could Not Believe

Isaiah's two prophecies, secret believers who loved men's approval — and the Light's last public cry

JOHN 12:37

But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him.

DAVID GUZIK

Hardening without coercion; no smoking flax quenched; a tender last word.

R.C. SPROUL

God stops the ears that will not hear; Isaiah saw Christ on the throne.

C.H. SPURGEON

In bewildering darkness, wait for the turn in the stream.

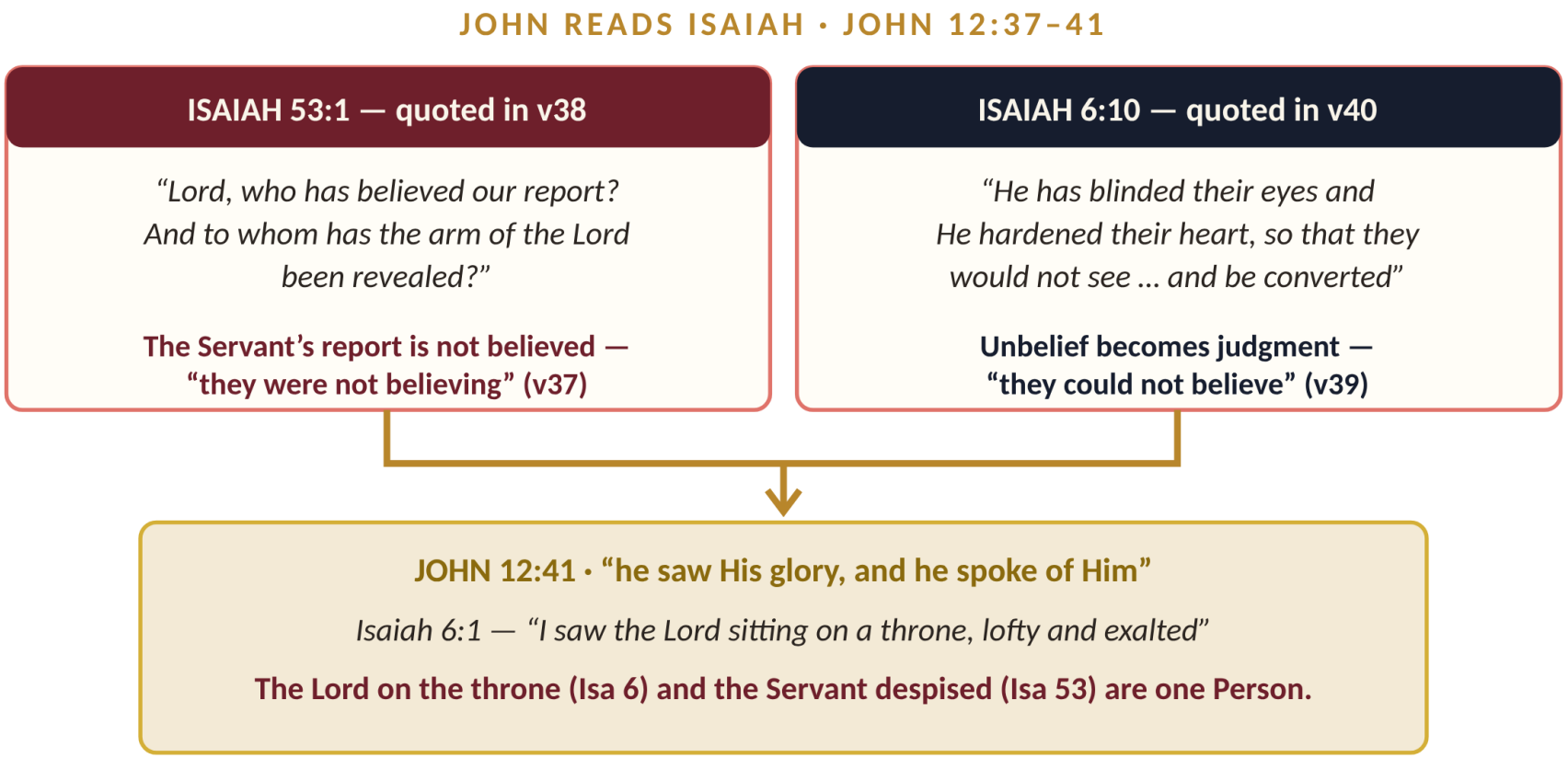
MATTHEW HENRY

Opportunity is short; more good people than we think.

τετύφλωκεν … ἐπώρωσεν
TETYPHLŌKEN … EPŌRŌSEN · "HE HAS BLINDED … HE HARDENED"

Typhloō, to make blind, appears only three times (here; 2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 2:11).

Isaiah saw His glory



John joins two passages of Isaiah to explain unbelief — and then says both were about the One whose glory Isaiah saw on the throne.

What to carry from this chapter

1

Love is extravagant; calculation is Judas's language.

Mary poured out about a year's wages; Judas priced it.

2

Pure nard, nothing cut into it.

Pistikos means genuine, unadulterated.

3

Hosanna means "Save us now."

The crowd meant Rome. Sproul: they wanted a king "who will drive the Romans out"; God sent the King on a donkey.

4

The palms and the donkey argue with each other.

Palms said national victory; the donkey said Zechariah 9:9 — humble, bringing salvation.

More to carry

5

“The hour has come.”

All through John the hour has “not yet come” (2:4; 7:30; 8:20).

6

A seed kept is a seed lost.

“It remains alone” is the fate of the self-protected life.

7

Troubled and obedient at once.

Tetaraktai (v. 27) — John’s Gethsemane.

8

Lifted up means both cross and throne.

Hypsoō in John is always the crucifixion — and always exaltation.

Talk it through

1. What would it look like for me to “waste” something costly on Jesus this week — time, money, pride — without calculating the return?

2. Like the crowd, what “private agenda” have I brought to Jesus — and how have I been disappointed when He came on a donkey instead of a warhorse?

3. What part of my life am I keeping “in the hand” so it stays safe — and alone? What would it mean to let it fall into the ground?

4. Jesus said, “Now My soul has become troubled,” and still obeyed. Where is my soul troubled right now, and what would “Father, glorify Your name” sound like in that place?

5. Whose approval am I most afraid to lose if I openly confess Christ — at work, at home, on the yard, with old friends?

CLOSING

John 12 opens with perfume and closes with a warning. In between, a crowd hails a King they don't understand, Greeks ask to see Him, and Jesus tells them where to look: a grain of wheat falling into the ground, a Man lifted up on a cross. The hour has come. The Light is still among us for a little while — believe in the Light.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

Full Deep Dive, O·I·A study and reflection journal: see the John study page.