

“Hard to Believe”

John 12:37-50

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John introduced His Gospel by telling his readers that Jesus came to His own (the Jews), but “His own did not receive Him” (1:11). Now in John 12:37-50 he tells why that is prophetically true. Israel’s initial unbelief was not a surprise to God but rather part of His overall plan.

1. Isaiah Predicted Unbelief (37-41)

“But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him; in order that the Word of Isaiah the prophet should be fulfilled, which he spoke: ^A‘LORD, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?...^BHe has blinded their eyes and He hardened their heart’ ”

^AIsaiah 53:1 [700 BC]

^BIsaiah 6:10

2. The Pharisees Practiced Unbelief (42-43)

“Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the approval of men rather than the approval of God”

3. Jesus Permitted Unbelief (44-47)

“And if anyone hears My sayings, and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world”

4. Jesus Will Punish Unbelief (48-50)

“He who rejects Me, and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the Word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day”