

## His Hour

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Several times in the Gospel of John we read of an "hour," and almost all of them mentioned by our Lord Jesus Christ. A meditation on some of these will be profitable to our souls.

The wedding feast at Cana of Galilee (John 2: 1-11) is the first occasion on which our Lord used this term. Mary, His mother, had approached Him telling Him, "They have no wine." Surely this was the time for Him to manifest that He was Master of the situation! But He would not be precipitated into any such course. His reply was, "Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come." That "hour" is yet to strike when the Lord will produce the wine of joy in His coming kingdom. That will be the time of marital festivity when the erstwhile unfaithful and divorced Israel will be taken to himself in new covenant blessing to share, on earth, the joy of His dominion (Hosea 2: 14-23).

In John 5: 25, He takes account of the awful supineness all around Him. In the consciousness of His deity and power, and in co-equality with the Father, He announces that "the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live." In the course of this blessed "hour" our lot has fallen. We have heard His life-giving voice speaking in His word to our dead souls of the Father's love, and He has brought us "from death unto life" (v. 24). Then, too, "the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice. And shall come forth." Just as dead souls in this present hour of quickening have experienced the power of His voice in making them live to God, so then dead bodies will be raised. "They that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation (judgment)." Between the resurrections of these two classes a thousand years will intervene (Rev. 20: 4-15).

The hour of His manifestation in power and great glory, ushering in His kingdom reign, shall bring the first resurrection to completion. This commenced with His own resurrection as "the first fruits of them that slept" (1 Corinthians 15: 20). At His coming for His saints all that are asleep through Jesus will be raised. Then, just preceding His glorious appearing all the post-rapture saints who will be martyred for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus (Rev. 6), and those, too, who refuse to worship the beast and his image, or to receive his mark on their foreheads or hands (Rev. 13), will also be raised (Rev. 20: 4-6). All of these — Old Testament saints; the Assembly; post-rapture; all pre-millennial — will experience the blessedness of that resurrection "hour."

When His reign of a thousand years has run its glorious course the wicked dead, small and great shall hear His resurrection voice summoning them in its own irresistible power from the grave to the great white throne. There they shall meet their final judgment and be consigned to the lake of fire. "This is the second death," whilst of all those who have their part in the first resurrection it is written, "on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (Rev. 20: 6).

In John 12: 23, the "hour" of His public and universal glory as Son of Man is presaged by the expressed desire of the Greeks, "Sir, we would see Jesus." This betokens the day when the once humbled One should be glorified, but ere that hour of brightest glory could be ushered in, another "hour" of unparalleled suffering which Calvary entailed for Him must be endured. In anticipation of that hour He voiced His soul trouble, "Father, save Me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour, Father, glorify Thy Name" (vv. 27, 28). He has passed through that "hour," hence the Father has been glorified; the kingdom of the Son of Man will be brought in; life can be communicated to dead souls **now**, and soon the hour of resurrection will strike. That hour of His suffering was the hour

of all hours. Eternity looked forward to it as eternity will look back to it. The cross is assuredly the centre of eternity. With hearts affected, quickened by His power and won by the love which took Him through it all, we gladly avail ourselves of the privilege of that other "hour" of John 4: 23, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him." Outside of worldly religion and altogether apart from its ceremonial and sensuous order, in its darkness through its ignorance of God, we gladly gather to the Name of the Lord, in the power of the Holy Spirit; and in the company of the Son of the Father's love, enter the presence of the Father to worship and adore.

The glories of His work we bring  
Thee glorified we see;  
His deep perfections gladly sing,  
And tell them forth to Thee.