

“Hour at Hand” (Jn. 12:20-36)

1. Hour Signaled (20-22)
  - a. V. 20 is the ironic confirmation of the fear of their exaggeration.
  - b. And the seeking of the Greeks triggers Jesus’ discourse of dying and the hour of His glorification – which are not indistinguishable.
  - c. The Jews are ready to crucify Him and yet the Greeks are coming to see Him.
2. Hour of Jesus’ Glory (23)
  - a. “Son of Man” and “glorified” signal Daniel’s prophecy’s fulfillment (Dan. 7:13-14). Furthermore, Jesus’ response to the Greeks seeking after Him also begins the fulfillment of Dan. 7:14. Finally, that verse also mentions the dimension of His reign being forever – of which they question Jesus here in Jn. 12:34 when they hear of His self-proclaimed imminent death. He doesn’t labor to spell it out, partly because He just did with the seed/death analogy.
  - b. Glory of the Cross: Isa. 52:13ff.
  - c. J. C. Ryle wrote: “This sentence was primarily meant to teach the wondering Greeks the true nature of Messiah’s kingdom.... Our Lord would have them know that He came to carry a cross, and not to wear a crown. He came not to live a life of honour, ease, and magnificence, but to die a shameful and dishonoured death. The kingdom He came to set up was to begin with a crucifixion, and not with a coronation. Its glory was to take its rise not from victories won by the sword, and from accumulated treasures of gold and silver, but from the death of its King.”<sup>8</sup>
  - d. Jesus associates His glory with a parable about a dying seed which will in turn yield much fruit. →
3. Hour of Death (24-27, 32-33)
  - a. Dying to Live: Jesus is not the only One to die but those who follow Him must not love their lives
  - b. Following Jesus honors the Father and such will result in the Father honoring the one not clinging to life but to truth. Rev. 12:11.
4. Hour of Dread (27)
  - a. But Jesus would face more than a physical death. He faced the horrifying terror of God’s righteous wrath on the totality of man’s hideous, atrocious, heinous sins. Ryle offered another helpful comment: “Terribly black must that guilt be for which nothing but the blood of the Son of God could make satisfaction. Heavy must that weight of human sin be which made Jesus groan and sweat drops of blood in agony at Gethsemane and cry at Golgotha, ‘My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?’” (Matt. 27:46).”<sup>4</sup>
  - b. What shall I say? Yes, I would love to avoid such a cup, but it is for this reason I have come.
  - c. Jesus would honor the Father as always and in the most profound way by giving His life to the cruelest form of execution and the hell of sin’s punishment.
  - d. Paradox: in the obscene, primitive, grotesque, horrifying, and excruciating atonement – Jesus glorified God →
5. Hour of Father’s Glory (28-30)
  - a. As previously noted, when we too endure the erroneous, shameful, malicious accusations and actions of our enemies we glorify God.

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<sup>8</sup> J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: John*, 3 vols. (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1999), 2:376.

<sup>4</sup> J. C. Ryle, *Holiness* (Durham, UK: Evangelical Press, 1979), 6.

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- b. When we do not stoop to their ploys, curses, deceptions, and schemes, we honor the Father.
  - c. God honored His name through Jesus’ work and He honors His name through ours. Mat. 5:10-16.
6. Hour of Judgment (31)
- a. Hour of the eschaton had arrived. We are in the last days. The Writings and Prophets foretold of the Messianic age.
  - b. “Now” times 2 emphasizes that Jesus is the King, Messiah, Servant who ushers in the new age. Jesus said “Now” is the judgment, the casting out of the evil one, His exaltation, and the drawing of all nations. “Now,” the hour began the eschaton two thousand years ago. But although Jesus came to pay the penalty for sins, does not mean that those who refuse to receive that gift will not get their just recompense. The judgment for those not in Christ awaits at the end of the eschaton when the Kingdom, which was inaugurated at the “now,” is consummated at His second appearing (Heb. 9:28).
7. Hour of Victory (31)
- a. Ruler of this world cast out: Rev. 20:2-3 speaks of Satan being bound so as not to deceive the nations till the end of the thousand years. One’s understanding of the “now” casting out the ruler of this world and nature of Satan’s binding is largely indicative of one’s millennial view.
  - b. Donald Grey Barnhouse noted: “When a person becomes a Christian, he is delivered from Satan’s grasp, and the chains of sin which had shackled him are instantly broken.”<sup>5</sup> The cross secured not only the judgment of the world that rejected Jesus, but also the overthrow of his enemy, the devil.<sup>1</sup>
  - c. Carson well explained: “In one sense Satan was defeated by the outbreking power of the kingdom of God even within the ministry of Jesus (Lk. 10:18). But the fundamental smashing of his reign of tyranny takes place in the death/exaltation of Jesus. This is a brief statement analogous to the apocalyptic scene in Revelation: the followers of the Lamb overcome the dragon ‘by [*i.e.* “on account of”] the blood of the Lamb’ (Rev. 12:11). When Jesus was glorified, ‘lifted up’ to heaven by means of the cross, enthroned, then too was Satan dethroned. What residual power the prince of this world enjoys is further curtailed by the Holy Spirit, the Counsellor (16:11).”<sup>2</sup>
8. Hour of Attraction (32-34)
- a. Exaltation in Obedience (Humility). As seen in the cryptic Suffering Servant passage of Isa. 52:13-53:12, the dual meaning for lifted up encompasses both humiliation and exaltation. See Phil. 2:8-9; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 1:3; Lu. 9:51.
  - b. All Peoples (32) The lifting up and drawing all peoples are eschatological promises which Jesus fulfilled. Zech. 12:10 looked forward to this lifting up and its results.
  - c. Via the Cross (33) “As the Holy Spirit presses the cross of Christ upon our hearts, the prophecy of old is fulfilled: ‘I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom

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<sup>5</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Illustrating the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 1973), 160.

<sup>1</sup> Phillips, R. D. (2014). *John*. (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Doriani, Eds.) (1st ed., Vol. 2, p. 105). Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing.

<sup>2</sup> Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 443). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

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they have pierced, they shall mourn for him’ (Zech. 12:10).”<sup>3</sup> Also cf. 1 Cor. 1:22-24 where Paul articulated how God uses the ‘foolishness’ of the Cross to confound the wise but to call both Jews and Gentiles to Himself.

- d. Revealing His person (34) “What passage they have in mind is uncertain. Isaiah 9:7 promises that the kingdom of the expected Prince of the house of David will be established for ever; in Ezekiel 37:25 God promises that ‘David my servant’ will be Israel’s prince forever. Some scholars think of Psalm 72:17, where the name of the king, the royal son, the Messiah, will endure forever. Others think of Psalm 89:35–37, where the psalmist declares that David’s seed, his line, will remain forever.<sup>11</sup> ¶What is clear is that the Palestinian Judaism of the time expected the Messiah to be triumphant; most expected him to be eternal. Jewish sources amply attest this (e.g. *1 Enoch* 49:1; 62:14; *Psalms of Solomon* 17:4). A slightly later Judaism speculated that the Messiah would be defeated and destroyed before the consummation (e.g. *4 Ezra* 7:28–29), but that perspective had not invaded the thinking of Jesus’ interlocutors. And so they ask the question, *Who is this ‘Son of Man’?* By this they do not seek simple identification, but demand to know what kind of Son of Man/Messiah Jesus has in mind, of whom it can be said that he will die.”<sup>4</sup>
- e. In other words, if you are the one promised to reign forever, how then could you be crucified?

9. Hour of Darkness (35-36)

- a. While the Light of the world is still with them they must “now” trust Him so that when the light is removed, they will not be overtaken (or mastered (Carson)) by the darkness. He would immediately remove Himself from public and His next self-discloser would be His execution and exaltation which would be accompanied by signs not unlike the voice of thunder which was just heard. At Jesus death (just after hours of darkness), there was an earthquake, raised saints, torn veil, and terrifying testimony from even the centurion attesting that Jesus is indeed the Son of God and they beat their breasts in remorse.
- b. They glorified God in this.
- c. V. 27-30 the voice signaled imminent judgment just before Jesus left the crowds; and the earthquake etc. signaled the affirmation approval, and access Jesus’ sacrifice secured.

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<sup>3</sup> Phillips, R. D. (2014). *John*. (R. D. Phillips, P. G. Ryken, & D. M. Doriani, Eds.) (1st ed., Vol. 2, p. 106). Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing.

<sup>11</sup> W. C. van Unnik, *NovT* 3, 1959, pp. 174–179. Several authors appeal to Targums (ancient Aramaic paraphrases): e.g. B. McNeil, *NovT* 19, 1977, pp. 22–33; B. Chilton, *NovT* 22, 1980, pp. 176–178. G. Bampfylde (*JSNT* 17, 1983, pp. 87–89) appeals to Ps. 61:6–7. Cf. also Moloney, p. 182.

<sup>4</sup> Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (pp. 445–446). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.