

The Gospel of John

The Hour Has Come

John 18:1-4

INTRODUCTION:

We come now to the eighteenth chapter of the gospel of John. Despite the fact that Jesus was facing arrest, persecution, and execution on the cross, His concern was on the eleven disciples and everyone who would believe throughout the end of time when He would come back for His own. The hour has arrived. Now He must finish the task that had been set before Him by His Father in order to bring the death blow to Satan and bring salvation to mankind.

Stand and Read Scripture

John 18:1-4 (NASB)

18 When Jesus had spoken these words, He went away with His disciples across the ravine of the Kidron, where there was a garden which He entered with His disciples. ² Now Judas, who was betraying Him, also knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with His disciples. ³ So Judas, having obtained the *Roman* cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, *came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. ⁴ Jesus therefore, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, came out *into the open* and *said to them, "Whom are you seeking?"

Prayer

In John 12:23 Jesus foretold that "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."

In John 13:1 John tells us that Jesus knew that His hour had come and that He would depart out of this world to be with the Father as He sat with His disciples in the upper room.

In John 17:1 Jesus began His priestly prayer by saying "Father, the hour has come , glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You".

What hour is this?

This is the hour when Jesus completes His work. This is the hour that begins with the cross, and then the resurrection, and then forty days of instruction, and then the ascension, and then the exaltation, and then the launching of His ministry of intercession. All of that is going to happen in the next six weeks. This is the time that the prophets of old and the angels had longed for when the Messiah would arrive to bring salvation to mankind.

We now come to the dark, the gloomy, the tragic part of His life. It appears to everyone around as if it were the blackest and darkest of all times. This is as it rightly should be. We look at this and we see the horror of these events: agony, sweating blood, anguish, loneliness, betrayal, arrest, injustice, torture, execution by being nailed to a cross. But in the midst of that extreme darkness the glory of Christ will be put on full display.

Up to this point, He has been verbally criticized but He has never been touched physically. There have been men seeking to kill Him, but it never happened because His hour had not yet arrived. This, however, **is** His hour. And by God's appointment, He will die at this Passover as God's true Passover Lamb.

Here in these events we see the glory of the Son of God more clearly than anywhere else. His wondrous perfections will shine through all the darkness, ugliness, hatred, and through all of His physical pain and suffering. He is able to do that because he is the Messiah, the Son of God.

John wants us to be certain of one thing: that **Jesus is not a victim of His circumstances**. Despite the fact that men **thought** they were in control of the situation, they were actually only playing in the predetermined plan of God. He has always exhibited total control over all people: both individuals and groups of people. He has total control over all events and circumstances. And that control continues in His arrest, in His mistreatment, in His unjust trial, in His execution, in His burial, in His resurrection, and all the way to His exaltation. The hour had come. In one sense, it is the worst hour; it is Satan's hour. But in reality, it is the best hour; it is God's hour.

We remember the purpose for John's writing.

John 20:31 (NASB)

³¹ but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that by believing you may have life in His name.

His purpose for writing is that you would believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Anointed One, God's Son incarnate, and that by believing you might have life. True to His goal, you will find the glory of Christ on majestic display through all the events beginning here in chapter 18.

John wants us to see the glory of Christ in His betrayal and arrest. This is as ugly of a scene as we could expect. Judas, the traitor of all traitors, is on display. It is in the middle of the night, everything is dark, and the darkest of it all is the hearts of the people surrounding Jesus and the disciples. But in the midst of this darkness, John shows us our Lord's glory.

BODY:

I. JESUS IS WAITING.

John 18:1 (NASB)

18 When Jesus had spoken these words, He went away with His disciples across the ravine of the Kidron, where there was a garden which He entered with His disciples.

Back in verse 1 it says, "**He went away**". Here it says, "**He came out into the open**". He is going to a death that is not just a physical death, but a death in which He will absorb

all the wrath of God for all the people who have ever believed in Him throughout all of human history. And God will unleash that *massive* amount of wrath in a period of three hours in which He will be forsaken by God.

Watch how it unfolds.

The eleven disciples had been with Him all evening. This is now Friday, in the morning, in the darkness. They had been with Him since Thursday when they celebrated Passover.

They are still with Him. They follow Him out of the upper room earlier in the evening. He teaches them as they walk through Jerusalem in the darkness. They stop with Him and they hear His prayer in John 17 so that they have knowledge of His intercessory ministry for them. Then they head toward this garden on the Mount of Olives, a familiar place. The other gospel writers tell us it was called "**the garden of Gethsemane**". It is on the other side of the brook Kidron.

It was customary for people to have little fences around their gardens, or walls around their gardens, and a gate to keep them private. I would assume that this garden was always made available to Him, because the Lord went there so many times.

Perhaps He and His disciples were given a key by the owner. The eleven knew it well, Jesus knew it well, and Judas knew it well. Jesus then arrived at the garden "**which He entered with His disciples**".

Why did He go to the Garden of Gethsemane?

It would be right to say maybe He went there because it was a place of rest and it was a home. It would be right to say He went there to pray, because He did. It would be right to say He went there to get away from the crowds and get away from the conflict. It would be right to say He went there with His disciples very often, so maybe He went there again because He enjoyed the fellowship of His own. All of that would be true, because He did pray. He did escape the crowds. He did fellowship with His disciples in that garden. But none of those is the reason this time. The reason He went there is because He knew that Judas would lead "**the Roman cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees,**" there "**with lanterns, torches, and weapons**".

John wants us to know that Jesus went there because He knew that Judas would know that He would be there. He is no victim. He went there knowing that He would be betrayed, arrested, and sent to His own execution. He is not trapped. He is not tricked. He is not deceived. He is not fooled. He is not surprised.

The leaders of Israel had tried for some time to capture Jesus. The one time of the year that they chose not to go after Jesus was during the Feast of the Passover because they feared the people. Jesus was popular and they feared that it would caused a riot. But God had other plans.

John 10:17-18 (NASB)

¹⁷ For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it back. ¹⁸ No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it back. This commandment I received from My Father."

So Jesus made it easy for them. He went to the place that Judas knew He would be. Judas informed the authorities that He would be there, and that is why Jesus went there.

I think it is pretty obvious that a coward would have gone anywhere but there. But now the hour had arrived and Jesus was waiting for them.

Matthew 26:4-5 (NASB)

⁴ and they plotted together to arrest Jesus covertly and kill Him. ⁵ But they were saying, "Not during the festival, otherwise a riot might occur among the people."

II. JUDAS IS BETRAYING.

But Jesus tells them that...

Luke 22:53 (NASB)

⁵³ While I was with you daily in the temple, you did not lay hands on Me; but this hour and the power of darkness are yours."

Satan and hell, God and heaven, meet at the same scene with entirely opposite intentions, and God triumphs. On previous occasions, He avoided His enemies and walked away from them. It was not His hour. But now it **was** His hour, and the Good Shepherd is going to lay down His life for His sheep.

Jesus has been moving through the darkness, finally arriving at the Garden of Gethsemane after the time of prayer. Judas, at the same time, has been planning his strategy thoroughly. He left the upper room before the Lord's Table. Satan entered into him and took total control. He is now possessed by Satan. Now Judas is going to accept thirty pieces of silver to betray Jesus.

John 18:2-3 (NASB)

² Now Judas, who was betraying Him, also knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with His disciples. ³ So Judas, having obtained the *Roman* cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, *came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons.

The Romans and the Jewish temple police have been gathered together with the elders and the chief priests, led by Judas. Malchus was there because he was a slave of the high priest, not a soldier. They come armed to the teeth.

Why would they arm themselves like that? It was because they had seen and experienced the **power** of His person. He had healed the sick, made the lame to walk and the blind to see, he had calmed the angry sea, and even raised people from the dead, including Lazarus, from the dead. And, oh, by the way, Malchus was also there so Jesus could do one more miracle. Peter cuts off Malchus' ear right in front of all of them and Jesus touched his ear and healed him.

Such is the idiocy of unbelief. They were aware of the many failed attempts that they had made trying to capture Jesus in the past. They probably thought that Jesus and the disciples were going to run and they would have to hunt them down. So they send an army to take an unarmed Galilean carpenter and teacher. It consisted of the temple

police, the security personnel who were to control large crowds, and a "Roman cohort". This would have been several hundred men.

They were also aware of His popularity. Things could get out of control and they may have to do crowd control.

Judas came to betray Jesus with a kiss. People wonder, "Why didn't he just arrive at the garden and point out Jesus?" His intention was not simply to point out Jesus; his intention was to make Jesus think that he had returned to rejoin the group.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke tell us, he goes up and kisses Jesus on the face. A kiss on the cheek was a common greeting between friends and family. Thus Judas used his intimacy with Jesus and his disciples as a platform for betraying the Son of Man. But his kiss was total hypocrisy. He just wanted Jesus to believe, for a moment, that he is back. Maybe so Jesus would think that He has nothing to fear and they can grab Him.

Of course Jesus knew exactly the purpose for the kiss and he revealed Judas' feigned innocence and unmasked him immediately.

Luke 22:48 (NASB)

⁴⁸ But Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"

III. JESUS IS WILLINGLY SURRENDERING.

But it isn't just Satan's plot to kill Jesus, as we heard Peter say from Acts 2 but it is God's predetermined plan.

Acts 2:23 (NASB)

²³ this *Man*, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death.

Part of that predetermined plan was to take His eleven with Him, which is risky – as we will see. But He took them with Him so that they might know that He was not seized as a helpless victim. But that they could see that He voluntarily gave up His life.

John 10:17-18 (NASB)

¹⁷ For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it back. ¹⁸ No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it back. This commandment I received from My Father."

So here, God and Satan come together on the same person for two very different reasons, and God triumphs. Instead of destroying Christ, as the devil intended, Jesus is exalted above every name. Since Jesus completely fulfilled His Father's will, He willingly surrendered Himself to the Roman soldiers.

John 18:4 (NASB)

⁴ Jesus therefore, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, came out *into the open* and *said to them, "Whom are you seeking?"

Jesus knew everything that was going to happen, and He willingly stepped right into their hands. He had known what He was going to face when His hour came ever it

since He could understand Genesis 3, Genesis 22, Isaiah 53, Zechariah 10-12, and other Old Testament passages. He had known it as the Son of God from all eternity. He was the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world.

He had told His disciples, the rulers of Israel are going to arrest Me. They are going to arrest Me. They are going to whip Me. They are going to spit on Me. And they are going to crucify Me on the cross. He knew exactly every single detail that was going to happen because of His omniscience. So, in essence, He anticipated it all every moment of His life.

I believe the hardest thing that He had to face, though, was not that He knew He was walking toward physical pain with the crown of thorns, the weight of the cross, the whipping, the nails being driven through His flesh, and his time on the cross as His weight pulled against those nails through this hands and feet. I believe the hardest thing that He had to face was walking into the blast furnace of the wrath of God, His Father when He took on our sins.

CONCLUSION:

Christ's ultimate battle (**and subsequently ALL Christians**) is not against fleshly beings but against those who are spiritually wicked and opposed to God; i.e., the Devil and his dominion.

Ephesians 6:12 (NASB)

¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Satan thought he was delivering the final blow that would win the war against Christ. It shows his inferiority to God because God had known the ending since before the beginning of time. Satan certainly would not have placed Jesus on the cross if he had realized the significance of that event. He actually needed Jesus alive because his only chance to win the war was to cause Jesus to sin. Thus He could not have been the perfect lamb of God. However, we know that this was an impossible task from the beginning because, **as God**, Jesus **could not sin** and, **as man**, He **would not sin**. When Jesus died on the cross, He paid the enormous price for our sins that we could not pay and imputed us with His righteousness. This act gave us eternal life so we could face God on judgment day. God will only see Christ's righteousness within us and we will be able to spend eternity with God in heaven in all His glory.

Colossians 2:13-14 (NASB)

¹³ And when you were dead in your wrongdoings and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive (Gave us eternal life) together with Him, having forgiven us all our wrongdoings, ¹⁴ having canceled the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

He is Lord!