

# GRACE GAZETTE

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*Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.*

*Hebrews 12:12-13*

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## THE HOUR

*These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee.*

*John 17:1*

The LORD JESUS CHRIST was a man of fervent prayer. This is a quite normal activity for all who are the sons of GOD, but most specifically for HIM who is the only BEGOTTEN SON of GOD, who had the SPIRIT without measure. (see John 3:34) *"And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God."* (Luke 6:12) This was HIS custom rather than an occasional activity. (see Mat.14:23; Mark 6:46; Luke 9:28) In fact it was because HE was a MAN of prayer, that HIS disciples asked HIM to teach them to pray. *"And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples."* (Luke 11:1)

The LORD then gave them a model prayer which was appropriate for them. Many have taken this model or outline for prayer and turned it into the very "vain repetition" which HE admonished HIS disciples to avoid. HE did not give them this "prayer" so that they might memorize it and repeat it verbatim. Rather HE instructed them of such things that they as sinners should be mindful to remember. Many have called this the "LORD's prayer" and turned it into a religious mantra which is recited in like fashion as the Romanists fumble through their prayer beads or the Buddhists spin their prayer wheels.

Yet this model prayer for sinners (*"forgive us our sins"*) is not the "LORD's prayer". HE had no sin neither was guile found in HIS mouth so HE should hardly need to utter such things. Rather the "LORD's prayer" is found in John 17 and cannot be duplicated by anyone but HIMSELF. HE is both the PETITIONER and the OBJECT of this prayer. The ONE who intercedes and the ONE who hears that intercession. The ONE who gives glory to the FATHER and the ONE who takes it unto HIMSELF as the REDEEMER of those whom the FATHER gave unto HIM.

It is worthy of note that HE *"lifted up HIS eyes to heaven"*. We remember that one whom the LORD said "went down to house justified" (i.e.; publican), who when he began to pray did not so much as lift his eyes to heaven but smote upon his breast. Yet this MAN who was without sin, looked up into HIS FATHER's face as one well pleasing in HIS sight, as ONE approved of GOD, as ONE who always did HIS FATHER's will. *"Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation."* (Psa 24:3-5)

HE is that ONE among men who alone has seen the face of GOD and lived. HE is that ONE who is worthy of all praise and prays according to HIS FATHER's will, saying *"Glorify THY SON"*. HE does perfectly fulfill HIS FATHER's will. This is the exact work which HE told HIS disciples that the HOLY GHOST would perform when HE sent HIM. *"He shall glorify me."* (John 16:14)

HE who formed the Earth out of nothing and made all things; the ONE by whom all things consist, now utters the most momentous of phrases, declaring the fruition and manifestation of the purpose of GOD in the creation of this world. All things which occurred in this world up to this point have brought forth this moment and HE says, "*FATHER, the hour is come.*"

Many hours, months, and seasons had already passed through history, as the water of a river passes under a bridge on its way to the sea. Yet now the most significant "hour" in the history of the world was unfolding. In our vernacular, the word "hour" is generally taken to mean "sixty minutes", yet in the scripture it simply has reference to a season or time.

Now we know that every hour, minute, and second of every passing day is ordered and numbered by HIM who rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. Just as surely as HE separates the light from the darkness, creating both according to the good pleasure of HIS will, HE has ordained the passing of time from the moment HE created it, so that not one instant can occur but that it is predestined to bring forth exactly what HE has determined to come to pass. In this sense this "hour" of which the LORD here speaks is no different than any other, yet this exact hour of which HE now speaks is at the center of the purpose for every other hour that has or shall occur.

This is a particular hour. No other hour could be this hour. It is impossible that anything could have hastened this season to which HE has reference nor is it possible that it could in any wise be delayed. Before the foundation of the world, this moment was set in motion whenever the LORD determined to manifest the glory of HIS grace by sending HIS only begotten SON into the world as the REDEEMER of sinners. Though HE was the "LAMB slain from the foundation of the world" yet this redemptive work was determined to be manifested in time here in the earth. Thus HE prayed, "*the hour is come*".

This is an appointed (ordained, predestined) hour. Though HIS mother, Mary, could not have known when this time would come as she held HIM in her arms and HE suckled at her breast, nor even when she puzzled over HIS words, when HE said, "*wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?*" (Luke 2:49) Nor could Joseph have predicted when it would come as he saw the LORD JESUS growing up and learning a carpenter's trade, even though the angel plainly told him, "*HE shall save HIS people from their sins.*" Though no other man knew when or if this hour would come, the LORD knew that every miracle and every step down the dusty roads of Galilee brought HIM nearer to that time, when the sin of HIS people would be manifestly pressed upon HIM here at the Mount of Olives and HE would be well nigh crushed beneath its load. Yet HE shrinks not from that prospect, but rather glories in it as HE says, "*the hour is come, glorify THY SON.*" "*He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied:*" (Isa 53:11) "*Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*" (Heb 12:2)

This is a specific hour created for a specific purpose. When the priests and elders came with soldiers to arrest the LORD JESUS, HE rebuked them even as HE pointed out that both this time and their actions (evil and wicked though they were) were ordained by GOD. "*When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.*" (Luke 22:53) This is reiterated by Peter, on the day of Pentecost, "*Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.*" (Acts 2:23) In the same fashion in which Satan was ordained by GOD to try Job, so too did HE appoint an hour wherein the wickedness of men should be unleashed against HIS anointed ONE. Otherwise this could not have occurred. Zechariah prophesied of this very hour. "*Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd.*" (Zec 13:7)

This is a measured hour. HE does not need to continually endure this hour, "*Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.*" (Heb 9:12) Having finished that which HE came to do HE did sit down at the FATHER's right hand. The hour is accomplished. mam