

His hour had not yet come

Reference: SHM-S09-030-Mw-R00-P2

(Originally spoken on 3 February 2013, edited on 4 February 2013)

Web site: <http://www.ajourneyinlife.org> and <http://www.ajourneyinlife.com>

This message is protected by copyright © 2013 Lim Liong. Permission is given to reproduce part (where the meaning is retained and the part is not quoted out of context) or all, of it, for personal use or for distribution, on condition that **no changes are made** and the message is **distributed free** of charge. Please do so prayerfully and discreetly.

Unless otherwise stated, Scripture quotations are taken from the NEW AMERICAN STANDARD BIBLE®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

The paragraphs above as well as this paragraph must be included when the message is reproduced so that others who reproduce it will be conscious of the conditions stated above.

Let us turn to **John 7: 25-30**

John 7: 25-30

- 25 So some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, "Is this not the man whom they are seeking to kill?"
- 26 "Look, He is speaking publicly, and they are saying nothing to Him. The rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they?"
- 27 "However, we know where this man is from; but whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from."
- 28 Then Jesus cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, "You both know Me and know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know.
- 29 "I know Him, because I am from Him, and He sent Me."
- 30 So they were seeking to seize Him; and no man laid his hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.

Today I want to concentrate on **verse 30** to consider the life of the Lord Jesus as an example for us to ponder over, that we may appreciate Him more deeply and also learn from Him, and live our lives well before God.

Verse 30 tells us that in the context of what the Lord Jesus was saying and teaching, there was a reaction – not a positive reaction – the people were angry; they wanted to seize Him and if possible, to kill Him.

Verse 30 tells us: So they were seeking to seize Him; and no man laid his hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.

This tells us that although the people were angry with the Lord Jesus and although in the physical realm they had power to seize Him and to kill Him, yet, they could not do it. They were seeking to seize Him ... and then we are told, "...and no man laid his hand on Him". Why is it they wanted to seize Him and yet, no man laid his hand on Him?

And this verse tells us the reason: because His hour had not yet come.

What is the meaning of this and what is the relevance to us? This verse is very reassuring for us because it presents to us, it communicates to us the wonderful reality of God in His majesty and sovereignty. God is the ultimate Ruler in the universe. Men may seek to do many things, but they do not have ultimate power. They wanted to seize the Lord Jesus, they wanted to kill Him, but they could not because His hour had not yet come. It was not yet time for Him to die. God would not permit it. So, no matter what they might try to do, they would not be able to do it. The reason: because His hour had not yet come.

This principle is a very meaningful principle for all of us living in this world of uncertainty, of problems, of suffering, of opposition, of many difficulties that we face constantly. If we sufficiently appreciate God in His sovereignty in the right way and we know how to walk with Him, then we can live a very peaceful, restful life. No man can do to us just as they wish if God does not see fit for that to take place.

In the physical realm, we do not have ultimate say in our lives. We may think that we do but we do not. Our body is created by God and God has the right over us. He can stop us if He wants to; He can destroy us if He wants to, and God can intervene in the physical realm in many different ways.

What we have ultimate responsibility and freedom to do is the exercise of our moral choice. As long as we exist, God will not violate that. We will be responsible and we will have the freedom to choose.

But in all other areas, we do not have that freedom

Of course, God can destroy us totally if He wants to, so that we do not exist anymore and we do not have any moral choice. But as long as we are alive, as long as God allows us to live as moral beings, we will always have that moral choice and that is our responsibility.

But in all other areas, God gives us abilities, He gives us opportunities and there are many things that we can do, but they are not absolute. God can stop it; God can prevent that if He wants to. We have seen how Nebuchadnezzar was proud. He thought that he was so powerful. God could just straightaway discipline him, so that he had no power and he lost all his grandeur.

God in His sovereignty undertook in the life of the Lord Jesus, so that He would not die before the time and in the right setting. It would take place when His hour had come.

If we live our lives well as God desires of us, we can also have that kind of confidence that whatever may happen to us, we can live a life that is truly meaningful. God will undertake.

John 8: 20

These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come.

Again, we see this phrase: because His hour had not yet come, and again, it is a context where the people were angry with Him; they wanted to seize Him, but no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come.

So God in His sovereignty would ensure that no one would kill the Lord Jesus before the time.

Why is it so? Does it mean that God will always work in this way?

The answer is obviously, "No". Although God is almighty, He is sovereign, He is all powerful... there are many things that He will not undertake. There are conditions to this way of life.

The Lord Jesus lived His life such that it was appropriate, it was good, it was meaningful, for God to undertake in this way. The way that God undertook in His life was related to the way the Lord Jesus lived His life: He did what He did when it was the right hour, when it was the right time, when His hour had come to do so.

John 2: 4

And Jesus *said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come."

Here, in this context, Mary the mother of the Lord Jesus told Him at the marriage in Cana of Galilee: "They have run out of wine." She was looking to Him to solve the problem and He said, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come."

Here, it tells us that the Lord Jesus would not simply respond to situations as may seem convenient or what people may expect Him to do, but He was very conscious that He must live His life right before God. He must do it at the right hour, in the right way, in accordance with God's will. This was so central in His life.

"My hour has not yet come." In this instance, the time was not yet for Him to perform that miracle and He would not do so until the right time. So because He lived that way, He would wait until the right hour to do the right thing; and so, God would undertake to protect Him, keep Him until the hour for Him to go. Before that, it would not be so.

Likewise in **John 7** (we have seen these verses in earlier messages), in **verse 6**, we are told:

So Jesus *said to them, "My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune..."

And in **verse 8**, He said to them:

"Go up to the feast yourselves; I do not go up to this feast because My time has not yet fully come."

In this instance, His brothers, who did not believe in Him, urged Him to go to Judea: If He were a prophet of God, He should declare these things openly in the context of the Feast of Booths. But we are told that the Lord Jesus chose not to go to Judea at that time because the Jews were seeking to kill Him. So, it might seem that He was afraid to die. But that was not so. It was because it was not the right time.

"My time is not yet here". But then later, we are told He went to Judea. When the time came when it was appropriate, He went to Judea. He was not afraid to be killed and in fact, when He went to Judea, the people sought to kill Him. But they could not because His hour had not yet come.

This is a very interesting situation. His hour had come for Him to go to Judea, but His hour had not yet come for Him to be killed.

If we live our lives in fellowship with God, if we are conscious of Him and His will, if our heart truly belongs to Him, then we can have a meaningful confidence that God will so undertake that no matter what happens in this world, God in His sovereignty will see us through each situation, so that it will be good, it will be meaningful. That is why the apostle Paul tells us that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God.

If we truly love God, God will actively be at work to undertake in the situations to bring about situations that will help us in our growth, our development and also in our contribution to serve Him, to do His will. The question is: Do we truly love Him?

And there are different degrees in which God undertakes in people's lives. It does not mean that if you do not love God with a pure heart totally, God will not undertake at all. God being gracious, He still does undertake in our lives in the midst of our failures and faltering, but the more we are faithful to Him, the more we love Him, the more confidence we can properly have that God will sovereignly undertake as we go through life, and it will be meaningful. There will be an ultimate eternal meaning and value in our lives.

But one very important thing for us to ponder over in this situation is that we are told: His hour had not yet come. But what was that hour?

"His hour had not yet come" referred to the cross. The hour had not yet come for Him to die on the cross. That means when the hour came, when the time came, God would sovereignly undertake for the Lord Jesus to die on the cross properly, in the right way, in a meaningful way to fulfill His mission, to accomplish what God desired, to really help mankind, to save us. But it was the most painful situation for God and for the Lord Jesus Christ.

So when we say that God will sovereignly undertake, we must not think that when God sovereignly undertakes, it always means an easy life: no pain, no suffering; just pleasantness, enjoyment. It is not that kind. It concentrates on meaning. God will undertake so that it will be the most meaningful in that situation if we truly love Him and if we live our lives according to the right time, the right hour.

The right time, the right hour, is not just a reference to waiting for the right time to do something. It represents a life that is truly offered up to God, where we just want to do His will, we are prepared to go through whatever He sees fit, we trust Him to lead us and guide us, we are sensitive to Him, we seek Him. So it means that we must be deeply rooted in the word of God, what God has said; we understand His ways, we love what He has to say to us, and we are prepared to live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

So if we want to live life meaningfully with the confidence in God's sovereignty undertaking in whatever we go through, then we need to work hard to seek Him, to learn to give of ourselves to Him, to be conscious of what is meaningful to Him.

If you are not very bothered about what is in God's heart, why should God be so bothered about your life? It does not bring much meaning to Him. What good would that be? Yes, it is true that in the initial phase, we may not respond well and God is patient, He is kind, He seeks us to help us. But if we persist in wanting to go our own way, if we are not prepared to repent, to listen to Him, to respond to Him, then why would God undertake in our lives, why would He specially take care of us? It would no longer be meaningful for Him to do that.

So it is important for us not to be presumptuous as we live our lives, thinking that because we are children of God, God will surely undertake in this situation and that situation. He may not.

Satan knew that and that is why when he tempted the Lord Jesus, he wanted to draw Him to do things which He could do, but they were not the will of God. He told Him: "If You are the Son of God, command these stones that they become bread." He wanted Him to exercise that power that He had, to command the stones to become bread.

But the Lord Jesus would not do that. He would do it only if it was what God desired of Him at that point of time. And so He said, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." Yes, bread sustains our physical life, but more importantly, we must have spiritual bread; we must listen to what God has to say; we live by what God has said.

Likewise, Satan asked Him to jump down from the pinnacle – God would send His angels to protect Him so that He would not be hurt. And this might seem to be something spectacular – spiritual – to do that would prove that He was the Son of God: special protection, God's sovereignty and working.

But the Lord Jesus said: "You shall not tempt the Lord your God. You shall not put the Lord your God to the test." He would not do a thing to prove something, to impress people. He would only do what would be appropriate, pleasing to God and at the right time, in the right place, in the right way.

So this speaks to us of a life of oneness with God, a life of fellowship with Him, a life of submission to God and His will, a life of dependence on Him.

Do we recognize that we need God every moment? We need Him every day, every hour, every year; each moment of life; all the time. Are we conscious of that, or do we think that we can do without Him?

And God may allow us to live that way if we think so and it may seem as if we can live our lives as we wish, but it is not true.

God can take away our life anytime; He can cause any difficulty to come our way anytime.

But God is patient, He is kind, He gives us many opportunities to think through our lives: to consider, reconsider, so that we may respond well to Him. Let us learn from the example of the Lord Jesus, to live each moment for God.

The Lord Jesus said that He would not do anything of His own accord, by Himself, without that fellowship with God. He would do all things as God would guide Him, instruct Him and in full oneness of heart: That is the Lord who died on the cross for us, that is the Lord who saved us. He came from heaven not to do His own will, but to do the will of God, to save us, to give us the opportunity to find true meaning in life.

If we love Him, we will want to follow Him, live the way He lived and if we do that, we too can contribute to the lives of others. We can encourage others to respond well to God. But if we ourselves are not prepared to do that, how can we properly and effectively bring the message to others to repent, to believe in the Lord Jesus, to follow Him and to live for Him?

So let us, as we come before the Lord, ask Him to help us to understand these issues more clearly, to appreciate who the Lord Jesus is, so that we may follow Him. He is the perfect Man and He has shown us the perfect way to live on this earth. If we do that, then our eternity with God will be rich and meaningful.