

Remember This Hour

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*This talk was given on April 16 2006 during the Easter Service in BYU 46th ward.
The meeting was held at 1:00pm and included Sacrament,
several musical numbers and a speaker from the Bishopric.*

It is now about 2:00pm Mountain time. It is also about 11:00pm in Jerusalem. It was almost 2000 years ago at this hour when Savior stepped quietly into the Garden of Gethsemane and suffered an exquisite pain for all mankind. Few hours before this, Jesus instituted and administered Sacrament to his Apostles. Luke describes that hour the best: “And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.”¹

This sacred ordinance of Sacrament is being administered every week in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints by the Lord’s authorized servants. By it, the members of the church are cleansed, sanctified by fire, guided into truth, comforted and blessed in many ways as partakers of the fruits of the Atonement.

When we partake of bread and water we are commanded to remember our Savior’s flesh and his blood. The Prophet Joseph Smith, however, adds an interesting insight. In the Joseph Smith Translation, it reads:

“Jesus took bread and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them, and said, Take it, and eat. Behold, this is for you to do in remembrance of my body; for as oft as ye do this ye will remember this hour that I was with you. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them; and they all drank of it. And as oft as ye do this ordinance, ye will remember me in this hour that I was with you and drank with you of this cup.”²



In addition to remember his flesh and blood, during the Sacrament, Lord specifically instructed us to remember that hour or during those hours when he instituted the Sacrament.

Please note the Savior’s emphasis to “remember [him] in [the] hour that [he] was with [the Apostles].” In addition to remember his flesh and blood Lord specifically instructed us to remember the hour, or during those hours when he instituted the Sacrament.

So what exactly happened during those hours? I feel that identifying and discussing about the events that took place during those hours on this Easter morning is appropriate and I believe it would be of profit to any faithful believers who wishes to come closer to the Lord. I will be quoting extensively from the words of Elder Bruce R. McConkie for next few minutes and I have modernized his words with no disrespect intended.³

As the sacred supper of that ultimate Passover came to a close, Jesus was under the strain of deep and profound emotion. After the Savior instituted the Sacrament, he knelt and washed his disciples’ feet; taught them a new commandment, to love one another.

In that same hour, Peter swore that he would never deny his Master. But Jesus, with his incredible foreknowledge, knew exactly what Peter would do several hours later.

Jesus offered advocate prayer; and sang hymns. Then he quietly stepped in to the grove of olive trees, where the Son of God gave his life a ransom for many. We do not know, brothers and sister, to the fullest of what Christ did in Gethsemane. We know, however, that he suffered, both body and spirit, more than it is possible for man to suffer.

In Mark 14:33, it describes that the suffering Jesus began to be “sore amazed.” According to the footnotes, the phrase “sore amazed” is denotes “awestruck” or “astonished” in Greek.⁴ Can you imagine that even the Creator and the Lord of the universe, who oversees the interlacing of the galaxies, stars and worlds “astonished”? Jesus knew cognitively what He must do, but not experientially. He had never personally known the process of atonement before. As a resurrected being, He later described the ordeal: “how exquisite you know not, yea, how hard to bear you know not!”⁵ As near as we can judge, these infinite agonies - the suffering beyond compare - continued for some three or four hours.

Then another hour was at hand. The Son of man was betrayed into the hands of sinners. He was arrested and led away with a rope around his neck, as a common criminal, to be judged by the arch-criminals: Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, Herod and then Pilate again. Being much agitated, Peter followed after Jesus. Then followed his tragic denial: “Peter remembered the words of the [Lord]... and he went out, and wept bitterly.”⁶ How tragic!

Blood ran down his face as a crown of thorns pierced his trembling brow. And above it all he was scourged. Then he carried his own cross until he collapsed from the weight and pain and mounting agony. Finally, on an obscure hill called Calvary, the Roman soldiers laid him upon the cross.

With great mallets they drove spikes of iron through his feet and hands and wrists. Truly he was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. Then the cross was raised that all might see and gape and curse and deride.

After suffering on the cross for 6 hours Jesus said, “It is finished,”⁷ and he voluntarily gave up the ghost. As the peace and comfort of a merciful death freed him from the pains and sorrows, he entered the paradise of God.

After some thirty-eight or forty hours - three days as the Jews measured time - our Blessed Lord came to the Arimathaeon's tomb, where his partially embalmed body had been placed by Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathaea.

Then, in a way incomprehensible to us, he took up that body which had not yet seen corruption and arose in that glorious immortality which made him like his resurrected Father.

He then received all power in heaven and on earth, obtained eternal exaltation, appeared to Mary Magdalene and many others, including his believers in the American Continent, and ascended into heaven, there to sit down on the right hand of God and to reign forever in eternal glory.

His rising from death on the third day crowned the Atonement. Again, in some way incomprehensible to us, the effects of his resurrection pass upon all men so that all shall rise from the grave regardless of how and when we got there.

Brothers and sisters, one of the reasons why the Lord commanded us to remember the hour that he was with the Apostles is so that we can have fuller grasp of what Jesus had to go through for us. As we contemplate those hours during the Sacrament, we can enjoy and appreciate more fully the blessings of the Atonement.

I testify that Jesus performed the agonizing Atonement out of his pure love and desire to immortalize all of his Father's children, with the most valiant to live in his presence. Nobody else could have taken his place.

None others ever will. Unblemished and without fault of any kind, he is the Lamb of God, to whom I bow, and through whom I approach my Father in Heaven.

Once again, it is now about 2:00pm, Mountain Time. It is also about 11:00pm in Jerusalem. But globally, we are taught that we are in the eleventh hour. This is a period of time right before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. This is the last Dispensation. When does the twelfth hour come? We don't know. "That hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."⁸

But we know that, when next hour comes, "there shall be silence in heaven for the space of half an hour; and immediately after shall the curtain of heaven be unfolded... and the face of the Lord shall be unveiled."⁹

Thus we see two parallel hours of extremity: first belong to our Exemplar – the agonizing hour of the Atonement; the other to His disciples – the eleventh hour. For us, brothers and sisters, this eleventh hour is the most crucial hour. It is a proving ground, a probationary state, a time to walk by faith, a time to repent, a time to prepare to meet God. Nevertheless, in pondering and pursuing to live the gospel, understandably, we tremble inwardly at what may be required. Furthermore, while you and I strive daily, we will fall short. Hence the avoidance of discouragement is so vital!

Imagine how Christ endured his hours. When the magnitude of the Atonement began to fell upon him, Jesus cried out "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour."¹⁰



Jesus is already victorious in the greatest battle.

And in the very hour of the Atonement: "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee. Take away this cup from me."¹¹ Even so, he maintained his sublime submissiveness, saying "Nevertheless, not as I will but as thou wilt."¹² While bearing our sins, our infirmities and our sickness, Jesus became the Lord of strait of narrow path. And he finished his preparation unto the children of men.¹³

If we are his true disciples, are we not, brothers and sister, in our own smaller scale, willing to go through our own path of extremity? Thus, as the Lord instructed, our struggles of life "remain to overcome through patience, that [we] may receive a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."¹⁴

Actually, brothers and sister, Jesus is already victorious in the greatest battle anyway. In the very hour when he instituted the Sacrament, he said: "In the world, ye shall have tribulation. But be of good cheer. I have overcome the world."¹⁵

Therefore, the greatest happiness in God's generous plan is finally reserved for those who are willing to endure this eleventh hour, and pay the cost of journeying to his regal realm. "Come, let us anew [this] journey pursue."¹⁶ In the name of Lord of the strait and narrow, even Jesus Christ, amen!

References

1. Luke 22:19-20.
2. JST Mark 14:20-25.
3. "The Purifying Power of Gethsemane," *Ensign*, May 1985, 9.
4. Mark 14:33; see also the footnote.
5. D&C 19:15.
6. Matthew 26:75.
7. John 19:30.
8. Mark 13:32.
9. D&C 88:95.
10. John 12:27.
11. Mark 14:35-36.
12. Matthew 26:39.
13. see D&C 19:19.
14. D&C 63:66.
15. John 16:33.
16. Hymn 1985. "Come, let us anew." no. 217.