

THE FLORAL HEIGHTS INFORMER

www.floralheightschurchofchrist.org

13 January 2008
VOLUME 8; ISSUE 02

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“Why hast thou forsaken Me?”

Every other week I receive a letter from Manuel Ruiz who is in the maximum security prison at Iowa Park. Manuel and I have been studying the Bible together now for about eighteen months. He usually has a Bible question for me to consider for my next letter. I want to share with you his latest question and the answer I gave him because it really caused me to think about the depth of God’s love for all of us. Manuel wrote, “Did Jesus repent of sins at death when he asked God, ‘Why hast thou forsaken me?’” To answer this question let us consider the context. Jesus is being crucified on the cross and it is the ninth hour.

Matthew records, “*Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour*” (27:45). Matthew apparently uses the Jewish method of keeping time (i.e., from evening to evening). The sixth hour would have been 12:00 noon. Recall that Mark had said that it was the 3rd hour that Christ was crucified (i.e., 9:00 AM) (cf. Mk. 15:25). John used the Roman method of keeping time saying that it was the 6th hour (i.e., 6:00 AM) (the time for Pilate’s trial and the scourging lasted 3 hours i.e., Jesus was on the cross by 9:00 AM Friday morning) (see Jn. 19:14). The sixth hour (i.e., 12:00 noon) to the ninth hour (i.e., 3:00 PM) was a three hour period of darkness. Why darkness? God miraculously caused darkness to cover Jerusalem (much like the days of the plagues over Egypt). The word of God does not tell us why this took place yet fear surely settled in to the hearts of all who witnessed the day’s miraculous events. Matthew then records, “*And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthani? That is, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*” (27:46) Though the hour was 3:00 in the afternoon the miraculous darkness continued. Jesus then cried out into the darkness asking God why He had “forsaken” him. To “forsake” (*egkataliipo*) = “to leave behind... to leave in the lurch” (LS 221). In what way did God **forsake** Jesus in this hour of great anguish? David wrote, “*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*” at Psalms 22:1 in relation to his pain and God’s seemingly being far from helping him. Jesus too was experiencing pain and it seemed that Jehovah was far away from helping. Some

Local News:

Welcome to all our visitors:

We pray that you will be edified by our service and that you will ask questions if things are not as you are accustomed to seeing.

Chance McCraw has left to go back to school at West Point Military Academy in New York. The McBrooms have aided Chance is finding a church there to worship with. Let us all keep Chance in our prayers as he begins his new walk as a Christian.

Pam Husak will have more outpatient surgery this coming Thursday. Keep her in your daily prayers.

Herb Sims doing well and is scheduled to have a stress test next month (February 8).

Please remember **Nina Gray** in your prayers as she continues with her health struggles.

Deirdre Wilson asks us to pray for her and a friend because they have lost their jobs. She also request prayers on behalf of her family and a man in Abilene that will be loosing both his legs.

Continue to pray for our shut-ins:

Stella Davidson
696-1030 (Home)

Calvin York
692-0489 (Home).

Bessie Murphy
4600 Taft Blvd, Apt. 538

believe that Jesus was repenting of sins at this time. This; however, could not possibly be because Jesus never one time sinned (see Heb. 4:14-16). Jesus was perfect in every way as deity on this earth. This being the case, what was Jesus saying then?

Suffice it to say that Jesus bore the sins of the world upon the cross (Heb. 9:28). He was dieing for those to whom the stroke was due (Isa. 53:8). The price of man's redemption was the perfect blood of the Son of God. Sin, death, and Satan were being defeated at this moment. Jesus' expression of God "*forsaking*" him (i.e., leaving him behind) had to do with the event itself. The crucifixion of Jesus meant the redemption of mankind. Redemption is the central theme of the entire Bible. The moment of God's saving grace had come to the world. As Jesus hung on the cross God would in no way help him. To help Jesus in the form of aiding him from his persecutors would be to go against all that God had promised in relation to man's redemption. The suffering of being beaten and nailed to a cross and left to die a slow and agonizing death was the PRICE THAT HAD TO BE PAID FOR SIN. The picture is one of a father sitting back doing nothing as his own son is being beat and killed. The father has the ability to wipe out every one of the evil men who are doing this to his son but he does nothing. Why did God do nothing to save Jesus? God did nothing to save Jesus because he wanted to save all of us by His son's death. There was a high price paid for man to have the opportunity to be forgiven of sins. Thanks be to God for his love (see the classic verse at John 3:16).

To ask such a question, on the part of Jesus, was to give another illustration of his humanity. Jesus was human all the way to death. Jesus had earlier asked God the Father, "*O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.*" (Matt. 26:39-42). Though Jesus was deity, and knew of his great mission, he experienced the human emotion of anxiety over the matter. Here was a son who was being shamefully treated by wicked men as his father stood nearby and watched. The son naturally calls out for help from the father. On this occasion; however, the father does not give help but rather turns away. What was being done was necessary for the eternal good of humanity. When Jesus cried out, "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*" he illustrated the distinct person that he represents in the Godhead and he showed the world how great God's love is toward us as His created beings. Consider the words of the apostle John: "*Herein was the love of God manifested in us, that God hath sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another*" (I Jn. 4:9-10).

John C. Robertson

All Things are ready; Come to the Feast

Matthew 22:1-14; Luke 14:15-24

Introduction:

Jesus delivers a parable wherein he compares the kingdom of God with a marriage feast at Matthew 22 and Luke 14. The parable illustrates not only the kind invitation of God to enter into His eternal kingdom but also the awful consequences of rejecting the gracious offer. Let all know that God will not tolerate the one who rejects His invitation to eternity.

I. God has “made ready” the Marriage Feasts:

- A. The kingdom of heaven is compared to a marriage feasts.
- B. Such a feast took preparation. The king said, “*I have made ready... all things are ready...*” (Matt. 22:4).
- C. Those preparatory acts were the development of Christ in history (Eph. 1:3-7; Matt. 1:1ff; Gal. 4:4), the blood that was shed for man’s justification (Rom. 3:23-26), and the divinely inspired revelation that makes manifest God’s will for man (II Tim. 3:16; Jn. 16:8).

II. God has invited all to attend the Marriage Feast:

- A. The king sends out his messengers to “*call them*” (Matt. 22:2; Acts 8:1-4).
- B. The gospel message calls man to attend to its instructions for their eternal well being (II Thess. 2:13-14).
- C. God’s gospel call is intended for all (i.e., good and bad) (Matt. 22:9-10; Gal. 3:27-28).

III. Man’s attitude toward God’s Invitation:

- A. Some “*make light of it*” (i.e., disregard as unimportant) (Matt. 22:5).
- B. Some value the things of this life more than an eternal kingdom (Lk. 14:18-20).
- C. Some are downright violent to the messengers who are inviting them to a wonderful feasts (Matt. 22:6; Jn. 15:18ff).

IV. God’s estimation of Man’s Rejection:

- A. Some are not worthy of eternal salvation because they care more for the things of this world than God (Matt. 22:8; Eccl. 4:7-8 comp. I Tim. 6:9-10).
- B. Many will be subject to the wrath of the king due to their shameful treatment of his messengers (Matt. 22:7; Matt. 13:39-43; Rom. 2:3-9).
- C. Some will lay claims to answering the invitation call; however, their lack of a “wedding garment” will reveal their identity. The Christian is identified by one who has been forgiven of sins and having a mind that purposes to remain sanctified from the world of sinners (Acts 2:38; I Pet. 1:22; 2:11-12; 4:1-6).

Conclusion:

God’s invitation has eternal benefits. Those who take this lightly, disregard it, or shamefully treat His messengers shall face the wrath of God.