

**"Why did God make mean people like the 9/11 people? Why doesn't God prevent things like 9/11?"**

Exodus 7: 1-7

II Corinthians 5: 1-10

6 March, 2011

### **Greetings**

1. Greetings
2. Liz's Nurture Hour – March 16
3. Jubilee Kitchen
4. Invitation to join Ministry Teams Monday night
5. Stillness to prepare

### **Organ Prelude**

### **Invitation to Worship**

**By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return. – Genesis 3: 19**

– Let us worship the ultimate meaning of our lives!

### **Choral Introit**

### **Opening Hymn**

### **Call to Confession**

### **Declaration of Forgiveness**

### **Song of Glory**

### **Children's Talk**

Turn your hand into a fist then try to take cup

### **Song of Praise**

### **Prayer for Knowledge**

### **Old Testament Lesson Exodus 7: 1-7**

**The Lord said to Moses, "See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. You shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go out of his land. But I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and I will multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt. When Pharaoh does not listen to you, I will lay my hand upon Egypt and bring my people the Israelites, company by company, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. The Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch out my hand against Egypt and bring the Israelites out from among them." Moses and Aaron did so; they did just as the Lord commanded them. Moses was eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three when they spoke to Pharaoh.**

### **New Testament Lesson II Corinthians 5: 1-10**

**For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling— if indeed, when we have taken it off we will not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.**

## Reflection

### **"Why did God make mean people like the 9/11 people? Why doesn't God prevent things like 9/11?"**

Good question. Well, I kept the newspaper from September 12, 2001. I looked at it the other day. Do you know what else happened that terrible day, aside from the Al Queda attacks?

Typhoon Danas strikes Japan. Landslides. Floods. 5 deaths.  
 Israeli truce talks postponed, tanks encircle a town in the West Bank  
 Rape trial of a US Airman in Okinawa  
 Mother of murder victim collapses in court in Alburqueque  
 Flame guts house in Briar Creek  
 Trial in Stroudsburg of a woman who persuaded a man to kill her rival  
 Child dies at the York Fair from intestinal injuries after a roller coaster brake stopping too quickly  
 Newly born infant drowns in toilet in Beaver, Pennsylvania.

Is the death of a this infant any worse than 9/11? Or this child enjoying a roller coaster one minute, killed the next?

Tragedies. Calamities.

Why do people do mean things that hurt other people? Is it because of bad people? No. It is because of people. And people do bad things.

In the case of the 9/11 attacks, the terrorists from 9/11 wouldn't think of themselves as mean. They didn't think of themselves as doing evil. They thought of themselves as doing good. They had reasons for what they did. They had every justification. In their eyes.

We may and should disagree, but we must first understand that from their perspective they were doing right. In their eyes. There's the rub.

There's the problem. As Yogi Bera said: "The future ain't what it use to be."

Did God intentionally harden these terrorist's hearts as the story about Moses and the Pharoah implies God did to Pharoah. I simply take this phrase to be how a puzzled author explains how it was Pharoah's nature to be stubborn, refuse to repent, and why he refused to listen to sense.

But, come on now, really now, what options did Pharoah have? It wasn't as if he was going to cash in his pride and concede to these upstart peasants. Oh, yeah sure, lets apologize and let you go. Pharoah just might not last much longer as Pharoah if he did that. You think Khadafi is going to admit he's in the wrong?

Pharoah himself was trapped. What choices did he have? In many ways, he too was a victim.

Think of the mean people you've met. Think of when you've been mean. What happened to these mean people to make them choose to do mean things?

I dare suggest it isn't that people do mean things because they like to be purposely mean. Evil is done because they think it a good.

Our nature is prone to taking everyting good and lovely and twisting it around to serve our selfish ends.

God wants to change our natures to the way they are meant to be. As God defines the Good. That is how the sovereign Lord exerices divine sovereignty. Inside out. It is in the lack of safety our God is known more clearly.

Do we really want God to be some puppet master? Us the marionttes? For if God can prevent such evil then God also is the God who causes such evil. If God is the God who can stop this from

happening, God is the God who can choose to allow such evil to happen.

I absolutely refuse to worship such a God. Such a God is a tyrant, a bully.

Where was God on 9/11?

Present in the responders who ran into the burning buildings  
 Present in those who let others go down to stairs to safety first  
 Present in the those who refused to hate  
 Present in those who refused to howl with the mob  
 Present in those who confess violence only begets violence,  
 meanness begets meanness  
 Present in those who embrace them that mourned  
 Present in those who want to be better

### Prayers of Dedication/People

- 1) **Your Thumb is nearest to you** -- So begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you.
- 2) **The next finger is the Pointing Finger** -- The pointing finger reminds us of those who instruct so pray for those who teach, instruct and heal.
- 3) **The next finger is the Tallest Finger** -- Our tallest finger reminds us of those who are in charge. Pray for the president, leaders in business and industry.
- 4) **The fourth finger is our Ring Finger** -- The ring finger is our weakest finger, as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain.
- 5) **And lastly comes our Little Finger** -- The smallest finger of all. Which is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, "The least shall be the greatest among you." Your Pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself.

◆For we do not live by bread alone...

### Offertory

### Doxology

## The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

1. elders process during singing of Hymn of Dedication
2. elders stand at table, elder 5 closest to choir, then 4, 3 (in middle), 2, and 1 (closest to Fellowship door)
3. elders remove linen (elders 1 and 5) and hand linen to Andrews
4. elders 2 and 4 hand cup and loaf to Andrews
5. elders retreat and sit in front pews
6. Hymn of Dedication ends

### Words of Invitation

**When you hear of wars and insurrections, do not be terrified; for these things must take place first, but the end will not follow immediately.” Then he said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be great earthquakes, and in various places famines and plagues; and there will be dreadful portents and great signs from heaven. “But before all this occurs, they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. This will give you an opportunity to testify. -- Luke 21**

### Prayers of Thanksgiving

God our Father: we than you for this table, for us to join in a a life of suffering because we join a life of love, and by this table we testify to what kind of world we want, when all are fulfilled beyond all measure, fulfilled in heart, fulfilled in love, fulfilled in peace, fulfilled in hope, fulfilled by the companionship of others, fulfilled and free from fear, free from all alientation and loneliness, fulfilled by your very presence and real substance in spirity that feeds our spirits this hour,. Thank you Lord, for the fulfillment that comes from the life and being of the Living Christ. who bids us to pray together, saying...

### Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done; On earth as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

### Words of Institution

For I received fro the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took break, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In

the same way also the cup, after supper saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this break and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. [I Corinthians 11: 23-26]

1. Andrews speaks about bread of life: *"I am the bread of life; they who believe in me shall never be hungry, they who come to me shall never thirst."*
2. elders come forward from pew and stand at table, and Andrews hands the plates to the elders
3. elders distribute elements then process and sit to receive bread from Andrews
4. Andrews speaks about vine: *"I am the vine, you are the branches; cut off from me you can do nothing."*
5. elders come forward from the pews and Andrews hands the trays to the elders, who distribute cup trays then process and sit to receive cup from Andrews

### Communion Blessing

**Do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.**

1. Hymn begins
2. Andrews hands linen back to elders
3. elders 1 and 5 recover the table with linen
4. Andrews recesses
5. Elders recess

### Dismissal Blessing

**So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight.**

### Choir Response

### Organ Postlude