

Date: March 10, 2013

Subject: Look We for Another?

"And John calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art Thou He that should come? Or look we for another?" Luke 7:19

This is speaking of John the baptist, not John the Apostle. When you think of John the baptist, what do you think of? What kind of witness was he of the Lord Jesus Christ?

John the baptist was not only an answer of his parent's prayer (Luke 1:13), but he was the fulfillment to the old testament prophecy in Malachi 3:1 "Behold, I will send my messenger [i.e. John the baptist], and he shall prepare the way before Me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant [i.e. the Lord Jesus Christ], whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come, saith the LORD of hosts."

John's ministry began in the desert where he wore clothing of camels hair and a leather's girdle about his loins; and his food was locusts and wild honey (Mat. 3:4). John was a man that liked to keep things simple, wouldn't you say?

John was also a very bold witness for Jesus Christ; in fact, he ~~to~~ boldly rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees to their face by telling them, "O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet [~~of~~, worthy] of repentance:" (Mat. 3:7-8).

John was a bold preacher - just like Elijah - and he even rebuked Herod the tetrarch. Herod was a ruthless King, and back in those days you couldn't defame the King without dying. Not like today in the United States, where people all over disrespect the President and hide behind the freedom of speech law; no such thing back in John the Baptist's days. Even still, John told King Herod that his marriage to his brother's wife was not lawful (Mat. 14:4) and this - eventually - landed John in prison. It was after all this, while John was still in prison, that he sent a couple of his disciples to Jesus and asked Him, "Art Thou He that should come? Or look we for another?" (Luke 7:19)

The Bible doesn't record what all John had to go through while in prison; did the soldiers

refuse to feed him? Did they torture him? Did they mock and ridicule him? We don't know, but what we do know, is this great prophet... began to doubt.

Just like Elijah, remember? In 1 Kings 18 Elijah challenged all the false prophets of Baal to call down fire from heaven; "and the God that answers by fire, let Him be God," he told them. (1 Kings 18:24) They all agreed, but after the false prophets failed for their god to bring down fire, Elijah prayed to God who consumed the soaking wet sacrifice. Afterward, Elijah had all the false prophets of Baal killed, then he prayed earnestly for rain. Then in the ^{very} next chapter (1 Kings 19), Jezebel sent a message to Elijah and told him, "So, let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time." (1 Kings 19:2)

She threatened Elijah, basically she said that he will be dead like the prophets he killed. Now God had just answered Elijah twice before, first He sent fire from heaven, then He sent rain. Elijah ought to be assured that the Lord was on his side, but what happened next? He ran for his life and wished to die! Elijah, like John the baptist, began to doubt in God.

Amazing, isn't it? These two wonderful prophets, who were extremely bold in their faith toward God, began to doubt God, and became discouraged.

"Art Thou He that should come? Or look we for another?" What was John going through? What was he thinking?

"Jesus! I have done all that Thou hast asked of me. I have preached Thy name faithfully and boldly, what more could I have done? Hast Thou forsaken me? Hast Thou forgotten me? Ah! Lord Jesus, I have this little doubt that nags upon me hour after hour in this cell. This doubt gnaws upon me in this cold cell, I hear the screams of other prisoners... and they are coming to behead me! Help me Lord Jesus! I know Thou canst set me free, Thou canst do anything; but O Lord, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest. I do not withhold my life for Thee Lord, but ah! This doubt won't leave me alone! I am ashamed to ask, but I cannot hold back... Art Thou... Art Thou He that should come? Or look we for another? Did I prepare the way for the wrong One? Have I been living a lie? Surely the Christ would have me released from prison! Surely if He were Christ,

I would not be in prison! Where art Thou? Who art Thou!? Art Thou He that should come? Or look we for another...?"

John's disciples went and passed this message ^{on} to Jesus. "And in that same hour He cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind He gave sight." (Luke 7:21).

Do you see what Jesus did? He responded immediately, "And in that same hour..." It's as though upon receiving John's message and seeing His beloved friend in great spiritual pain, He said to ~~the~~ ^{his} disciples, "Oh yeah? ~~the~~ Watch this!" And with the awesome power of the Son of God, healed everyone within reach: infirmities, plagues, evil spirits, blind; He healed them all, and with vehement fervency.

"Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go thy way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached. And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me." Luke 7:22-23

It would've been sometime shortly thereafter, that King Herod had John beheaded, "And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison." (Mat. 14:10).

Before John was killed, he was reassured that Jesus is the Christ. There was nobody else for John to look for, he faithfully prepared the way for the right One. Even though John died a shameful and terrifying death, he died in peace. Later in Jesus' ministry, he told his disciples,

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

John 16:33

Are you a little discouraged, my friend? At times do you feel forgotten and forsaken of God? Unanswered prayers? "Does God still love me? Why am I in so much pain? Why do I have to struggle so hard to scrape enough money^{just} to feed my family? Why is my life so unsettled and chaotic? God why didn't you...? God why did you...? Where are You God? ¶ When I need you most, why do you seem so far away??"

He hasn't forgotten you beloved, and yes, He still loves you. Just like John the baptist, Jesus never doubted His love for John; John doubted Jesus' love for him. Did Jesus forsake him? No, neither has He forsaken you, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for He has said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." (Heb. 13:5).

Before He died on the cross, Jesus told His disciples, "If ye love Me, Keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever." (John 14:15-16). The Comforter is the Holy Spirit, He is called Comforter because one of His functions is to comfort us in our times of trial. Every true child of God will suffer from one thing to another, but the Comforter (Holy Spirit) will remind us of God's ~~to~~ love for us and ~~blow~~ blow upon the embers of our faith. In our stupidity we sometimes resist this be it for one reason or another, but don't do that my dear friend; that is how we grieve the Holy Spirit. Therefore, be encouraged in your ministry, love, and faith to your Lord Jesus who loves you and died for you.

When your old man insists on asking, "look we for another?" Respond by faith as the Holy Spirit comforts you as He did for the Apostle Paul, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in ~~the~~ me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me." (Gal. 2:20).

My prayers and love be with you.

Your friend and servant for Jesus sake,

Herb F. Allen

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen." 2 Cor. 13:14