

THOUGHTS

By the father/son team
Pastor Paul R Schroeder
Douglas W. Schroeder

SPEAKERS ON THE WORD TODAY

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NO JOKE

It's April Fools Day as I write this, and I didn't even try to play a joke on anyone this year. It only took 52 years! Do we get too tired to harass others? Do we grow in valuing sensibility and even temperedness? Am I not interested simply because the matters of life have grown so weighty that shenanigans seem the furthest thing from my mind?

Perhaps part of it is having a father who is authentically struggling with his health, a father in law who is perhaps not far from death at 92 years of age and weakening, and various congregation members with health related concerns, the most pressing that of a man diagnosed with an inoperable tumor not so slowly stealing his life away. Thankfully this committed man of God walks with Christ authentically, so his eternal welfare is not a concern.

Concerned; perhaps that's the mood I feel in mid-life. I'm concerned about a lot of things, the needs of the church, reaching the world with the Gospel, the state of Connie and my relation to our sons, our parents' health... This does not depress, nor crush our spirit, but it does bring a sobering perspective. The silliness of youth has seeped away and in its place contemplation has seeped in.

"MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?"

These are words of Christ from the cross, the seemingly hopeless plea of a man condemned and abandoned by God. But, they aren't really. The most common explanation of Jesus' lament found in Matthew 27:45-26 is that the Father abandoned him on the cross, that Jesus was rejected, left alone in his death. Not true; Jesus, as part of the Holy Trinity, would not be excised from the Godhead any more than would the Father or Holy Spirit. Do not misperceive that statement, as it is true that Christ died physically, but not his spirit, which is divine. The Godhead did not suffer a near-fatality through the crucifixion of Christ.

Yes, Jesus bore our sins on the cross, and he was "condemned" to die as a stand-in for us. We deserved the punishment of God, but he took it for us, which is what the Good News of the Gospel is all about! If Jesus was not forsaken on the cross, why did he say so? He was quoting Psalm 22, which was originally spoken by King David of ancient Israel. It was spoken at a time of dire need, when David felt God was not acting quickly enough to deliver him, and he feared for his life. Halfway through the Psalm David determines to hope in God, "But you, O Lord, be not far off; O My Strength, come quickly to help me... (v.19)." Just as David did see the Lord's deliverance, so also Jesus would be vindicated on the third day, on Easter morning when he was raised from the dead, conquering the foes of sin, Satan and the grave!

Moreover, Jesus was directing attention to fulfillment of his role as the Messiah; there are several direct prophecies about Jesus which are fulfilled in his suffering on the cross! Psalm 22 speaks of people ridiculing, saying, "He trusts in the Lord; let the Lord rescue him (v.8)," which was fulfilled in the passion of Christ when his enemies said nearly verbatim the same thing.

2015

Thoughts
Box 77
Greendale
WI
53129



*The Bible is God's Word . . . Jesus is God's "Word" made flesh . . .
His death and resurrection, the message needed Today.*

April

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The physical agony of dislocated joints and fierce thirst (v.14-15), as well as the piercing of hands and feet (v.16) were all a part of the crucifixion of Christ. It is obvious that Jesus wanted us to note how even at his last moments he was fulfilling completely the role of Messiah.

Such a profound fulfillment of the suffering and death of our Savior makes the Easter celebration even more joyful! God worked out the plan of redemption in Jesus very carefully, omitting nothing. Even on the cross all was "going according to plan," and Jesus was not cast aside wantonly, but clearly pointed our attention to the fact that he and the Father were orchestrating our salvation!

IN VOGUE TO BELIEVE IN ALIENS

North American culture has gone foolish, preferring to promote the ludicrous assumptions of Darwinian Theory over the strong data supporting Intelligent Design theory. As such, since God has been ruled out a priori, it falls to Aliens somewhere out there to be the source of all the ingenuity, creativity, planning and execution of design so abundantly evident on Earth.

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Nowadays, seemingly intelligent people discuss with a straight face the possibility that things such as precise dispersion characteristics of a pulsar might indicate the existence of an alien civilization reaching out to us! Then again, the article "Are Aliens Behind Mysterious Radio Bursts? Scientists Weigh In," at the Huffington Post online today, admits the source may be a cell phone tower being picked up by the radio telescope! The article quotes Michael Hippke, a scientist at the Institute for Data Analysis, "Hippke said the pulses probably are generated by some as-yet-unidentified source here on Earth that emits short-frequency radio waves followed by high-frequency ones -- perhaps something as simple as a cell phone base station. If that's not the explanation, it's possible they come from a new, unknown kind of cosmic object in deep space. This lends a lot of confidence to the prognostications of discovering other galactic communities, doesn't it?"

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Well, let's see; a Supernova doesn't explode with exact precision to make perfectly timed pulses (11 sets of them recorded since 2007), all at a multiple of 187.5. But, of course, machines made by humans can! So, it's *very* likely the radio telescope is picking up an Earth-bound source intermittently. But it makes for great indoctrination to promote the Alien idea! Darwinian based science has such wonderful objectivity, scouring the universe for the beings out there in the face of overwhelming data (see works such as The Privileged Planet by Gonzalez and Richards) showing the universe is not fit for carbon-based life forms, the only kind of life of which we can sensibly conceive.

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The pulses, may, that is a *very statistically thin may*, be some natural phenomenon, but you are secure scientifically to conclude the idea that aliens sent them, is fluff sensationalism at the expense of common sense.

Blessings!
Douglas W. Schroeder