

THE PRAYER THAT JESUS REFUSED TO PRAY

Mat 26:53 *Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?*

Mat 26:54 *But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?*

When the Lord told the apostles to sell that they had and buy swords before he went to Jerusalem to be arrested and sentenced to death, the apostles misunderstood and procured two swords. “And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough” (Luke 22:38). Galileans were known to be straightforward people who did not shy away from a confrontation, and they interpreted the words of the Lord literally. Once they came to Jerusalem, the Lord was arrested. They were 13 including the Lord. How can two swords between 13 men fight against the well-armed soldiers of the high priest who were also backed up by the Roman soldiers? Yet because Peter’s love for the Lord was so great, he ignored the odds against them and struck the high priest, Malchus’ head with his sword. Fortunately, Peter missed the head and cut off an ear.

John 18:10 *Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.*

John 18:11 *Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?*

Peter had no power against the power behind the authorities of the day, but yet decided to go down fighting. The Lord Jesus, on the other hand, had all the power of the universe at his beck and call, and yet decided to submit to their wickedness. Let us not forget the Lord will return with a double-edged sword to annihilate the armies of the antichrist assembled at Armageddon. “And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” (Revelation 19:15). The Lord needed no help from anyone, much less the help of human beings. “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matthew 26:53). Each legion consisted of about 6000 Roman soldiers. The Lord was basically saying that he had enough legions to defend every one of his apostles and each of the 12 tribes of Israel. Let us also remember that it took one angel in the days of King Hezekiah to destroy the entire army of the Assyrians who came to Jerusalem.

2Kings 19:35 *And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.*

One angel killed 185,000 soldiers. The Lord could summon 12x6000 (72,000) angels but desisted from doing so. Imagine if Peter or we had access to such power! Jesus would never have gone to the Cross. We would have “saved” the Lord from all these evil people because we love him so much. This kind of love is blind to the scriptures and the salvation of the entire world. Thank God, he has not trusted us with so much power! Thank God he does not allow even one angel to submit to us, however much we may try to order angels around! Can you imagine what we would order angels to do? Angels receive orders only from the Lord Jesus. How eager they must have been that day to destroy the enemies of the Lord, but they knew they were to stay silent, cry and resign themselves to seeing their God and Creator suffer humiliation and death.

Joshua 5:14 *And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant?*

We remember the men of David who admonished him to kill Saul even stating that the Lord delivered Saul into his hands. “And the men of David said unto him, Behold the day of which the LORD said unto thee, Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee. Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily” (I Samuel 24:4). David cut a piece of cloth from Saul’s robe and even that pricked his conscience. In other words, let us make sure that our swords do not accomplish work that may destroy the work of God. Jesus has the most powerful sword in the universe, but his sword was by his side passive so he could fulfill the scriptures and save us. Can Jesus trust us with swords and his power?

Mat 26:53 *Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?*

The Lord Jesus had no possessions on this earth but all he needed to do is pray – he left us an example. One prayer has the potential to change everything on earth. When there are no family members, relatives, friends etc. to help anymore, when doctors and lawyers give up and the situation looks hopeless, one prayer is enough! “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5:16). When everyone abandons you and everything

looks hopeless, remember what the Lord said, “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels” (Matt 26:53). We have swords, too, like Nehemiah, but they are lying passively on our sides. Jesus promised he will not leave us orphans; he will never abandon us.

Sometimes we panic like King Saul because the Philistines are coming nearer, and we forget to wait on Samuel until the last moment. The Lord Jesus was telling the apostles that even at that late hour he could still deliver himself, but then salvation will never be given to us humans. It was never too late for Jonah in the fish’s belly to pray; it was never too late for church to pray for Peter’s deliverance, and it was never too late for the thief on the Cross to pray to the Lord to remember him. It was not too late for the Lord to pray for his own deliverance, but he rejected this prayer. This is the one prayer that Jesus refused to pray.

Mat 26:54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

God refused to pray for his own deliverance so that we may live forever. No one really had the power to kill Jesus; the Lord himself said that he did this voluntarily, of his own free will. “No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father” (John 10:18). Notice he said, “power to lay it down”. Only God has power to submit to death of his own free will – this is not something anyone can impose upon him. He gave up the ghost himself; no one took it away from him. O blessed Jesus, you suffered and died willingly for us!

Mat 27:42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.

Saints of God, the supremacy of the scriptures over everything is what the Lord Jesus submitted to. The scriptures must be fulfilled regardless of whether the apostles understand and the Jews provoke him to save himself. See how much self-restraint and commitment to salvation Jesus showed! Let us pray that we will also follow in his footsteps – we must honor the Word of God and not the word of humans. If angels were ordered to stay away and not interfere, how can we interfere and disrupt the will of God through the scriptures? If we have to go through hardship for the salvation of others, let us not pray the prayer that Jesus refused to pray! We must accept whatever method and situation the Lord chooses by which he wants to deliver souls. Thy will be done!