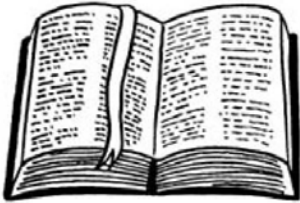




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God's counsel in a day of treachery and betrayal



This is a day when previously unthinkable things are now taking place: the leader of the Ulster Unionist Party paying homage to the Pope of Rome; the British Government continuing to favour the terrorist organisations upon whose hands are the blood of hundreds of policemen, soldiers and civilians by releasing from jail those members of their organisations who have been imprisoned for murder;

the continuing pressure on the unionist community to accept Sinn Fein into the Northern Ireland Assembly Executive while the IRA refuses to disarm.

In the midst of this nightmarish scenario are the ecumenical churches, urging Ulster to go even faster down the road toward reunion with Romanism as the only solution to our difficulties, ignoring the fact that our troubles have their origins in the Bible-rejecting, Christ-dishonouring doctrines that the apostatising leaders of the main churches foisted upon their gullible members. Just what is God's Word for believers in the midst of this all? The following is the substance of a sermon preached in Kilskeery Free Presbyterian Church on Lord's Day, 2nd May. We believe that it is God's counsel to His people today.

"Therefore have I cried concerning this, Their strength is to sit still," Isaiah 30:7.

Man is a wanderer, doomed to roam restlessly looking for peace and comfort amongst the creatures of the world. *When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth*, Genesis 4:12. Only the believer in Christ has found rest. *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*, Matthew 11:28. The man of Gadara pictures for us the saint at rest. *Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man, out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid*, Luke 8:35. Here is rest indeed. *As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste*, Song of Solomon 2:3. Such rest is the beginnings of heaven's bliss within the soul. *And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them*, Revelation 14:13.

Our text is part of the message of condemnation to Judah at her reaction to the threat of Sennacherib's invasion. Jerusalem looked to Egypt rather than trusting in the Lord and waiting quietly upon Him. Unbelief was the power behind all the political activity within the nation to find a solution to the threat facing the land. Against this evil the prophet lifted up his voice. There are times when the minister of the gospel must speak out on public matters as did Isaiah. Today is just such a day. God's Word for us today is found in the prophet's call to Judah.

Please note that



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THERE ARE TIMES WHEN FAITH WOULD HAVE US DO NOTHING BUT SIT STILL

The times when such sitting still is required is when instability and unbelief abound.

When peace and safety comes under attack from terrorism and lawlessness. When the powers of hell are unleashed upon society that is a time for God to be sought, waited upon and obeyed. David Trimble's running to Rome is an example of faithlessness and man resorting to his own notions and wisdom for a solution. One can well imagine the "brains" in his party HQ getting together to discuss the visit to the Vatican and deciding that since such a move would doubtless impress Irish Roman Catholics he should go. Such is man's method of deciding upon a course of action. Where are there amongst our leaders those who call for faith in God? Dr. Paisley is a lone voice and even he is deliberately marginalised by the media so that his voice is no longer heard.

When apostasy abounds in the major denominations, the answer is to sit still and wait upon God. When men cast off God's truth, then unbelief resorts to man's solution to the danger. The trend in many evangelical churches is to compromise with apostasy and worldliness in order to maintain the interest of their wandering congregations. Hold fast! Sit tight is the advice of heaven.

Many believers today have not sat still in the face of ecumenism's lying scheme for peace. They have rather become part of it. There are those evangelical churches which feel under pressure to conform and become part of the dialoguing, conferencing, seminaring ecclesiastical circus that makes up the religious environment in Ulster today. Some professing Christians in the realm of politics have felt that they too must show some interest in these ecumenical gatherings least it hurts them when they next stand for election. This is unbelief at work. old paths

God would have us stay still in the old paths. *Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls* , Jeremiah 6:16.

JUST WHAT IS THE NATURE OF A STABLE FAITH?

Stability of faith is **commended** by Christ. Hear what He says. *I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth*, Revelation 2:13. But it is also **commanded**. Again, listen to His Word. *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord* , 1 Corinthians 15:58.

Stable faith is unashamed faith. *For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek* , Romans 1:16. Peter showed instability when he shamefully denied the Lord.

Stable faith is well-rooted faith. The stable believer is as a well-rooted tree. *But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper* , Psalm 1:2-3.



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Stable faith is unfainting faith. *If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small,* Proverbs 24:10. Despite the attempts to present David Trimble as a man of strength, he is, in fact, a man of weakness as are all who would abandon the old truths of Protestantism. Their confidence in the God of our fathers is at best weak. Trimble and the ecumenists do not believe that it is a viable option to refuse to surrender freedom and trust in God to deliver us from the doom that is prophesied will follow failure to comply utterly with the demands of Irish Republicanism. Those who wait upon God and sit still in faith, enjoy strength bestowed by heaven. *But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint,* , Isaiah 40:31.

SUCH STABILITY IS A DELIGHT TO GOD

This is what the Lord looks for in Ulster. Those who sit still and wait on God will enjoy His blessing. Remember how it was with Israel during the Exodus from Egypt? *And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever,* , Exodus 14:13. Ought we not to believe that God can likewise deliver His people in the midst of the turmoil facing Ulster today?

God has no pleasure in the waverer. *Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him,* , Hebrews 10:38. Leaving the Lord and running after man's solution to our troubles is a double sin. *For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water,* , Jeremiah 2:13. To forsake the Lord is evil. To seek unto another helper is doubly so. Such action is a great reproach upon God. It slights His mercy, mocks His promises and questions His power. It clearly says He is not able to deliver His people in times of trouble.

To be stable in our faith is a Christ-like virtue. *For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed,* , Isaiah 50:7. These words are considered a prophetic picture of the resolve of the Saviour to go to the cross. *And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,* , Luke 9:51. Christ steadfastly believed His Father's promises and unhesitatingly rested on them as He went to the cross. We follow in the train of His triumph when we likewise show a waiting upon God.

It is a devil-defeating virtue. *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world,* , 1 Peter 5:8-9. Those who cling to God and remain in His shadow are beyond the reach on the devil.

Furthermore, it is a crown-winning virtue. *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life,* , Rev 2:10. *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the*



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faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing, 2 Tim 4:7-8.

Those who would win a crown, today must sit still and trust in God. He is still on the throne.