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Godless Federations

(A message preached at the Sovereign Grace Advent Testimony evening meeting held in New Life Presbyterian Church hall (kindly granted) in West Kilburn, London, on Friday 26th September, 2014, by Rev Ivan Foster)

"Keep not thou silence, O God: hold not thy peace, and be not still, O God. For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head. They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee: the tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes; Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre; Assur also is joined with them: they have holpen the children of Lot. Selah," Psalm 83:1-8.

The anti-Israel sentiments expressed here in this psalm have long been desired and if anything are stronger today than ever before. How precise and detailed is the information here given on this federation of nations. Prophecy is history written before the event. This amalgam of haters of Israel will indeed come together in their efforts to "cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance" just prior to our Saviour's return.

We are going to do with these verses what the Psalmist, Asaph, suggests we should. We are going to pause and consider what is here stated. I believe that such is the meaning of the word Selah as is set forth by many learned men.

The words of this prophecy will, of course, be fulfilled just prior to the Saviour's return. It will be central to the events spoken of by Jeremiah in the chapter 30:7-11.

"Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: but they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them. Therefore fear thou not, O my servant Jacob, saith the LORD; neither be dismayed, O Israel: for, lo, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be in rest, and be quiet, and none shall make him afraid. For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished."

It is in response to the actions of this confederation that the Saviour will intervene to save Jerusalem from destruction. "Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city. Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south," Zechariah 14:1-4.

(See also Zechariah 12:1-13:1.)

How wonderful that we can stamp "Utter Failure" upon this great conspiracy against the Lord and His ancient people, long before the wicked begin this doomed attack!

The motivating, energising spirit behind this latter-day action by these nations, has long been at work amongst men. Primarily, the enmity of these nations is not merely against Israel but Israel's God! They strike against the Lord by striking against that which they know He holds dear and which is within their



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reach. They cannot strike against the person of the Lord, but they can strike against those He loves. Therein lies the reason for Christian persecution also.

"Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake," Luke 6:22.

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you," John 15:18.

This spirit of hatred and persecution, we are told, was what lay behind Cain's murder of his brother Abel. "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you," 1 John 3:12-13.

I am going to suggest first of all that:

I. THERE ARE ONLY GODLESS FEDERATIONS

The uniqueness of God's Israel made it impossible for them to form anything other than an unholy union with any of the nations of this world. In truth, they were forbidden to form such allegiances either socially, commercially, politically or militarily.

"For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" Deuteronomy 4:7-8.

The incident with Amaziah, king of Judah, and his hiring of soldiers from the idolatrous northern kingdom of Israel indicates the impropriety of national alliances with the ungodly.

"He hired also an hundred thousand mighty men of valour out of Israel for an hundred talents of silver. But there came a man of God to him, saying, O king, let not the army of Israel go with thee; for the LORD is not with Israel, to wit, with all the children of Ephraim. But if thou wilt go, do it, be strong for the battle: God shall make thee fall before the enemy: for God hath power to help, and to cast down. And Amaziah said to the man of God, But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel? And the man of God answered, The LORD is able to give thee much more than this. Then Amaziah separated them, to wit, the army that was come to him out of Ephraim, to go home again: wherefore their anger was greatly kindled against Judah, and they returned home in great anger. And Amaziah strengthened himself, and led forth his people, and went to the valley of salt, and smote of the children of Seir ten thousand. And other ten thousand left alive did the children of Judah carry away captive, and brought them unto the top of the rock, and cast them down from the top of the rock, that they all were broken in pieces," 2 Chronicles 25:6-12.

TODAY

It follows on that believers today must be careful of the alliances they form.

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty," 2 Corinthians 6:14-18.

GODLESSNESS

It is a spirit of godlessness which prompts nations and men to form unions, irrespective of the high-sounding



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reasons put forward for such federations. We have only to think of the godless federation our nation is sadly a part of - The European Union. The reasoning behind its commencement and continued existence is the supposed benefits that it will bring to its member nations.

Sir Winston Churchill visualised a European union of nations that would banish war and bring about universal benefits and blessings. He is quoted as saying: "There is a remedy which ... would in a few years make all Europe ... free and ... happy. It is to re-create the European family, or as much of it as we can, and to provide it with a structure under which it can dwell in peace, in safety and in freedom. We must build a kind of United States of Europe."

How wrong he was!

Those who know and love God's Word understand that such benefits are, at best, fleeting and obtained at a terrible cost.

Whatever economic advances the EU has brought - and there are plenty who can put up a case that indicates that the UK's input to the EU far outweighs what it receives in return - the moral and spiritual consequences of membership have been unspeakably atrocious!

EU membership has resulted in the promotion of innumerable unscriptural initiatives to the detriment of our nation's spiritual wellbeing. Sabbath desecration, sodomy, divorce, the breakdown of the Bible's distinctions between men and women, the breakdown of child discipline, the corrupting of educational standards and curricular content, and many other wicked issues have received impetus from the EU.

In truth, the UK is being insidiously invaded and conquered from within the EU!

Of course, the commandments of God's Word were under attack within the UK before it ever joined the EU, but none can deny that joining the EU gave advancement to the spirit of apostasy within the nation and decidedly encouraged and strengthened it.

1. I believe that it is a tenet of God's Word that men and nations look to the Lord rather than to men for those things that some believe earthly alliances alone can bring.

Man when first created was established amidst abundance. He had every need supplied by the means God supplied. In truth it is still the same. The individual is not to look to any other than the Lord for the help that they need in this life. "Look unto me" is not just an evangelical command linked to the needs of the soul, but it relates to ALL of our needs. "And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you," Luke 12:29-31.

Have we not been taught to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread"? Very few of God's people really practise what is here commanded for few understand the implication of these words of Christ. As the Lord provided every requirement of Israel in its wilderness journeys, even so He promised that He will provide for us all our needs.

Consider these words of God to His people.

"Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed," Psalm 37:3.

"The LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be for ever. They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied," Psalm 37:18-19.

"I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread," Psalm 37:25.



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"For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly," Psalm 84:11.

"For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," 1 Timothy 4:8.

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," Hebrews 13:5.

2. From the beginning of time we have seen men resort to ungodly alliances in preference to faith in God.

"And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden. And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch: and he builded a city, and called the name of the city, after the name of his son, Enoch," Genesis 4:16-17.

This is the first reference to a "city" in Holy Scripture. It is not without significance. Having forfeited the care and protection of the Lord, Cain set about providing for his own protection by the forming of an alliance with others in a "mutual protection" agreement.

The word "city" means "a place guarded by watchmen."

The eye of man is considered better than the eye of God!

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye," Psalm 32:8.

"Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy," Psalm 33:18.

MOTIVATION

What motivated Cain has motivated ungodly men ever since. Socialism in its many forms, is the modern manifestation of this notion of "mutual protection" and we can clearly see in our society the fruits of such thinking. God is utterly forgotten and the "State system of benefits" is looked upon as the source of all help.

It is to it that modern men pray in their time of need!

However, the complaint of governments today, especially ours, is that they cannot meet the cost of the welfare payments its policies incur. However, God never goes bankrupt! "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want," Psalm 23:1. "O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him," Psalm 34:9.

3. Israel frequently abandoned God and placed its hope and faith in a national alliance with the ungodly.

Even the best of God's servants were prone to such unbelief. "And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land," Genesis 12:10.

We know the sad consequences of that failure. It nearly cost Abraham his wife, Sarah, the mother of the line from which the future Messiah would spring.

The nation of Israel so often forsook the Lord for an unholy earthly alliance.

"Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin: that walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt! Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion. For his princes were at Zoan, and his ambassadors came to Hanes. They were all ashamed of a



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people that could not profit them, nor be an help nor profit, but a shame, and also a reproach. The burden of the beasts of the south: into the land of trouble and anguish, from whence come the young and old lion, the viper and fiery flying serpent, they will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses, and their treasures upon the bunches of camels, to a people that shall not profit them. For the Egyptians shall help in vain, and to no purpose: therefore have I cried concerning this, Their strength is to sit still," Isaiah 30:1-7.

"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes," Psalm 118:8-9.

The warning against such folly was oft repeated.

"Some trust in chariots, and some in horses: but we will remember the name of the LORD our God," Ps 20:7.

"There is no king saved by the multitude of an host: a mighty man is not delivered by much strength. An horse is a vain thing for safety: neither shall he deliver any by his great strength," Ps 33:16-17.

II. SUCH FEDERATIONS EVER PROMISE MUCH BY WAY OF PROSPERITY AND PEACE

1. The first federation formed between the devil and disobedient man promised much. "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat," Genesis 3:4-6.

2. Such deception has ever marked godless federations. They quickly prove to be totally unable to fulfil the promised security, bounty and abundance.

"Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, the prophets say unto them, Ye shall not see the sword, neither shall ye have famine; but I will give you assured peace in this place. Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart. Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that prophesy in my name, and I sent them not, yet they say, Sword and famine shall not be in this land; by sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed. And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; and they shall have none to bury them, them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness upon them," Jeremiah 14:13-16.

"They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace," Jeremiah 6:14.

"We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble!" Jeremiah 8:15.

"They say still unto them that despise me, The LORD hath said, Ye shall have peace; and they say unto every one that walketh after the imagination of his own heart, No evil shall come upon you," Jeremiah 23:17.

How willingly the ungodly and oftentimes foolish believers embrace such deceit. "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?" Jeremiah 5:30-31.

In Ulster, Ecumenism has produced an alliance between two former enemies, the Democratic Unionist Party and Sinn Fein. Such a union has not been for the good of our land and it has led many Christians into bondage whereby they find themselves supporting wickedness.

The phrase "Peace for Our Time" was uttered on 30th September 1938 by British Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain, in his speech following the signing of the Munich Agreement and the Anglo-German Declara-



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tion. Twelve months later, on 1st September, 1939, when Germany invaded Poland, it was seen just what an infamous sham that "peace" was!

3. That which is the bedrock of TRUE peace and prosperity is totally lacking in such alliances. "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people," Proverbs 14:34. The word "exalteth" means to "promote". We can only promote the interests of our people by following the paths of righteousness.

"Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the LORD my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" Deuteronomy 4:5-8.

Here is the key, the secret of earthly prosperity. It is utterly lacking in all reliance on man's schemes.

III. IN A TIME OF GODLESSNESS, THE FORMING OF SUCH ALLIANCES IS PARTICULARLY LIKELY

1. A very clear illustration of this is seen in alliances of wicked men formed around the cross of Christ. Was not this a time of great wickedness? Christ called it His enemies' "hour, and the power of darkness," Luke 22:53. In that hour of darkness and rebellion, "Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves," Luke 23:12. Likewise the "thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth," Matthew 27:44. They found common ground in mocking Christ with those who inflicted suffering and crucifixion on them!

2. In a day of wickedness that unlikely union has ever been seen functioning against Christ and His people. The scene presented to us in Acts 23:6-8 illustrates this. "But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both." These natural enemies combined in their opposition to the gospel.

The union of the State and the apostate denominations has ever resulted in persecution for the people of God. The Reformation period in this land shows that to be so. It was the cooperation of "church and state" that fuelled the martyrs' fires.

3. Israel will again fall into this trap at the end of this age. "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive," John 5:43. This is the Saviour predicting Israel's embracing of the regime of the Antichrist. Daniel speaks of that time of Israel joining with Antichrist in a covenant relationship which, of course, proves disastrous for Israel and soon ushers in the "Great Tribulation." "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week (seven periods of time or seven years, Genesis 29:27): and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate," Daniel 9:27. This is the incident that Paul refers to in 2 Thessalonians 2:4. "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

What a high cost Israel will pay for entering into an ungodly union with ungodly powers!

4. This will be the lowest point in Israel's long rebellion. "And in his estate shall stand up a vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries," Daniel 11:21. This ultimate departure takes place just before the "Great Tribulation"



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which will be the outcome of Antichrist breaking the agreement into which he had entered with Israel. "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate," Daniel 9:27.

The circumstances in which Antichrist's agreement with Israel will be broken are set out in 2 Thess 2:4 as we have already mentioned.

The Man of Sin will be honoured in Jerusalem until he exalts himself to proclaim himself as "God" in the temple in Jerusalem. That act will initiate the great and final persecution of the Jews. It is of this event that the Saviour warns in Matthew 24:15-21, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: for then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."

IV. IN THE MILLENNIAL REIGN OF CHRIST ALL SUCH FEDERATIONS WILL CEASE UNTIL THE RELEASE OF SATAN

1. Nations will then be in submission to the Lord. Consider the familiar words of Isaiah in 2:2. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." Nations will "flow", that is, they will gravitate toward the Lord as streams flow downhill. There is an inclination toward and submission to the Lord which replaces that inclination which was seen in Cain when he went out from the presence of the Lord.

2. It is in the Lord that men shall see their every need supplied. "Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the LORD, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all," Jeremiah 31:12. It will be then as it should be now!

3. Man's natural inclination to rebellion will be revived amongst the unsaved when Satan is released and musters men in rebellion against the Lord and His people. "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them," Revelation 20:7-9.

This proves that Satan is behind the formation of Godless federations!

4. The consequences of such godless federations will be clearly seen then. "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever," Revelation 20:10.

PONDER

We should consider the godless political and religious activities around us today in the light of these Scriptures for such are built upon the foundation of empty promises and false hopes.

We must not involve ourselves with that which is born of the spirit of Antichrist, the Mystery of Iniquity for such is but the embryo of that which will lead to the Lake of Fire.

"It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man," Psalm 118:8.



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"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is," Jeremiah 17:7.