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The oily words of peace which conceal the sword of war!

The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords, Psalm 55:21.

A sermon preached by Rev. Ivan Foster, on Lord's Day 28th November 1993.

A great contradiction may be discovered between what the mouth says and what the heart feels. It is a rule that man has come to live by and that is summed up in the proverb -- "Never judge a book by its cover". That is a truth that is undergirded by the Bible's revelation of man's heart. The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? Jeremiah 17:9. Because it is so, the greatest care must be taken when we come to evaluate the words of those whose whole purpose and acknowledged desire in life is to destroy what we count as precious.

Presently, a peace plan, drawn up by IRA man Gerry Adams and his friend John Hume, is the centre of much political discussion and agitation here in Ulster. Informed press reports have given a general view of its contents. It appears that Adams and Hume have made, what they call, considerable progress on broad principles of agreement in their efforts to create a peace process. They have gone on to set down proposals based upon the principles of this agreement. None but a few has seen this plan which was given verbally and in document form to the Dublin premier, Albert Reynolds and his coalition partner, Dick Spring, on October 7th.

Despite the fact that few really know what the plan entails and that it was jointly drawn up by a leader of a terrorist movement which has murdered over 1000 innocent people in the last 25 years, we are being urged to accept it by Rome and her allies, the ecumenists. They speak of a dawn of a day of opportunity, the like of which may never come again for another lifetime. Many have heeded their call and flocked to the streets to reinforce this call for peace. Naturally, they have been joined by Dublin's prime minister, Albert Reynolds. For those who have not become drunk with the wine drawn from the wine-cellar of Rome's propaganda, there have been one or two incidents which would make the cautious stop and ponder.

First of all, following the day of peace rallies on Thursday 18th November, Gerry Adams and John Hume sent a message of thanks to all those who turned out at the rallies. Gerry Adams has long been identified as a leading IRA man who once occupied the position of Chief of Staff of the Roman Catholic terrorist organisation. Following the recent bomb blast on the Shankill Road, which killed nine Protestants as well as one of the IRA bombers, Adams was seen carrying the coffin of the bomber and paying homage to this mass murderer. Two weeks later, he is thanking those who are calling for peace for their support! Were Hitler to have sent a message of thanks to a rally in Trafalgar Square in the midst of World War II, would those who were participating not have asked themselves just what purpose their rally was serving! John Hume stated his political ambitions some years ago when he declared that he was after a United Ireland or nothing. All that he has endeavoured to do has been to that end. And that includes his joint peace strategy with Gerry Adams!



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Secondly, a Dublin based newspaper, The Irish Press, published a document which it claimed had been leaked to it by someone near to the Dublin government. The document was a set of draft proposals from the Dublin government to the British government offering to seek an amending of the territorial claim over Northern Ireland within its constitution in exchange for Britain's conceding the desirability of a united Ireland. It is believed that the document is based upon the Adams/Hume proposals. Again, you have the contradiction of the soothing words spoken in Dublin while they scheme to take us over and to destroy us and our heritage. Is there not a great need for caution?

Thirdly, last night the government admitted that it was talking to the IRA. Prime minister John Major and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Sir Patrick Mayhew, publicly and repeatedly said that they would not talk to the IRA. They were forced to acknowledge their deception by the release of a communication that they had sent to the IRA. It is becoming clear that John Hume's talks with the IRA has been part of the government's chicanery. Even more disappointing is the fact that James Molyneaux's, Ulster Unionist party, knew that these talks were going on and did not inform the Ulster people but allowed the deception to take place. They are even now seeking to cover for the government and minimise the deception by dismissing it as a common occurrence in the ways of government. Are these not dark times indeed?

When dealing with Rome and her offspring and her friends we must lean not to our own understanding. Rather, we must look to that book where Rome's pedigree is revealed -- the Bible. Our forefathers successfully avoided the clever snares she laid for them by heeding its counsel. It is to that Book I wish to have you turn in order that we might gain insight into what is happening in our land and so avoid the traps laid for us.

In the Psalm 55, David is complaining of betrayal. His son, Absalom, has risen up in rebellion against him and is being aided by a former confidant of David's, Ahithophel. It is of his treachery he is particularly complaining in our text. Notice in David's words: --

I. THE DEPTHS OF HUMAN DEPRAVITY

1. The heart is capable of great sin. In Ahithophel's heart there was war and the drawn sword. To have such thoughts in your heart is to be guilty of murder even though no blow is struck. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him, 1 John 3:15. The human heart is described by the Saviour. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, falsehoods, blasphemies, Matthew 15:19. What a well of corruption!

2. The heart is capable of great deception. David was speaking here of a man who had been his friend, 12-14. What deception to hide such murderous thoughts behind a facade of friendship and affection! It was the spirit of Judas at work.

3. The human heart is capable of great betrayal. Where there is a committing of one's future wellbeing upon the word of another we must be very sure of that person. David was deceived and paid the price.



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

II. DECEPTION IS A PLOY CENTRAL TO ALL THE EVIL WROUGHT IN THE WORLD

1. The history of Satan is the history of deception. In the Garden of Eden, Satan pretended good but planned evil. The woman being deceived was in the transgression , 1 Timothy 2: 14. The devil abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of i t, John 8: 44. Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light , II Cor 11: 14.

2. The history of man's evil toward his fellowman is one of deception. Is this not the method that the wicked have used to obtain an advantage over others? Was not the first murder the result of a Judas blow, Gen 4: 8. There have been many such blows struck since, 2 Samuel 3: 27.

3. The history of man's dealings with God is one of deception. He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me , Mark 7: 6. And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not , Ezekiel 33: 31-32. How many have a religion of pretence? God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth , John 4: 24.

4. The history of false doctrine is one of deception. The false prophet is pictured for us by Christ. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves , Matt 7: 15. The advance of Antichrist will be marked by deception. 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. The word flatteries refers to slippery words. Such are the means by which false doctrine is foisted upon a people.

5. The history of the greatest evil committed by men is one of deception . Judas agreed to betray the Son of God with a kiss, the universally recognised sign of friendship and love. Deception plumbed the depths in the Garden of Gethsemane. . . . he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him. But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss , Luke 22: 47-48.

III. ALL DECEPTION WILL BE JUDGED OF GOD

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death , Rev 21: 8.

1. The arch-deceiver will be judged. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand



The Burning Bush—Online article archive

years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. . . . 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 , Rev 20:3, 10.

2. The system of deceit we battle against tonight will be judged. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration , Rev 17:6. It appears that John was dazzled by the sight of this system of iniquity. He admired it. The word is the same used in 2 Thessalonians 1:10. The day of judgment is coming for the Harlot of Babylon. She will be destroyed under the judgment of God. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled , Rev 17:16-17.

3. Sinners who have sought to deceive God will be judged. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity , Matthew 7:21-23. It is not the words we speak but the life we live that indicates whether or not we are truly saved. Doing the will of God begins with believing on Christ and progresses with our devoted following of Him. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day , John 6:40. In the true believer there is an echo of the cry of David, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart , Psalm 40:8.

There are those today who are deceived about peace in Ulster. More tragically, there are those deceived about peace with God. They believe it is attained by religious duties and observances. That is not the message of the Bible. Peace with God is to be found in the atoning death of Christ at Calvary. His blood was shed in order to reconcile sinners to God. The price of reconciliation was the paying of the price of the sins of those to be reconciled. For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit , I Peter 3:18. The forgiveness of sins is based, not on God ignoring them, but on Christ atoning for them by enduring the wrath of God that was due to them. This was what the Saviour did at the cross. Is the blood of Christ your hope for eternity, your basis of peace and reconciliation with God?

It MUST be or you will perish.