

APPEAL TO CORRUPT SECTS.

Christ said, "False Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. But take ye heed, behold, I have foretold you all things," Mark 13: 22, 23. O, you backsliding, erring children! Mind, had you taken to heart this faithful warning of our Lord and Savior, Christ; had you acknowledged his Spirit, doctrine, and holy life as a perfect Spirit, doctrine and life, and acknowledged him as the true Prophet, promised in Scripture; and had you received him as the true and living Son of God; you would never have been led so far from his ways, nor would such frightful errors have taken place. But, O Lord! I fear that some of you are so far enchanted, that you will nevermore come to Christ, the true Shepherd; for you, through a perverted and obscure understanding of the Scriptures, defend, as just and right, the abominable works of ungodliness, which are not only contrary to the Spirit, word and will of Christ, but also contrary to reasonable modesty, nature, and reason.

Is it not a grievous error, that you suffer yourselves to be so sorely bewitched by such worthless persons, and so lamentably misled from one unclean sect to another: first to that of Munster, next to Battenberg, now Davidists; from Beelzebub to Lucifer, and from Belial to Behemoth? Ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the real truth. You suffer yourselves to be led about by every wind of doctrine. You choose out a way for yourselves, as do also the priests and monks: you hold not to the head, Christ, from

which all the body, fitly joined together, cometh unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

I fear that your sins will be punished; for you are earthly, and carnal minded, whereby you thrust from you the pure knowledge of Christ, and hate his cross; and against all admonition of Scriptures, against the undeceiving example of Christ and his saints, you conform yourselves in the splendor, pomp, eating, drinking, folly, hypocrisy, and false worship, of this proud, useless, vain and idolatrous world, which you should, by right, instruct and admonish by a pious, humble, sober, and godly walk.

O, you backsliding children! consider how grievously you disgrace the holy Moses, who teaches and speaks to you out of the mouth of God. He says, "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him," Deut. 18: 18, 19. This is repeated by Peter and Stephen in Acts 3: 23; and 7: 37.

What do you do with all the great prophets of God, as David, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, who, in so many places, with such plain words, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, direct us to Christ and his word? They must either testify to lies, or your prophets must be deceivers and false teachers. This is incontrovertible.

Did not holy Paul say, "But though we,

or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed," Gal. 1: 8. That your prophets, with their king, dominion, polygamy, sword, &c., do not agree with Paul and the doctrine and gospel of the apostles, you are all forced to acknowledge and admit, whence it forcibly follows, that they, with their doctrine and conduct, are cursed and anathematized.

Say, my beloved, what do you do with the revealed and infallible word and testimony of the Almighty Father, which he himself has testified of his Son, and said? "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him," Matt. 17: 5. *Him shall you hear*; but since you reject his Spirit, word and example, you follow and hear those who, with their spirit, doctrine and conduct, are from the bottomless pit, yea, manifestly anti-christs and false prophets.

Know you not, that the Son of God has himself commanded us that we should observe all that he has enjoined, and that he will be with us until the end of the world?

Will you then say, that the doctrine of Christ and his apostles was imperfect, and that your teachers bring forth the perfect instruction? I answer, that to teach and believe this, is the most horrible blasphemy, the most mocking perversity, that can be uttered against the Most High: for you thereby declare that Christ is not the true Son of God, the perfect Teacher, and the true image of righteousness. You deny the whole Scripture, you reject the testimony of Moses and all the prophets, who pointed to the only and true Christ, as has been shown; you disparage the word of the Father, and reject Christ Jesus, with his Spirit, word, kingdom and spiritual government; you put your trust and hopes in lying, mortal flesh, and upon earthly, carnal things, which, as the Scriptures teach, must be dispersed like dust before the wind. Examine the Scriptures in the fear of the Lord, and reflect, if such is not a gross blasphemy against the Almighty.

Say, you deceived children, where is there a syllable in the whole doctrine of Christ and the apostles (according to which Spirit, doctrine, conduct and example all Scripture

must be understood), by which† you can prove and establish one of all your erring articles?

If you would appeal to the literal understanding and transactions of Moses and the prophets, then must you also become Jews, receive circumcision, literally possess the land of Canaan, again erect the Jewish kingdom, build the city and temple, and according to the law, offer sacrifices, attend to the worship of God, and declare that Christ, the promised Savior, has not yet come, who has changed the literal and figurative ceremonies into new, spiritual and abiding substances.

You miserable, erring sheep, observe, I have before remarked to the magistrates, that the kingdom of Christ is not of this visible, perishing world, but that it is an eternal, spiritual and abiding kingdom, where there are no eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. There no king reigns, but the true King of Zion, Christ Jesus. He is the King of righteousness, the King of peace, the King of kings, who has all power in heaven above, and on earth beneath; before whom every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess. The true king David in Spirit, who, through his righteousness, merits and crimson blood, has ransomed the sheep from the mouths of the savage lions and bears of the pit, has slain the great and terrible Goliath, and obtained for the spiritual Israel of God, eternal welfare and peace. Neither the King nor his servants bear any sword but the sword of the Spirit, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, the word of God, with which he brings forth, builds, extends and governs his kingdom, guards and defends it under the pressing cross, in all trials and temptations, from the gates of hell, onsets and powers, and not with iron or steel, as the rude, vindictive world does; for his kingdom and dominion is spirit, and not letter, as has been shown.

Again, under this kingdom, and under this King, no other wedlock must be tolerated, except between *one* man and *one* woman, as God had in the beginning established in the union of Adam and Eve; and Christ has further said, that these two are one flesh,

and that they shall not separate, save for the cause of fornication, Matt. 5: 32.

This is not a kingdom in which a display is made of gold, silver, pearls, silk, velvet and costly finery, as is done by the proud wicked world, and which also your leaders teach and give you liberty to do under this deception, viz., that it is harmless if you do not desire and serve them from your heart. Thus might satan approve his haughtiness, and make pure and good the desire of his eyes. In the kingdom of all humility (I say), the outward adorning of the body is not desired and sought with power, but the inward adorning of the spirit, with zeal, diligence, and a broken, contrite heart.

Here is known no lying, eating, drinking, or hypocrisy; here none conforms himself to a drunken, luxurions, idle and idolatrous world, nor lays from him the cross of Christ, as you do, but all are upright and godly in heart and deed. They speak the truth from the heart. They lead a circumspect, temperate life; shun all idolatry and false doctrine from within and without; abstain from all appearance of evil; perform the true worship of the heart; abide firmly in the word and ordinances of Christ; lead an unblamable life before the whole world, and testify of Jesus Christ with the mouth, works, possessions and blood, as the divine honor requires it.

Here that confession is unknown to which some of you pretend, here we confess only to the true God before whom we have sinned, and to our neighbor against whom we have trespassed.

Here modesty, rectitude, and honesty are taught and practiced, but not immodesty, disgrace and uncleanness. I think you understand well what I mean.

In short, here the Spirit, word, will, commands, prohibitions, ordinances, customs, and examples of Christ are taught. To which all Scriptures refer us, and not the opinions of false prophets, high sounding words, enchanting appearances, boasting, dreams, and lying miracles, against which, the Spirit of God, and the Scriptures everywhere warn and counsel us.

Dear children, reform yourselves. Every one who teaches you otherwise, than is testified by the word of the Lord, even though

he were one who could dry up the bottom of the sea, and hurl the stars down from heaven, let him be abandoned, and let his doctrine be regarded as deceiving and erroneous, for, to all eternity there may no other foundation be laid, than that which is laid, Christ Jesus. He is the corner stone and foundation in Zion, on whom all the building fitly framed together (according to his will, Spirit and word), groweth into a holy temple unto the Lord.

O ye backsliding children, hear the word of God and make haste, for your way is in darkness, and your path leads to death. Embrace the truth and learn wisdom, for your comforters have destroyed you and rendered uneven the way in which you must go. Munster and Amsterdam may well be to you an eternal warning and example. When a prophet, said Moses, speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is not the thing which the Lord hath spoken.

O dear Lord! How many innocent hearts have they ruined? How many poor souls have they deceived? What gross shame have they cast upon the word of the Lord? What great abominations have some of them committed under the appearance of good? How have they made the poor, blind magistrates, who are, alas, destitute of a correct understanding of the holy word, to be guilty of innocent blood?

I think it is time you should see and learn to know your lying faithless, and deceiving prophets. They are the foxes which destroy the vineyard of the Lord. These are the thieves and murderers of your souls; false prophets who deny the Lord that bought them; who have directed you, poor erring sheep, by their own lying visions, dreams, and thoughts of their hearts, and have led you against all the Scriptures upon a false and loose foundation.

How like unto those you have become, of whom Ensebius writes, that they walked according to the lusts of their hearts, as the prophets foretold; who denied Paul and the New Testament, and carried with them a book, which they boasted, fell from heaven as a present to them.

So it is with you, O ye entranced (bear with me, for it is the truth which I write).

The prophets you read according to the Jewish understanding. You say the doctrine of Christ and the apostles is at the present time fulfilled; and pretend that there is now another dispensation, &c., and observe not that you thereby deny the Son of God, and gainsay the whole Scriptures; you comfort yourselves with mere lies, as also did disobedient Israel in their time.

Oh dear Lord! How long shall these sore plagues endure? how long shall the name of the Lord through you be blasphemed, and his holy word through you be disgraced? Is it not a grievous error (man phrenzy), that Christ, the Son of the living God, who, brought forth in eternal righteousness, has reconciled heaven and earth by the blood of his cross, with his word of truth, and with the counsels of eternal life, is rejected from your hearts, which he so dearly bought, and which should, so properly be the dwelling place of Christ; and poor, sinful flesh, and mortal man descended from Adam, full of all unrighteousness, haughty speeches, lies and open deception is received by you and adopted in stead.

Oh, beloved children, what are you doing? Are you so thoroughly enchanted that you have lost all reason, intelligence, the Scriptures, and everything, so that you cannot see at all? then may God be merciful unto you. Good children, observe that a letter of the law of Moses could not be changed till the new Moses, Christ Jesus, came, who was promised through the law and the prophets. If then the letter of the law was so strong, effective and firm, and in its time unchangeable, although given only through a servant, and sealed by perishable blood, how much more powerful, effectual, firm, and unchangeable is the free law of the Spirit, which was given through the Son himself, and confirmed by the blood of the eternal covenant.

All who taught anything contrary to the word of Moses, were false prophets, for nothing was to be taken from, nor added thereto, but all appeals were to the law and the testimony, Dent. 4: 2. All the prophets of the present day are false who teach contrary to the Spirit, word, commands, prohibitions, ordinances and example of Christ, even though such should exhibit themselves in appearance, as holier than John, more zeal-

ous than Elias, and more miraculous than Moses.

They persuade you that the doctrine of the apostles is imperfect, but that *they* now teach that which is perfect. This is a deception above all deceptions, as above said, for thereby the creature is honored more than the Creator. Paul does not refer to any better doctrine or perfection other than that which is shown by the doctrine of the apostles, which will abide in everlasting clearness, according to the infallible promise of God, and which we shall receive in the resurrection of the righteous, when all doctrine shall receive an end. This is true, otherwise Paul is at variance with himself, and the true reality is not to be found in Christ.

Again, will you say, then, with the Jews and Scribes, that Elias will come before the great and terrible day, and thus wait for something new?

First, I answer with Christ's own words, that "all the prophets and the law prophesied until John, and if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come," Matt. 11: 13, 14.

Secondly, Even though Elias himself were to come, he dare not teach any thing against the foundation and doctrine of Christ and the apostles, but he must, if he would preach aright, teach and preach conformably to the same, for, by the Spirit, word, actions and example of Christ, all must be judged, and receive the last sentence, otherwise the whole Scriptures are false.

Therefore, one of two things must follow, either that we are not to look for an Elias any more, since John was the Elias who was to come; or if an Elias should come yet, he must propose and teach us nothing but the foundation and word of Christ, according to the Scriptures; for Christ is the man who sits upon David's throne, and shall reign forever in the kingdom, house, and congregation of Jacob.

I would then, herewith sincerely admonish you all to weigh and prove all spirit, doctrine, faith, and conduct, with the Spirit, doctrine and conduct of Christ, and that ye be temperate. All spirits which accord therewith, are from God, but those which are contrary, are from him, who from the begin-

ning has turned Adam and his race aside from God, and has led them by lies onward to death.

If you will not hear, but will ever turn your ears to lies, and believe the deceiving creature more than the infallible Creator; if you set your feet upon slippery places; if you neither fear nor regard Scripture admonitions, nor the power and punishments of God, but reject and set aside all as idle and useless, and suffer yourselves always to be comforted with falsehoods, visions, dreams, splendid delusions, false interpretations and continue, without the cross, on the broad way, then will the righteous Lord send to you mockers and deceivers, and by his righteous judgment suffer you to be led from one ungodly course to another, as may already be seen.

You shall be satiated with lies, vanity, folly and hypocrisy. You will reap the fruits of your wantonness, and at last, with all false prophets and lying wonder workers, you shall hear the words, "I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity," Luke 13: 27.

Be ye then eternally warned and faith-

fully admonished of God. Beware, the day approaches, repent, reform. The word of God is true. Is there any one among you who fears God, let him reflect on what I here write; search the Scriptures and believe the truth, for God hates all liars. Eternal woe and gnashing of teeth will be the portion and reward of the hypocrite; "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God," 2 John 1: 9.

O ye miserable, enchanted children! turn again. If ye knew what it was to forsake the living fountain of Christ, and dig for yourselves dry wells which can neither yield nor hold water, Jer. 2, how soon would you turn your back on the false prophets and their hypocritical lives, surrender yourselves to the true Shepherd of your souls, Christ Jesus, and follow and obey his sure counsel, teaching, admonition, ordinance, and holy example (although in weakness); but alas, enchanting blindness has obscured your understanding. The beloved, merciful Lord grant you eyes to see and hearts to understand; this is our sincere wish, Amen.