

HUE AND CRY: A Bloody Sword

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Words and the images they create are funny things at times, and when used properly, they can communicate far more than one can imagine. In a recent conversation with a former missionary, who worked with one of America's finest missionary organizations, one such statement figuratively cut me to the bone.

In a time of sharing about the move of the Holy Spirit, as the Lord is globally impressing seekers to return to the Hebraic Roots of our faith, an interesting statement was made by a converted native of a distant culture, who through the grace of God has been seeking some of these things. The brother I encountered is an evangelist who is continuing the work of English-speaking missionaries who first brought the good news to his country.

In a desperate need to have the written Word available to continue to proclaim the gospel, the indigenous preacher turned to the American missionary organization for written resources. Without hesitation, the young man was supplied with boxes of New Testaments translated into his native tongue. For this he has been very grateful, and for years—as he matured in his walk of faith—those volumes served their purposes very well as the message about the arrival of Yeshua, the Savior of all humanity, was proclaimed.

But now as he has considered the reality of being a part of Israel, whether adopted, grafted-in, or simply a part of the Commonwealth of Israel by faith (cf. Romans 8:15, 23; 11:17, 19, 23, 24; Galatians 4:5; Ephesians 1:5; 2:12)—all New Testament concepts that have not been buried in the depths of texts like Habakkuk or Philemon—the reality of dealing with Believers who are only equipped with the teachings of the New Testament has begun to overwhelm him. As he was relating, many of the new Believers that he has to deal with do not know what to do when the Apostolic Scriptures refer to “the Law,” and figures of faith like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He himself knows that the Torah forms a substantial part of the background behind the Apostolic Scriptures, but urgently wants to know what to do so that others can gain a fuller picture.

This gentleman has also been a witness to years of slanderous rivalries among the various denominations, who have in a like manner, come to his native land with their own teachings and perspectives on how to win souls and secure their allegiance. In his frustration, as he has faithfully continued the work of the Kingdom among his people, he could never understand why all of the different groups have been so susceptible to the spiritual warfare that was obviously taking its toll—not only on the converted natives—but also among those who serve their respective Christian outlook.

Then it dawned on him one day. As a student of the Scriptures, he knew that the **Word of God** was actually one of the weapons of warfare that is most powerful for fighting the wiles of the Devil. He knew that the Apostle Paul had given a list of some of those weapons, and that the sword of the Spirit was the Word of God:

“And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:17).

He also knew that this sword is most likely the two-edged sword, which the author of Hebrews defines as being sharp enough to cut and separate between the issues of the spirit and the soul:

“For the word of God is living and active **and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit**, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).

Upon considering all of the above and his understanding about the need to consult the whole counsel of God, he came to this astute observation: “**The New Testaments that I am receiving are like double-edged swords without handles.**”

The mental image of what he described grabbed my attention like nothing else in recent weeks.

Can you imagine how much personal blood has been shed from the very hands of those who have spent years brandishing their “handless swords,” without even realizing that their own

hands are dripping with the blood of their own ignorance? How much of that blood would have been spared if we had only known to embrace the whole counsel of God, rather than just the Gospels and Epistles? How much better prepared would these third-world Believers be for the life challenges that they struggle with every day?

I would pray that we could avoid mistakes such as this in the future, as we continue in the pursuit of His Word and the restoration of the entire Holy Writ—as it is *all required* for us to consult for understanding about our Creator God, and our Messiah Yeshua. If we do this, then perhaps the dry valley of bones—when energized by the sword and breath of the Spirit of God—will rise to fulfill its destiny:

“Again He said to me, ‘Prophesy over these bones and say to them, “O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.” Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones, ‘Behold, I will cause breath to enter you that you may come to life’” (Ezekiel 37:4-5).

Until the restoration of all things....

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