

SABBATH THOUGHT 2024-08-03—ANGER, WRATH, MALICE, BLASPHEMY, FILTHY LANGUAGE, & LYING

May God bless you on His Sabbath day!

An epistle is a public treatise, similar to what is called an 'open letter' these days. The epistle of James was written to brethren in "the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad." (Jas. 1: 1-2). Obviously, the location of all twelve tribes was well known. More to the point, he not only knew where they resided but James was acutely aware of how evil the Israelite nations had become. All the tribes of Israel knew the laws of Moses—they were not 'lost' upon them (remember the wise men?), but they had become like the Gentiles around them. James' epistle was intended for the Believers but also seemingly for the unconverted people of those tribes as well. It is hard to imagine that the following was a rebuke meant for the *ekklesia*:

JAMES 4:1-10 Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they* not *come* from your *desires for* pleasure that war in your members? 2 **You lust** and do not have. **You murder and covet** and cannot obtain. **You fight and war.** Yet you do not have because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on **your pleasures.** 4 **Adulterers and adulteresses!** Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an **enemy of God.** 5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"? 6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "**God resists the proud,** But gives grace to the humble." 7 Therefore **submit to God.** Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, **you sinners;** and purify your hearts, **you double-minded.** 9 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom. 10 **Humble yourselves** in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

These are scathing accusations that surely cannot describe true Christians; however, they reflected the national conditions of the "scattered" descendants of Israel then and now.

Satan's main tool for destruction of a nation begins with dividing the citizens by using anger. When one group of citizens is angry toward another, they will respond in kind. Solomon said, "a harsh word stirs up anger" (Prov. 15: 1) and "a wrathful man stirs up strife." (Prov. 15: 18). Harsh words quickly elevate both sides to hatred, or wrath as the Bible calls it in places. What is the difference? Hatred is anger that is intense and deeply rooted. The main contrast is that anger tends to fade over time whereas hatred does not. Hatred is a powerful emotion that produces a desire to do EVIL unto others. Hatred plus violence is malice.

Once groups within a nation begin hating one another, the nation is doomed. A nation only exists when the people respect major points of common law and justice. When "the leaven of malice and wickedness"<sup>1</sup> takes hold, it increases just as bread with leaven expands. Law and justice are the victims of unrestrained violence, which is

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<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. 5:8.

followed by utter chaos and destruction. Consider the nations of Africa. Most of their history is one of tortured genocide between tribes even though they are basically 'cousins'—they are not so different from each other as are the Chinese and Russians or even the American Indians and Anglo-Saxons. Neither of those nations or groups murder each other like the Africans. This is not limited to Africans either. Some of the worst genocide has occurred in the Middle East, India, and Asia.

This is the current state within the modern nations descended from Israel. There is hatred with violence—malice—among the people, aligned along so-called political lines. But politics is not the problem because ideological differences are not sufficient to cause hatred and malice. The USA has had differing political parties since its inception. While the Civil War was the result of anger and even hatred, it was a war fought pro-slavery states, who were the *cause* of the division by enslaving people. Moral justification was on the side of those who wanted to free all people from slavery, not the slave-holders who considered slaves to be inferior people unworthy of human rights.

Today, it is the opposite. Take for example the issue of abortion in the USA. In 2022 the US Supreme Court repealed the previously nationally recognized 'right' to abortion. The liberals responded with absolute vitriol. But there was no rational reason for their reaction because the outcome is that women who want an abortion can still get one. NOTHING HAS CHANGED! So why the hatred and violence? It is not from those who 'battled' it in the courts according to the laws of the land. Those who want to force the nation to accept abortion are trying to do it through nefarious and violent means. This is why they will be victorious: a nation is lost when the wicked use hate and violence instead of the legal legislative system!

The abortion issue was just one of many 'crises' used by wicked leaders to stir up anger, hatred, and malice through their primary tool—the media. ALL media, both liberal and conservative, no longer 'report' the news—they shout it with all the rage they can muster. Recently, the media aired videos of members of the US Congress who said they were disappointed that President Trump was NOT assassinated. The liberal media did not hide their approval and the conservatives called them names that were once disallowed in the media. But the response of liberals is not unusual. Of the four US presidents who were assassinated and the now three who were wounded, only one was a Democrat (John F. Kennedy, despised because he was Catholic). The liberals have been using anger and hatred for a long time but it has now become the expected delivery for conservatives as well.

Forget about the false narratives of lying broadcasters. The real issue now is malice. Lies cause deception whereas hatred produces violence. Deception can be overcome but violence requires violence to halt it. The liberal media today NEVER condemn the violence of thefts, arsons, and murders because they WANT to destroy the country. They are all pawns of Satan. They will prosper, too, because conservatives are weak cowards who focus on their lusts for power and money. None of this is particularly unique or shocking. It existed in Paul's time:

COLOSSIANS 3:5-7 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth:  
**fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.**  
6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,  
7 **in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.**

Paul said the nations of the earth were full of “fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.” Believers “**once walked** [and] lived in” those ways but put them to death in the watery grave of baptism. True Christians are a new creation, walking in the fruits of the Spirit and no longer having anything to do with their old ways. However, what Paul said next is extremely disturbing:

COLOSSIANS 3:8-9 But **now** you yourselves [*brethren*] are to **put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language** out of your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, since **you have put off the old man with his deeds,**

If those of the *ekklesia* “put off the **old** man with his **deeds,**” (fornication, et al) then why does Paul then tell them “**now**”—AFTER baptism—to put away anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language, and lying?!? These are TERRIBLE and HORRIFIC accusations laid upon the *EKKLESIA*.

Sadly, they *still* exist. Who has not witnessed such evil behaviors or been the target of them by brethren or ministers? Anger, wrath, and malice in churches are rampant. And just like the world, the source is typically the leaders. How many times has a minister condemned a Believer to eternal death in the Lake of Fire or judged brethren to be ‘children’ of Satan? I myself have heard ministers say these things ears. Too many leaders are sowing seeds of anger that grow into hatred.

In addition to anger, hatred, and malice Paul mentions blasphemy, filthy language, and lying. Blasphemy is vilification, which is abusive slander. Filthy language is corruptive influence. There is no need to explain abusive slander (blasphemy) or lying but an example of corruptive influence is when someone says, “those of church XYZ *may* be God’s people but they do not have as much truth or biblical understanding or they are not as ‘converted’.” Another is prohibiting brethren from different churches to gather together. Why is that corruptive influence (filthy language)? Because it casts dispersions on BRETHREN and DIVIDES what should otherwise be unified people of God!

Blasphemy (abusive slander), filthy language (corruptive influence), and lying have been around a long time but the results of them are now fast filling the hearts of Believers with anger, hatred, and even malice. Paul said “**NOW you yourselves are to put off all these**”. They cause divisions among members of the ONE Body of Christ!

These problems existed long ago in almost every city where Believers resided. Paul rebuked the Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, and Colossians<sup>2</sup>; Peter rebuked brethren in Asia Minor including Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Bythnia<sup>3</sup>; and James rebuked those of the Israelite nations<sup>4</sup>. As far as I can tell, only the Philippians and Thessalonians escaped reproach.

The churches seem to be a decade or so behind the culture of the country. Today, this country is beyond anger and consumed with hatred and malice. At this point, some Believers are fulfilling Scripture with their hatred:

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<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. 3:3-4; Gal. 5:9-10, 12, 15; Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:11.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. 1:1; 3:8-17.

<sup>4</sup> Jas. 4:1-10.

MATTHEW 24:10 “And then many [*of the saints*] will be offended, will betray one another, and **will hate one another**.

What follows hatred is malice and violence. Decades ago, brethren fellowshiped regularly in each other’s homes—serving and helping each other. Then came the Big Divide. While it had to happen, the one Big Divide to escape the heresy of the time has become hundreds of smaller divides. Why? Because leaders resorted to blasphemy (abusive slander), filthy language (corruptive influence), and lying about other leaders resulting in anger and even hatred among the brethren. And they use their MEDIA to do it!

Who gets together in homes to eat a meal and fellowship on the Sabbath anymore (much less during the week)? Who has more than one or two *true* friends (not familiar acquaintances) among the brethren anymore? And the real kicker: Who has more friends than *enemies* (brethren separated by offenses) anymore? THE ANGER, WRATH, MALICE, BLASPHEMY, FILTHY LANGUAGE, AND LYING HAS GOT TO **STOP!**

It happened to believers in Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Colosse, Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Bythnia, and the scattered Isralite tribes. For every rebuke, Paul, Peter, and James begged them to put on love. These divisions were motivation for Paul’s incredible poem of love to the Corinthians. Here is a sampling of others:

GALATIANS 5:13-14 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but **through love serve one another**. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

EPHESIANS 4:2-3 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, **bearing with one another in love**, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

COLOSSIANS 3:12-14 Therefore, as **the elect of God**, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13 **bearing with one another**, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. 14 But **above all these things put on love**, which is the bond of perfection.

And it is happening today among Believers around the world. The warning of Scripture is clear and the urgency cannot be overstated. How long does it take to repent and actually put *aside* anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language, and lying? How long does it take to then put on agape love? How long will it take to reconcile all the offenses caused by anger, hatred, and malice? Above all, how much TIME is left to any Believer?

May God’s grace and peace be upon you!

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