

*"I did not come with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:1-2).*

## Conspiracies - Who Cares?

**"Do not say, A conspiracy! to everything of which this people says, A conspiracy! And do not fear their fear, nor be afraid. Sanctify Jehovah of Hosts Himself, and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread. And He shall be a sanctuary for you, but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of falling to both the houses of Israel, for a trap and for a snare to the people of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble and fall and be broken, and be snared, and be taken" (Isaiah 8:12-15 MKJV).**

From time to time, we hear of various persons or groups conspiring to take over the world, plotting against Christians, seeking to diminish the population of the earth, and so on. Nominal Christian circles are rife with such rumors and theories. I'm thankful for such occasions because they provoke me to delve into yet other areas of knowledge and adventure concerning the Lord and His ways and thoughts.

In pondering these things and asking the Lord to direct us, I began to see so many "conspiracies" in the Scriptures and particularly how the Lord dealt with them and counseled us by the Scriptures to respond. For example, the Pharisees came to Jesus, advising Him to flee because Herod would kill Him. A purported conspiracy. What was the Lord's answer? "Go tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected. Nevertheless I must walk today and tomorrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." (He knew the sovereignty of God as should we as we grow in Him).

The conspiratorialists came with their fear mongering (and the danger seems to have been true, considering that Jesus told them to reply to Herod). What was the Lord's reaction? It was not to give glory, no, not for one moment, to those in power who would exercise evil. He neither condemned nor resisted Herod, and He did not try to warn others against him.

No, He immediately focused those concerned on Himself and on what He was doing, what the Father was doing by Him. He completely ignored what Herod was doing. What He was saying in effect was: "What Herod does is not the issue; what God does is" and, "Fear not Herod, nor man but God." He had said, "Fear not those who can kill the body and not the soul but fear the One Who can destroy both body and soul in hell." And a point to be made, of which one may take note: In the end, was He slain by Herod? No...He was slain by those who preached conspiracy. Who indeed is the enemy?

And what did Jesus have to say about the incident wherein Pilate mingled the blood of some Galileans with their sacrifices? Did He say, "He must be stopped?" or, "Watch out for Pilate?" Or did He hand out videos on the secret machinations and inside information of Pilate and his cohorts? No, He said, "Watch out for sin; sin is the issue; the enemy is within; repent, otherwise you shall all likewise perish."

Conspiratorialists put the onus and emphasis on others, on externals, on dangers, on men, rather than on sin within themselves or others. Repentance, faith and obedience to God are the true and sole ways of deliverance. Where can one run

WITH his sin from judgment, seeing it is God Who ordains all powers who "bear not the sword in vain"?

Paul says that those who resist rulers, resist the ordinance of God and thus receive to themselves judgment. When did Jesus and His disciples ever resist or teach to resist the secular authorities, even if they were as pagan and ruthless as were the Romans? And what man (ruler or otherwise) or army of men can do harm to the one who obeys and believes God, having repented? And if he is delivered, is it because he can save himself? Can he "trust in the arm of flesh," or can he "lean unto his own understanding" and deliver himself? No, salvation is of the Lord; He is Savior, and He alone.

What about Herod's conspiracy to slay the newborn King of Israel? It was prophesied by Jeremiah that children would die but that the One Whose life was sought for destruction would be delivered. God warned Joseph of the danger and they fled to safety. Could He not have warned and/or saved them all so that none perished? Of course. But that was not the will of God. In His sovereignty, "Rachel had to weep for her children" at the time, for a time, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled. So then there are "conspiracies" which are inescapable if God so chooses, and utterly impotent if God so chooses. It isn't ours to fear nor to get caught up in these things whatsoever.

This is not to say that there may not be a time of flight or to hide away, beware of dangers from which God would deliver us, even as with Jacob from Esau, Moses from Egypt, Joseph and Mary from Herod, David from Saul, Paul leaving Jerusalem, to give a few examples. These events are all examples of conspiracies. To everything there is a time and season. And in none of these cases was there defiance, condemnation, resistance of authority nor onus placed on externals.

Also note that these particular sets of circumstances were at the onset of preparation of those souls for future fulfilment, even rulership of one form or another. Take for example the circumstances concerning David and Saul. Speak of a conspiracy! Here we have a king and an entire army at his disposal, determinedly seeking to destroy a poor and innocent yet believing man, with a rag tag band of social misfits and rejects. David and his companions were on the run, living in the wilderness, in caves, having to avoid even the general populace lest it should deliver him over to Saul. And why was all this "conspiracy" happening? To prepare David to replace the conspirator!

What about the conspiracy that fell upon Joseph? Does it get any worse than that? Abruptly separated from family, by family, without warning, very life hanging in the balance, defenseless, begging and pleading ignored, with no apparent deliverer, sold into slavery, all hope of reunion with loved ones lost, in the end left in an Egyptian prison. Result: victory within and without; a savior raised up; the conspirators subject to the victim, all entirely the will of God Who meant it for good.

Are conspiratorialists unwittingly short circuiting potential "Joseph victories"? Are they proposing to preserve the flesh? Certainly! And all in the Name of Christ Who died on the cross to deliver us from the flesh.

In other words, these false prophets deny the Lord's already finished work on the cross and/or the necessity of its application to themselves and ourselves. What would have happened had Peter succeeded in his words to the Lord, saying, "Be it far from You, Lord: this shall not be to You"? Isn't that what conspiratorialists are in part saying? That we should not suffer, that we should live to hide and/or to escape carnal suffering? But what did Jesus have to say to Peter? That he was savoring the things not of God but of men, that such thinking and attitude was satanic, contrary to the ways and purposes of God.

And what about this reaction to a conspiracy, required of the people of Judah, God's people, by God Himself? Jeremiah, by the Lord, instructs all of Judah to submit to Nebuchadnezzar, the "conspirator," Jeremiah thus becoming a conspirator himself, against his own people yet, in the eyes of the Jews.

In submitting to, rather than "reproving" and "exposing" the "works of darkness," the "illuminati" of the day, (as conspiratorialists propose they ought to do out of Christian duty), the Jews' lives would be spared! Those who resisted would be destroyed, not according to men but by the will of God. Are not those who walk in fear and resistance of the powers that be (and none can have power unless granted from above, as Jesus declared to Pilate) destroying themselves even as they run about?

And what are they doing? Do they know? Besides trying to save themselves, do they think they can scare people into the Kingdom of God? Is that how God converts sinners? Men enter into the Kingdom by faith in God, not fear of man, through "much tribulation" and suffering, not self-preservation.

Fear of man brings a snare; faith in God brings salvation. It isn't a matter of, "Watch out; if you don't repent, the devil is gonna get you," but "Repent; God loves you; the Kingdom of Heaven is upon you; have courage: man can do nothing to you outside the will of God; He is in charge; He is in control; the Kingdom of God reigns over all; JESUS CHRIST IS LORD!" Without faith it is impossible to please God but "the wicked flee when no man pursues" and the "fearful...shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone..."

But these people consumed with the preaching of conspiracies seek their own glory, for one thing. They love to promote themselves, getting attention with sensationalism, impressing others with knowledge so-called. Conspiratorialists unwittingly give glory to Satan, to evil, to powerful men and not to God.

Powerful men? In the sight of men maybe, but utterly impotent to God. Once when Elisha and his servant were surrounded by a large, hostile army complete with horses and chariots, the servant was afraid. After all, speak of a living, present conspiracy in full bloom!

What was Elisha's reply to him? "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." He then prayed that his servant's eyes be opened and when they were, he saw that "the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." Rather than entertain his unbelieving companion's fears, Elisha prayed that his eyes be opened. (II Kings 6)

Psalm 2 also describes a conspiracy: "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

But then the psalmist goes on to say that "He that sits in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision." As for those that are His, ought they to quake and tremble at the conspiracies, given they are real (how much less the imagined ones which they often are)?

Of and to them (the saints, the corporate body of Christ) it is said, "You shall break them with a rod of iron; you shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Of and to them, I say, because His sons are in Him and He in them. His heritage is ours; we reign with Him, in Him, by Him. It is that heritage of the saints, granted by our Elder Brother Who is not ashamed to call us His brethren, members in particular of His body.

What are conspiracies, even if real, but the works of men? And of these it is written, "Concerning the works of men, by the Word of Thy lips, I have kept myself from the paths of the destroyer" (Psalm 17:4).

Indeed, "the wicked flee when no man pursues" (Proverbs 28:1) but "the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits" (Daniel 11:32).

"If God be for us, who can be against us?" asks Paul. The psalmist declares, "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him: fret not yourself because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked devices to pass...for evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth" (Psalm 37:7,9) and, "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do to me? (Psalm 118:6).

It goes on to say, "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" (verses 8 and 9). Are we not putting confidence in men and princes, having fear, reverence, respect (whatever you wish to call it) when we dwell on alleged conspiracies and all their morbid details? The psalmist also writes, "The Lord is my light and my salvation: whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27:1).

Let us take one brief look at a reversal of a conspiracy situation. We have a people (the children of Israel) who are enslaved by a tyrannical nation (Egypt). In the eyes of man, this is the successful fulfilment of a conspiracy. Now consider that Moses and his brother, in the power of God, with but two staves, marched into Egypt, and delivered an entire nation out of the oppressive hand of the power of that day.

Initially, Moses too was afraid to go to do the job but God promised to be with him. How puny and powerless is the greatest strength of man! And also consider: Did Moses have to know all the details about Egypt? Did he need secret intelligence and a strategy? He didn't even know that "all those men who sought his life were

dead" (Exodus 4:19). Nor would it have mattered one whit had they still been alive.

And another point, a very important one: As with Joseph, wherein a conspiracy successfully practiced on him turned out to be the very will of God for the good of His people, so with Moses and the children of Israel. In this conspiracy of the Egyptians to exploit the Hebrews for their own gain, the Lord had determined and ordained to form a nation. He had made a promise to Jacob centuries earlier in these words: "I am God, the God of your father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of you a great nation: I will go down with you into Egypt; and I will also surely bring you up again..." (Gen. 46:3,4)

My, my! So God even ordains conspiracies and enters into them with us, only to prosper and to make us what He purposes us to be!

No, it is for the wicked to dwell on conspiracies and to flee them, not knowing or acknowledging that the Lord REIGNS SUPREME OVER ALL THINGS, BOTH GOOD AND EVIL. And it is for the righteous to walk by faith, to give thanks and to praise the Lord of lords, the King of kings (including conspiring ones) Who does all things well and for His glory! Praise the Lord!

Victor Hafichuk

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