

Immunology notes.

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On missionary labours

Jer. 23/21-25

The apostle Peter (2 Peter 4, 3) warns his brethren that false prophets would arise in the church, as there had been among the people of Israel. and in so far as Israel after the flesh is typical of the true Israel, it may be assumed that the false prophets of Israel are typical of those of the church. It will appear also that the language in which the fathers are described applies most aptly again to their spiritual children. So it is with the word of the Lord ~~here~~ as expressed here by Jeremiah. In reading such a passage, we may see described and reprobated the self styled ambassadors of God, who in our own times have overrun the earth. The exercise of such a ministry is not an honour any man may take unto himself, it is not a calling to which any man may resort, and expect to be heard and believed on the bare authority of his own word. When Paul remarks (Heb 1/11) in regard to the Levitical priesthood, that no man took that honour to himself, he adds that even Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest, but He that said unto him, 'Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee'. How daring then to imagine that the offices of the church

are open to all who choose to fill them after going through a specified training. None of the apostles took upon themselves their office; they were called of Christ, chosen or called of Him whose voice must needs be obeyed. There is no example of any one so ordained being consulted or urged, a considering as to accepting or declining the call. With a Divine call, there is no choice but to obey. When Christ called his disciples generally, ~~he went~~ he went into a mountain and called whom he would, and they came to him; not one would or could refuse. (Mark 3/13). The most lowly cannot enter the lowest room of the house of God without this call (John 6/44-5), how presumptuous then is the claim of those who pretend to a Divine call, to have a mission ^{from} or any mandate ^{of} God to intercede with God for others, or to be in any sense messenger or ambassador of the Most High. such as were the apostles. We may feel the more jealous of such claims when the self assumed office is made an office of gain. Some gain wealth by it, and all, at the worst, a livelihood, contrary

to the example and exhortation of the only true and assiduous
who, by their self-denials, unwearied labours, and super-
natural gifts proved the truth of their claims to speak in the
name of God. 2 Cor 12/12-13 v 17. 2 Cor 11/9-15. 2 Thes 3/8-9.
1 Thes 2/9. Acts 18/3. Acts 20/33-5. We will see then
that the true apostles were ordained of God, suffered for his
sake, laboured with their own hands, - wrought signs and
wonders, and so gave proof of the truth of their claims to
speak in the name of God. When the 12 were first chosen, there
is nothing said to indicate that they had any special qualifications
for their work, or any desire to fill the office to which they were
called. They simply received the call, and obeyed it. (Mark 3/13)
Their own will played no part in the matter; - they had no
choice but to obey the Divine will. When a successor
was appointed to Judas, it was by lot, with a direct
appeal to God to show whom he chose. And in the case
of Paul, never was there a stronger example of the Divine
will, overriding the will of man. So it was with those
who could say with truth, - Now then, we are ambassadors
for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray
you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. 2 Cor 5/20

The general commission given to the apostles is recorded ^{in Matt. 28:19-20} and Mark 16:14-18. According to Mark, the charge to them was in these words. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature", and it is to be gathered from the testimony of the writings of the apostles, that the charge so committed to them, was by them fulfilled. Paul in his epistle to the Col. says of the word of the truth of the gospel "which is come unto you, even as it is also in all the world, bringing forth fruit and increasing". He speaks again of the hope of the gospel, "which" he says, "ye have heard", and he adds, "which was preached to every creature which is under Heaven". In the same speech, when writing to the Romans of faith coming by hearing and hearing by the word of God, - Paul adds, quoting from the 4th Psalm: "But I say, have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. Such expressions are too explicit to admit of doubt as to the breadth of their application. It amounts to this at all events,

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that Paul understood his own labours, together with the labours of the other apostles, within the span of their own lifetime, to have fulfilled their master's charge - so ye abroad into all the world, - and to have fulfilled also the prediction of the 19th Psalm, and consequently all other predictions of a like nature in the o. t. scriptures.

It would ill become any who esteem the s. to be the word of God to reason that Paul has exaggerated, or has erred in a question of fact concerning the observance of a commandment of Christ, and concerning the fulfilment of a prediction of scripture. We might as well reason that the evangelist erred in the report of the commandment, or that the prophet erred in his prediction. All who see sufficient grounds to esteem the s. as expressing the mind of God through the pens of human beings, will feel they have no alternative to the conclusion that the prophet who made the prediction, and the evangelist who recorded the commandment, and the apostle who declared the fulfilment of both, are one and all not speaking their own minds, but the mind of God. In short

giving due consideration to this as themselves, the conclusion is forced upon us, that in whatever sense the commandment was given to the apostles, it was in the same sense fulfilled by them in their lifetime. We will better understand, reverence, and obey the ~~ss.~~ if we put from our minds the consideration of the various scribes whose pens have written them, and rather regard the whole as the expression of one mind, the mind of the Disposer of all. In this view the mind which declares the fulfilment of commandments and prophecies is the same which gave the commandments and made the predictions, and if we esteem this of sufficient power to inspire men to foretell future events, we cannot doubt his power to inspire others in future times, to declare the fulfilment of the word that had gone before. We conclude then that, when Paul declares the labours of the apostles to have ~~been~~ fulfilled Christ's commandment to preach the gospel to every creature, and to have fulfilled the prediction of the 14th Psalm, they had indeed done so. In their labours the apostles

were assisted and ministered to by evangelists ordained for the purpose. Timothy was one, - being exhorted to do the work of an evangelist. Philip was another, being called, Philip the evangelist. But no instructions are left to the church to appoint successors, nor is there anything to indicate that the office was to be continued. Had it been the Divine intention that this office should outlive the age of the apostles, some guidance would surely have been left as to the qualifications fitting men to the office, and the duties of the office would have been defined as has been done for the offices of elders and deacons. The ss. are however silent, strengthening our view that the mission of the apostles was fulfilled in their lifetime. The same conclusion is again to be drawn from the nature of the qualification the apostles considered necessary in a successor to Judas, as well as from the nature of an apostle's chief duty. Both the qualification of an apostle and ^{the nature of} his mission were such as to make it impossible for them to have successors. A necessary qualification for an apostleship was to have seen Christ the Lord, and the duty laid upon an apostle was to bear witness of what he had seen and heard. This appears in the calling both of Matthew and of Paul to their office. It appears also in the nature of the words which Christ addressed to his disciples, generally, and again in the apostles' expressed understanding of their mission.

The example of Matthias then, the example of Paul, the nature of Christ's words, and the apostles' expressed understanding of their office, all agree in showing that, in the nature of things, neither the qualifications nor the duties of an apostle could pass beyond that one generation. When the apostles chose a successor to Judas, they said: "Of those men who have accompanied with us all the time Jesus went in and out among us, beginning at the baptism of John unto that same day that He was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." When Ananias addressed Paul he said: "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee that thou shouldst know his will, and see that just one, and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth; for thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard." In these two instances it appears that the qualifications of an apostle was to have seen and heard the just one, and that his duty was to bear witness to what he had seen and heard, especially the evidence of the resurrection of Christ. The apostles did not bear witness to what other men had seen and heard, but to what they had themselves seen and heard, and if this be the principal duty of an apostle, those who can do no more than repeat the report of others cannot

be apostles. Christ's own words to his chosen apostles ^{agree with} support this view. He said to them: "Ye shall be witnesses, because ye have been with me from the beginning," and again, "Ye shall bear witness unto me, both in Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." The apostles' expressed understanding of the nature of their mission is equally in harmony. Paul, in vindicating to the Cor. his claims to his office said: "Am I not an apostle? - Have I not seen Christ the Lord?" and in the exercise of his duty we find him before Gentiles and Kings, and the children of Israel, repeatedly bearing witness to what he had seen and heard. See also to the same purpose John's words, 1 John 1:3. All the apostles, with great power, bear witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and mightily convinced both Jew and Gentile, supporting their witness to what they had seen by showing how all the law and the prophets were fulfilled in Christ. It is clear that, since the apostles were taken away, there have been no men in like manner qualified, and in this view it must appear in the highest degree presumptuous for any to imagine they have any call to go abroad into the world to preach, or any mission to fulfil such as was required of the apostles, or any influence to save souls, or to bring souls to Christ. Christ promised to be with his ^{apostles} disciples, not only during their lifetime, but to the end of the world.

He was with them when they preached by word of mouth, and He has been with them ever since, - and is with them still in the written words which they have left for all time, whereby they, being dead, yet speak. They speak with effect as no man can speak, and will continue so to speak to the end of the world. The apostles alone can say with truth: - "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you, in Christ's stead (or on behalf of Christ) be ye reconciled to God. They speak to us now in their writings as they did of old time by word of mouth, and nothing beyond their testimony, and its power upon the conscience is required for the conversion of sinners. This alone makes men wise unto salvation, it turns them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, it sets their troubled minds at rest, and gives them hope in view of death and the grave. No human influence is of no avail, no man can teach his brother to know the Lord (John 6/45). Consistency with such a view of the Divine ~~will~~ ^{will} and the Divine power, requires of us to abstain from compassing sea and land to make proselytes. All men are able to read, or to hear read, Moses and the prophets and the gospel, and if they hear not them, neither will they hear us. There is therefore no

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need for us to creep into private houses, or to cause our voice to be heard in the streets, or in any way to thrust our views upon others. The only scriptural ways of promoting the cause of Christ are to attend to the public reading and expounding of thers. in the church, and to attend to the public observance of the ordinances of the church, the breaking of bread, fellowship, and prayer; and also to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in us with meekness and fear. To go beyond these instructions which the apostles have left is to add to the word, which is as great an offence, to take from it, as it is said; "Ye shall not add unto the word that I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you." and again; - "Every word of God is pure; He is a shield unto them that put their trust in him; add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee and thou be found a liar." Such admonitions together with the most solemn words of the Root and Offspring of David, at the close of divine revelation, (Rev 22/18. 19) should deter us from changing any of the ordinances of God and to adding to or taking from His commandments. After the death of the apostles, their writings

were collected, and now their written words, together with the Jewish scriptures, are the two witnesses of whose testimony we read (Rev 11.). They are then likened to two olive trees, and two candlesticks standing before the Lord of the earth. The long period during which the power and cunning of the clergy withheld the knowledge of the ss. from the mass of the people is there predicted under the figure of prophesying clothed in sackcloth, which is the garment of captivity. They are assumed for slain, and their return to power is likened to a resurrection after their captors had supposed them indeed for ever. "The spirit of life from God entered into them and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them that saw them, and they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither, - and they ascended up to heaven in a cloud and their enemies beheld them." Another similar prediction regarding them was made to John by the vision he had of a little book which at the word of the angel he ate up, and of which the angel said, Thou must prophesy again, before many peoples and nations and tongues and kings. It is an historical fact that there have been two distinct publications of the gospel, one by the apostles by word of mouth, and another by their writings on the discovery of the art of printing. Between

these two publications a long period of captivity intervened, at
the close of which the captors made every possible effort to kill the word
by stopping the publications, and burning every copy that could be
discovered. It is hard to understand how men can compare these
facts with the predictions and not perceive in both the hand of God.
It is true that the second publication of the gospel has been in a large
degree accomplished by the instrumentality of men who have taken
upon themselves the titles of the apostles, but their self-assumed
labours and unsupported claims do not constitute them either
successors to the apostles, or even faithful followers. As the
church is not intended to move in this matter, and as the word
carry the word of God abroad appears, when tried by the word, to be
unfaithful stewards, we conclude that it is a matter in which
it has been the divine will to make his enemies an instrument
to the fulfilment of his purpose, for all things, even the opposition
and persecution of the adversary, work together for good to them
that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.
The broad fact remains that the word has indeed gone forth, and
we know that, by its influence, the elect of all nations have been,
are, and will be gathered into the fold of the good shepherd of
Israel, who knows his sheep, and himself seeks them.

out, not one of his little ones shall perish, - their salvation does not depend on the feeble efforts of their fellow men, but on Him who has said, (read Ephiel 34(11-17)) The manner in which their salvation is accomplished appears from Paul's words to the Romans, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of ~~the Lord~~ shall be saved". He adds, - "How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed, and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful upon the mountains as the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things". We may take special notice of the words, - How shall they preach except they be sent? Unless the modern ambassadors can prove that they are sent, we have no justification to regard them as no better than wolves in sheep's clothing. To such Jeremiah's words (text) apply with much force. "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran, I have not spoken to them yet they prophesied".

We do not see from vs. that any but the apostles were sent to preach, and we think alone of them and of their great Master as "beautiful upon the mountains".

'preaching the gospel of peace'. This was the glorious mission of the apostles, a mission not yet finished, for they still preach to us in their writings. All we can now do is to remind one another of their words, and comfort and edify one another with much discourse upon them. This is all that pastors and teachers in the church can do. Do what they will, or think what they will, they can bring us new revelation to man, and so cannot preach as the apostles preached. We can but enquire into the things that are revealed to us by the ministry of the apostles and prophets, and so grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Note.

If it has been the divine purpose that the visible church on earth was to appear only for brief periods, & to be empowered of power, & to be deprived of supernatural gifts, it is obvious that it would not have the means to spread the ss. over the world. This has been accomplished, partly by the interests of commerce, and partly by wolves in sheep clothing, and probably in a small degree by true disciples, but the duty of spreading the ss. is not laid upon the church. It has not been and was not designed to be sufficiently powerful to accomplish such an end.

The Lord has taken his own way to fulfil his own purpose.
He himself fights for his people, and it is for us to
"stand still", and to take heed lest we put our hands
to the ark, or bring upon ourselves the reproach. "Who
hath required this at your hand?"

... that has been our task in the church, and we
... think what they will, the people have
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Copy

W. John Sandeman
V. P. B.

London 20 July 1908

You may have heard that our dear old friend Mr Loveday has been ill for some days past with an attack of jaundice, and confined to his bed. He has of late been failing much, due to the infirmities of age and natural decay. The doctor considered it advisable that, during his illness, he ought not to be left alone, so the last few nights Miss Ross Baxter, and Miss Katie Sandeman have alternately been with him. It is now necessary for him to have a nurse with him during the night.

Though he is weak in body, he seems wonderfully clear in his mind, and is much exercised in regard to a matter that usually recurs at this season of the year as to our custom of going away to the country on the excuse of health and so being away on the Sabbath days, thus as he considers leaving the Lord's table, as it were despising the great privilege granted to us of assembling together to partake of this ordinance.

He feels that this custom has of late years been increasing among us, and that we ought to consider

whether, if it be necessary to have a change, then
we should visit a part of the country near at hand,
so that we can arrange to be present on the Sabbath
days at the ordinances.

The passages of the scriptures which he thinks
we do well to observe are Isaiah Chapter 58 - the
whole of the chapter, and Isaiah 50 v 10 & 11

I do not know whether I have expressed clearly
the message he desires to convey. His remarks seem
in agreement with Hebrews Chap 10 v 23-25

He desires us to write to you, and get counsel
from you and your brother, and we feel that
in doing this, your remarks would be both
acceptable to himself and to us all.

Our number is so reduced that the absence of
even one or two is much felt, as it must
also be among you.

My brother Edward joins me in love
to you and your brother.

Yours

(signed) Henry Jones

Reply

Mr Henry Young

v. d. B.

Bearsden 26 July 1908

Confirming card posted last week, the view of the question of attendance at the ordinances expressed by our aged friend is just what I have frequently heard in the public doctrine on Sabbath day, - frequently in conversation, and once from the elders at our love feast when neglect of the ordinances was so marked as to call for rebuke before all. The only scripture I remember being quoted in connection is Hebrews 10/23-25. Paul appears to emphasize his exhortation by warning us of the consequence of neglecting it. He first exhorts us to hold fast our profession, to consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works, to exhort one another, and not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together, and he then adds, "For if we sin wilfully" &c. If we hear the apostle bidding us not forsake the assembly, and if we do forsake it, is not that wilful disobedience? We then sin, not in ignorance, but wilfully, and we deserve the judgment,

and fiery indignation Paul warns us to anticipate, and to fear.
In regard to Isaiah 58, does not the prophet here acknowledge
the observance of the formalities, while he reproves the neglect
of pure and undefiled religion? The words are: "They seek
me daily and delight to know my ways as a nation that
did righteousness, and forsake not the ordinances of
their God. They ask of me the ordinances of justice, they
take delight in approaching God." Then follows reproof,
and in conclusion, an exhortation to lawful observance
of the Lord's Holy day. Every day brings happiness to
some, and misery to others, yet the day itself is neither
good nor evil. A holy day is a day devoted to any
particular purpose, and the Lord's Holy day is the
one day in seven set apart to observe all things com-
manded, which things keep us in memory of the
hope so graciously given to frail erring suffering
sinful mortals, - the hope of life and happiness through
all eternity, a hope that springs from the satisfaction
of justice on the cross, not from anything we do ourselves.
This hope was kept before the O.T. church in the rite of
sacrifice, and it is kept before us now in the ordinance of

the supper. The prophet's words seem to suggest that men may attend the appointed ordinance, and yet deserve severe reproof, and we may grasp the reason in observing the prophet's words at the close of the chapter, telling us what we are to do, and what we are not to do. Those he reproves are represented as observing the ordinances. They are therefore not reprov'd for going away for pleasure or profit. Their error is connected with worship. They appear to have been seeking their own pleasure in worship, not the pleasure and the will of God. The reasoning of the prophet may become clearer if we observe this. In this view it is, when assembled on the Lord's day we are not to do our own ways; we are not to ^{find} our own pleasure; we are not to speak our own words; we are to turn away our foot from doing our own pleasure; we are to call the Lord's Holyday honourable; we are to honour Him; we are to delight ourselves in the Lord; we are to call His Sabbath a delight. - How then may we, in the Lord's Holyday, honour Him and delight in Him, not finding our own pleasure, steadfastly turning our foot from such vanity? We err if we imagine we honour God, or please God, by invariably being

present amongst the brethren, yet we would find great pleasure if we could persuade ourselves that we did. We err again if we find our own pleasure in receiving honour of men, because of our punctilious observance of appointed ordinances. We err if we desire the esteem of men because of the ability with which we draw their minds to matters connected with faith and hope. What does give us more pleasure than generous and sincere praise? And what pride exceeds religious pride? And if, in divine service that is what we covet and find, how can we at the same time honour God, and call the Lord's day honourable? We are not then enjoying the perfect Sabbath rest. On the contrary we labour for vanity, for applause; eagerly coveted, though of no enduring value; a contemptible spirit. The Lord appears to be, by Isaiah's ministry, correcting this vain and evil spirit, as He was afterwards to correct it from His own lips in these words; "How can ye believe who receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only." See also Matt²³/4:12. The honour of God should be our one thought and one desire. His good pleasure we should see centred on His beloved Son, not on anything a frail mortal

can do, or say, or think. We should rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh. We should see much in the flesh to humble us, and nothing at all to exalt us. In this spirit, hoping in mercy, we can encourage others in the same hope, and so undo the heavy burdens of those who labour and are heavy laden, and so deal the true bread of life to the hungry, and so cover the naked with imputed righteousness. When the light of the Truth breaks forth as the morning, the Righteousness of Christ goes before us, and the glory of the Lord is our reward. We then take away from the midst of us the yoke, the putting forth of the finger at the noses in the eyes of others, and the speaking of vanity, and we are kind to all men in imitation of Him who is so kind to us. If this be our spirit, we are the merciful who shall obtain mercy.

If the drift of Isaiah's meaning is as here suggested for consideration, those of us who never absent ourselves from the ordinances, may see cause to examine ourselves with fear, which very properly and necessarily rebuking for carelessness and thoughtlessness those who sometimes absent themselves with insufficient cause. No one can afford to glory over another. Thence what we hear from

one another, we are often in the assembly of the church in body, and absent in spirit, our minds wandering far away to worldly cares and worldly pleasures, - more concerned about the esteem of men than the honour of God, and for any good purpose, our bodies might as well be where our thoughts are, far from the divine service, and far from respect to the honour due to God alone.

Here brethren have ~~been~~^{from} of old, been discouraged leaving the ordinances, even when the object is to assemble with brethren not in church order. Frank Barnard, on one occasion, made the contrary choice deliberately, on the plea of supporting the weak; it was pointed out to him that those he called weak, were strong in faith, able to admonish one another; and in no need of any support he could give them. At an earlier date, probably in the seventies, on one of my first visits to London, I heard the contrary view expressed before the whole church, - some of the older ones among you may recall the circumstances. One or two of the brethren had visited Old Buckenham on the Lord's day. The elders at the Love feast commended them, and encouraged other brethren to do likewise. This sounded

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strange to me, and the incident has often come back to mind, questioning myself as to whether, when so impressed, I should have kept silence. I have heard Miss Jane Barnard, in conversation with Mr. Moir, and in defence of some away in summer for recreation, quote the o° . "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." Mr. Moir just gravely shook his head in dissent, and the subject was not pursued further. So far as I have heard, it has never been made a question of discipline, but except in the instances above named I have never heard the practice defended. Those reproofed have acknowledged the justice of the reproof. It is not easy to judge the necessities of others. I can conceive a state of mind or health when a change may be beneficial, and should not be forbidden, even though it do necessitate absenting ones self from the ordinance. The necessity may sometimes be imaginary, but perhaps that is not for us to judge. When the matter was brought before us here at the love feast, an aged sister spoke of her daughter's position with young children and a husband not in the church, and it was heartily conceded that she was not free to choose. With women who are free, it

is different and with men, and I heartily agree with the view that they should not go to places from which they cannot return to be present at the ordinances every Sabbath day.

Our aged brother's faithful admonition should stir us up one and all, and should lead us all to self examination, with love to him, and in desire of a happy release to him when the hour appointed comes, and in love to all the brethren, I hope for the truth's sake. Amen

(signed) ~ John Sandeman ~