

1Corinthians 10:12-18

Dig Deeper, June 18, 2003

NOTE: The following is from *Comments on First and Second Corinthians*, Leslie M. Grant, chapter 10, pp 61-64.

Verse 11 insists that all these things happened to Israel for types. It is not that they occurred by chance, and are taken as convenient lessons; but that the wisdom of God Himself designed the history in such a way that we should have these specific types from which to learn. While they may not have been written *to* us, yet they are written specifically *for* us. In fact, Israel could not realize the significance of these Old Testament types in such a way as can believers today; and we must not lightly estimate their present value. For upon ourselves is come the end of the ages. The probationary ages of conscience, human government, and of law had an end in view, that is, the pure grace of God revealed in the Person of His Son; and we, the recipients of this glorious revelation, are therefore those who, by the Spirit of God, are privileged to benefit the most greatly by past history, which has been designed by God for this very purpose. Let us not ignore or forget a truth so transcendently wonderful.

And one who thinks he stands is warned lest he fall. Is his confidence in himself? Peter had this, and he sadly fell, though not as did Judas, who had no faith whatever. For one who is not born again, that confidence in himself only leads to eternal ruin: on the other hand, as to a believer, self-confidence will lead to a painful fall, but for which there is recovery by the grace of God.

So that verse 12 presses the faithfulness of God, and that it is upon this only that we can safely depend. If temptation comes to a believer, it is not a completely new thing: others too have been similarly tried, no matter how unusual the thing may seem. But God will not allow one to be tempted above his ability to endure it. Let us therefore remember God's faithfulness, and depend thoroughly upon it. He will provide a way out in His own time, that the individual may have grace to bear it. The important thing here is the confidence of faith in the Living God that is the opposite of self-confidence. We cannot stand alone, but God is able to make us stand.

Verse 14 sums up this section with the urgent admonition to "flee from idolatry." This goes back to verse 7 as the first manifestation of the inward working of evil, and is in fact the underlying principle involved from the first of chapter 8 to the end of chapter 10. Paul was himself so purposed to be fully for Christ that no element of idolatry would have a place to enter in; and in this chapter he encourages the Corinthians similarly.

This leads now to the central expression of all true assembly fellowship, the united fellowship of saints with

Christ Himself, and with one another, as the body of Christ. Paul appeals to the wisdom they have in Christ Jesus, and asks that they judge wisely as to his words. Was not the cup in the Lord's supper the fellowship of the blood of Christ? When partaking, one expresses fellowship with the value and significance of the blood of Christ, identification with the atonement fully completed by shedding of that blood. Precious association indeed! And the bread which is broken, is it not the fellowship of the body of Christ? Certainly, His literal body given for us, in which He suffered agony beyond all thought, is to be considered here, ourselves expressing fellowship with the blessing resulting from His dread sufferings, with hearts drawn in appreciation and thanksgiving.

But verse 17 indicates a further application for us here. Believers being many, are one loaf, one body, all being partakers of that one loaf. This is most striking and important. The breaking of bread is the predominant expression of **assembly** fellowship. In doing this we are to give expression to fellowship with the **entire body of Christ**, not with any mere part of it, local or otherwise.

This is a basis we must not ever ignore, or we drop into sectarianism. When Paul wrote, separations had not divided the Church into numerous parties, of course, though the *attitude* of independency and division was threatening harm in Corinth, and had to be reproofed. This being the case, how important it was that they get back to the precious recognition of the one sound principle, basic to all unity in the Church of God. We too must pay greatest attention to this crucial matter.

At the present time, every denomination has its distinct and separate basis of gathering; but any basis that is not that of the entire body of Christ worldwide is in its essence sectarian, however good or however poor may be the attitude or spirit of those who gather on such grounds. Many may acknowledge the truth of the one body; and urge that, on this account, there should be interdenominational fellowship; but this is not at all really acknowledging the only *basis* of fellowship, for in this case, **various bases are retained, and their inconsistency with one another ignored**. And more seriously, God's basis is ignored, a basis far more important than is our enjoyment of fellowship. Faith therefore would cause the believer to **leave every other basis, and gather on God's one basis**, not adding anything to the declared truths of Scripture in these matters. The breaking of bread, in these verses, is seen clearly to be **not at all individual**, but connected with the Assembly, the body of Christ, and it is only rightly

observed when its basis of the one body is recognized as its principle of unity, and of gathering.

Israel after the flesh is again used in illustration of these things. When an animal was sacrificed on the altar, those who ate of the sacrifice were thereby identified with the altar. The serious question of association is that which is pressed here. If we are having fellowship with Christ and

His body, as expressed in the breaking of bread, is it consistent at the same time to have fellowship with what is

contrary to Him?

End of extract from L. M. Grant

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