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The third Prayer of Collect for Good Friday found in the 1928 Book of Common Prayer reads thusly:

O MERCIFUL God, who hast made all men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor desirest* the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; Have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics; and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy flock, **that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one fold under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord,** who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

I believe this prayer comports perfectly with the message spread throughout the Old and New Testament that God's people are not decided by race, national pride, gender, or conditions of servitude, but by that same saving faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – the same taught by the Lord Jesus Christ and His Apostles. In the Anglican Orthodox Church, we believe in Apostolic Succession of an episcopate that derives from the direct lineage of the Apostles. but only insofar as that succession includes the sound and true DOCTRINAL teachings of the Apostles. Any bishop or priest who teaches doctrines foreign to those of the Apostles is no part of the Church of God.

According to the Oxford Advanced Dictionary, the word 'remnant' is defined as "a small piece of fabric that is left when the greater portion has been sold." To the tailor, it is that part that is cut away from the pattern and cast in the wastebasket.

It may seem strange to some readers of this devotion that the Remnant of God are not the whole professing Church of today, but only a small remnant thereof. The larger church has embraced a gospel that does not resemble that taught by the Lord Jesus Christ and which accepts every sin as righteous, and every good as evil. This is the whole cloth of religion today. The large and opulent 'worship centers', the fawning TV evangelists demanding 'seed money of faith' from their poor following – these represent the fine apparel tailored from the whole cloth called the church; but the trimmings that are cut away from the patterned edges of the cloth to construct the modern church monstrosity is that which the tailor values little and which he discards in the waste basket. But it is this remnant that is the part so highly valued by God for its humility and lack of worth in the eyes of the world.

Large denominational churches began, perhaps, with a dream to serve God and to feed His people, but, in the process of time, the institution itself became the object of their dreams rather than the One to whom it was to be dedicated¹. They came to love grandeur more than humility and reverence for the King of Kings. They have become wealthy on the backs of their pawns of adherence. Their greatest divisions arise over building programs, interior décor, and other materialistic concerns rather than upon serious doctrinal issues for which they were intended in the first place. As mainline churches opt for the greater sins of abomination to the Lord, perhaps the words of Isaiah should ring with ever more terror in the ears of those churches, "***Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.***" (Isaiah 1:9) I need not remind the reader Sodom and Gomorrah are precisely the direction to which they pitched their doctrinal tents today with the embrace of homosexuality and murder of innocent babies in their mother's wombs!

But there ever remains a Remnant of God's people – the true Israel of God. Not only are these considered to be a "peculiar people" in the eyes of the world, but in the eyes of the churches as well. "***But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.***" (1 Pet 2:9-10)

This remnant are pilgrims and strangers in the world who seek a better city of God. ⁸ By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. ⁹ By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: ¹⁰ For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. ¹¹ Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. ¹² Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. ¹³ These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were

¹ Only one thing can come first. That is a cardinal principle of life, as Jesus told us in Luke 16:13: **No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.** Thus, you must decide who comes first, in the case of these 'churches' – The institution or God. The AOC has chosen God.

persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. ¹⁴ For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. ¹⁵ And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. ¹⁶ But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." (Heb 11:7-16) Strangers are shunned by the worldly community. So are believing Christians. They are chased from pillar to post for desiring to educate their own children in the godly virtues. Pilgrims are those who travel lightly. A pilgrim cannot carry all of the luxuries of a great house on his back. He does not desire to live in the mud and mire of the world, so he seeks that beauty and grace of the City of God.

There is a division of theology that believes that the Lord deals in different ways with different nations and peoples. That he amends His approach to some. This dispensational view of God conflicts directly with the entire message of Scripture. God is unchanging. "**Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.**" (Heb 13:8) His Word is immutable, eternal, and unchanging. The same teach that the righteousness of man will grow more and more until the coming of Christ. Look around you, friends! Does this seem true? Does this reflect the truths laid down by God for our learning and edification? "**Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.**" (2 Tim 3:12-13) If we do not suffer persecution for our faith in these times, perhaps we should re-evaluate our faith. To wax worse and worse means to grow forward in evil. The heart of man is dispositioned to greater and greater evil always unless restrained by a Godly conscience that is informed by the Word of God.

So as the evil days grow in their wicked excesses, what shelter remains for that remnant (Elect of God)? Shall the righteous be avenged at the latter day? "**I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?**" (Luke 18:8)

The US military often establishes temporary military installations during time of national crises. These temporary posts are referred to as 'CAMPS.' They are small and temporary in nature. If they are deemed ideal for permanency, they may later be re-designated as Fort (i.e.: Fort Rucker, Fort Benning, Fort Bliss, etc). Do you know God views His end-time people as a remnant-only confined, at the last, to a camp? This small camp of the faithful elect are confronted by the combined armies of the whole world. ". . . Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, ⁸ And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. ⁹ And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." (Rev 20:7-9)

Imagine the contrast in size of a cantonment area of such small proportions as a camp being confronted by the gathered military might of all of the world's armies arrayed about its perimeter with the single intent of total destruction without quarter. Of course, the Trumpet of Heaven will sound the "No Quarter" bugle call upon those forces of Satan and the Remnant of God's people shall be saved.

Let me ask you a question, friend. At that time, would you rather be the small outcast remnant sheltered in a mere camp; or would you prefer to belong to the great collection of apostate church who have allied themselves with the demonic forces of the world?

Today might be an ideal time to 'choose sides!'