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West Sacramento California
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"SET YOUR HOUSE IN ORDER,YE SHALL DIE AND NOT LIVE"

Dear brethren and sisters;-

In 2 Kings 20:1, we have;" In those days was Hezikiah sick unto death.And the prophet Isiah son of Amoz came to him,and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order for thou dhalt die and not live". See also Isiah 38:1.

As to the fact that Hezekiah was to die,there was nothing different from the general fate of men. For Adam sinned and brought death upon himself;Gen.2:17; Gen. 3:17-19. And since all men are born away from the tree of life,and not permitted to eat of it,all die. See Gen .3:21-24. Paul said,"And as it is appointed to men once to die,but after this the judgment;"-Heb.9:27. See also Eccl.12:7;Rom.5: 12. Hence,death was a natural consequence; but for a certain time to be set was different. But as it was the propper thing for Hezekiah to "Set his house in order",before death;it is also the propper thing for us to do. For the things written afore time are examples to us; 1 Cor.10:6,11;Rom.15:4.

We realize,no doubt, that Hezekiah's setting his house in order included having his business in proper shape. And of course included setting his spiritual house in order.So in this article I will deal only with ,setting our spiritual house in order.

And in order to discuss the subject properly we must know just what meaning is attached to the word,"order",.

In Exodus 25:10-16; we have instructions as to building the Ark of the covenant and the staves by which it was to be born.

The Priests were to bear (carry) the ark of the covenant,Deut.31: 25,26. But in the thirteenth chapter of first Chronicles,when David tried to move the ark he put it on a "new cart" ,thus disobeying the command,order, of God; and we see it resulted in the death of Uzza and a failure to move to the place David had prepared for it.

But we see in 1 Chron.15:2,"Then David said,none ought to carry the ark of God but the Levites, for them hath the Lord chosen to carry the ark of God,and to minister unto him.Verses 3-12 shows David having the Levites to sanctify themselves to bring up the ark. Verse 13 says," Because ye did it not at first,the Lord made a breach upon us-----"; Now get the last statement which I shall italicise for emphasis;"FOR THAT WE SOUGHT HIM NOT AFTER DUE ORDER". Hence,we see to do a thing after "DUE ORDER" is to do it as it is commanded. Now, to nail this down get the fifteenth verse,"And the children of the Levites bare the ark of God upon their shoulders with the staves thereon, as Moses commanded according to the word of the Lord".

Hence we see to do a thing,"IN ORDER", OR "IN DUE ORDER", is to do it according to the command of the Lord.

1 Cor.14 1-40,gives us some commands as to how to conduct ourselves in an assembly of the church; and in the fortieth verse he says,"Let all things be done decently and in order".

Again we see to do a thing," DECENTLY AN IN ORDER",IS to do it as commanded;for we all know Paul had previously, in this same chapter,commanded them how they ought to behave in an assembly of the church. Hence,to do a thing,"IN ORDER", is to do it as it is commanded.

The "order" of the Collosians was complimented in Col.2:5, and it was not an "order" based on Philosophy,vain deceit, traditions of men,nor the rudiments of the world, as that was condemned in verses 8-10 and verses 20-23, same chapter.

Hence,we see "ORDER", that applies to us would be any "orderly arrangement" exemplified ,or commanded in the new Testament scriptures. Then,to "put our house in order", would be to order our lives according to all orderly arrangements exemplified in the new Testament and all things commanded in the new Testament.

Of course all of us realize we first "SET OUR HOUSE IN ORDER" when we heard,and believed the gospel,repented of our sins, confessed Christ and were baptized into the Lord. But it does not end there,for we must continue to keep our house "SET IN ORDER", BY ADDING TO O R FAITH KNOWLED E,AND T O OUR KNOWLEDGE temperance,and to temperance patience,and to our patience godliness,and to our godliness, brotherly kindness,and to our brotherly kindness charity";2 Pet.1: 5-7. (notice,in above quote,I should have said;"Add to you faith virture--etc,etc--).

The addition of the above qualities are absolutely necessary to "setting our house in order";for Peter says in verse 8, "for if these things be in you and abound,they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ".

Brother,sister,have you added to your faith that,"virture", purity of life,in your obligation to God,your brethren,and your fellow man in general? Have you really added "Knowledge" by an earnest study of God's word? Have you added "Temperance",and not fractious and over indulgent? Have you really added "Patience" in all your dealings with your brethren and sisters and you followman? Have you added "Godliness",by building a charactar consistant with his holy word? Have you added "brotherly kindness", by being as kind to your brethren and sisters as a brother should be as taught in God's word? Have you added "Charity", that LOVE as taught in 1 Cor.13:-----? Or as taught in 1 Jno.3:16; where it is taught we should be ready to lay down our lives for the brethren? If not you are falling short in "SETTING YOUR HOUSE IN ORDER". Now,get the 9 verse in 2 Pet.;"But he that lacketh these things is blind and cannot see afar off,and hath forgotte he was purged from his old sins." Brethren,if we all manifested the spirit mentioned in the above quote; division would disapear like the dew before the morni g sun.

Sure, we must stand as firm as a rock against the doctrines and commandments of men as we aretaught in the following scriptures:Mat.15:9; Rom.15:18; Rom.16:17,18; Phil. 3:27; Phil.4:9;Phil3:16-19; Col.2:3-10; Col.2:20-23; Col.3:17;1 Tim 4:1,2;1 Tim.4:15,16;1 Tim.6:3-5; 2 Tim.2:1-5;2 Tim.2:23-26; 2 Tim.4: 1-4;1 Pet.4:11; 2 Pet.1:3; 2 Jno.9; and others. But brother,remember we must always demonstrate the attitude mentioned above as taught in 2 Pet.1:5- 10.And add to that those requsites as taught in Eph.4: 1-3; Rom.15:1-7 and others could be multiplied. Brethren,if we truely "set our house in order"; we must maintain that attitude as above taught,towards one another as well as those which oppose false doctrines. To assume that that attitude is not necessary is a "false doctrine" as well as any of the inovations we oppose.

And in exercising our liberties; dont forget,Rom.14:13;"--but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or occasion to to fall in his brothers way." 1 Cor.8:9;"But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak". Again,verse 12; "But when ye sin so against the brethren,and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ". Again,1 Cor.10:32;"Give none offence,neither to the Jews,nor to the Gentiles,nor to the Church of God".

Hence,we can see from the above scriptures on liberty; that if we "Put our house in order" in exercising our liberties; instead of making a fight to have "Our way", we would run to surrender our liberties for the benefit of our weaker brother.This,we can all see is as important in "Setting our house in order",as contending against any of the other doctrines of men.Lets start a hard fight for the whole truth and thus,# "SET OUR HOUSE IN ORDER",FOR Soon we must die and not live.

I now again want to call your attention to the Lord's supper. We know Jesus has ascended up to heaven and is seated at the right hand of God; Mark 16:19;Acts 2:33;Eph.1:20-23. And he is King of kings and Lord of lords; Rev.19:16; Rev.17:14; 1 Tim.6:15;.

Now,to you my dear brother who fails to eat the Lord's supper in its appointed time;How can you thus slight the King of Kings?

We are to eat it on the first day of the week; Acts 20:7-11. It is to be a memorial of him; Luke 22:19; 1 Cor.11:24,25. It is to show his death by which you are saved; 1 Cor.11:26. He promised to participate in it with us; Mat.29 Mk.14:25Lk.22:18.

We wouldn't turn a relative or friend down who invited to be his guest at a supper;so,why turn the King of Kings down?

Brother,lets rise up in the strength God has endowed us with and resolve we will never treat him so shabby again. And in so doing we will be "Setting our house in order ",for death is coming on.

May our heavenly Father bless us with power to do it is my prayer. As ever,your's in Christ,

J.S.Bedingfield.

"OUR MAIL BOX"

Letters from both Mary Wegley, of box 47-A Murphy stage road,Grants Pass Oregon;and Rex L.Mickey of Route 1,box 100,Cave Junction Oregon, stating that the faithful there are continueing the good fight of faith. Both these brethren worship at Cave Junction.

Earlie Tibbs,his wife Sylvia,and sons Ervin,Ronald,and John,dpent the week end at Cave Junction Oregon and worshiped with the faithful there, and had a wonderful feast,spiritually,with the brethren there.

Some time back I reported about brother Lowery going over to Roseville and baptizing a lady and starting another assembly there. He and Ervin Tibbs have been going over regularly and helping them to carry on. And to our great rejoicing,brother Lowery baptized another Lords day a week ago. The new convert was his neice.

A letter from brother and sister W.A.Nelson,of Routel,box 14-B.M. Somerton Arizona telling us they had a seven night singing school conducted by brother Paul Ferguson of 6392 Stanton Avenue,Buena Park California.And they highly recomendbrother Ferguson to any one who needs a singing school. He is now in a two weeks meeting there,and we know they will enjoy a great spiritual feast as brother Ferguson is one of our strongest men. The Nelsons report some from Yuma and some from California are attending the meeting. I might state here for the information of those who do not know,that brother Ferguson's home church is La Habra California. With a pair like Bro.Nelson and bro. Ferguson joined in a fight for the truth; sin is going to be exposed.

Brother Ira Brown and wife of route 2 box 235,Escalon California; and brother Lawrence Arnett and wife of Route 1 box500 Oakdale California; and sister Hope Arnett of Waterford California; worshiped with us at Bryte California, November 16,1958. We had a wonderful visit with these good brethren and sisters as we had worshiped in the same assembly .years ago. Sister Hope Arnett is the mother of brother Lawrence Arnett. Most of these brethren and sisters are members of the faithful assembly at Modesto California.

Their report of the condition of the church at Modesto was good. Tere are a fine band of brethren and sisters at Modesto. However, that grand old soldier, brother Condor and his wife,sister Condor,are still unable to attend church the most of the time. Our prayer to God is that brother and sister Condor will be restored to normal health soon, and be back on the fireing line.

Two other old gospel preachers live at Modesto, Brother A.C.Stark, brother Terry, yes,and brother F.H.Logan. We greet these and all the rest of the faithful at Modesto.

A letter from brother L.C.England of 358 north Gretna Avenue,Whittier californiatells us that the churches at La Habra,Bellflower, and Ontario,and other assemblies are moving along as usual,but they miss that departed soldier,brother E.H.Cavin; and so do we. He also reported sister Cavin was in the hospital but was improving. Our prayers are for her swift recivery.

Brother R.H.Peel of Floydada Texas; but who worships at Crosbyton Tex., writes Warren Scottand the eldest son of brother and sister Bob Hopper,and Jackie Scott,had been with them the last three Lord's days. He reports they enjoyed it very much. The Scott young man and young lady were grown up in that congregation. Brother Peel is a staunch old soldier of the Lord..

Brother Coy Garrison of 509 Chickasaw Trace,Grand Prairie Texas, wrote in his last letter all was well with them at Grand Prairie.

Brother Foye Garrison of Box 102 Nocona Texas ,writes in his last letterall was well at Nocona; except his mother was not too well. Our prayer is for sister Garrison's speedy recovery.

Brother J.V.Wood of 214 West Marshall,Midwest City 10,Oklahoma,writes they had been having some sickness to the extent some had not been to the Lord's day assembly. We pray the Lord for their recovery and be back on the battle front.

I wish to thank all you good brethren who have fellowshiped me in getting out the lessons. But each lesson may be the last,as wife and I are either well. If I am wrong on my positions,brethren,correct me;as mistakes can be eternal,and I do want to make heaven my home..

May God bless and keep every one of his faithful children unto that eternal inheritance in heaven is my prayer.. As ever,Your's in Christ

J.S.Bedingfield