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E T H N I C N O N S E N S E

David, one of your preacher friends came to our church and told my wife and me that we can not be partakers of the life message or become manifest sons of God, or have any place in the rulership of the coming kingdom of God because 'We both have parents who are Orientals. Do you believe that we are second class Christians because our heritage traces to Asia rather than Europe?

A. No! I don't. Revelation **5:9-10** says, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."

Those who are going to rule and reign with Christ will be from every kindred and tongue and people and nation. Your national heritage does not disqualify you from that group.

Q That's a relief! But, why do some people say that only Anglo-Saxons can inherit the promises in the Bible?

A. Many Bible scholars believe that most of the population of Europe is descended from the Israelites who were carried away into captivity by Sennacherib around 726 B.C. There is some circumstantial evidence to support this idea, but many scholars believe that it is not conclusive.

Q. Is that important?

A. Some believe that in order to receive all the promises in the Bible, the person must be a descendant of Israel. But, they seem to forget that **God divorced Israel** and went to other nations. (Jer. 3:8)

Q. Isn't Israel God's chosen nation?

A. That depends on what you mean by chosen. Chosen for blessings? Or chosen for service?

Q. They say that Israel was chosen to receive the blessings of God.

A. They are wrong! The word "chosen" in the Hebrew means "drafted" ' in English.

They were always "drafted" for ser vice - never "chosen" for blessings.

(Judges 20:15,34; 1 Sam. 24:2, 26:2; I Kings 12:21; 11 Chron. 11:1, 13:3, 17; 1 Cor. 9:17)

Q. That shows things in a much different light. Does that mean that people of Israel cannot receive God's blessings -only His "orders"?

A. Not at all! God's gifts and blessings do not depend on our goodness or on our heritage. They do depend on HIS goodness, not ours. However, obedience to God's directions does bring blessings.

Does that hold for Negroes as well as Orientals? One man wrote a tract to show that Negroes were not human at all, but that they were created animals. Another wrote that they were descendants from Cain and that the mark that God put on Cain was to be black. Some people believe that.

A . Wasn't Cain a son of Adam? Why then would his descendants be treated like animals instead of humans? Some people go to great lengths to prove their own superiority by putting other people down. That type thinking does not suit me.

Q. But I heard you say once that we Orientals can solve complicated mental puzzles much faster than you occidentals. Doesn't that show that we are superior to you mentally?

A. Not at all! Your forefathers made their souls their God. Naturally, with a concept of God as the Great Mind or even the First Thought they developed mental powers of reasoning rather than making spiritual development.

On the other hand, my forefathers from Germany and Switzerland developed machines and chemicals to make their work easier.

I think that both cases represent man's ability to adapt to his circumstances and to solve the problem he perceives to be of his highest priority.

Are you saying that we are all the same?

A. NO! We can get into some real problems when we try to categorize all ethnic groups, but I'm going to try a joke I heard about the subject to see if it shows what I mean when I say that we can predict the behavior of ethnic groups.

The English love the gospel

because they can

talk about it.

The Welch love the gospel

because they can

sing about it.

The Irish love the gospel

because they can

fight about it.

And the Scotch love the gospel because it is free!

I see it! You are saying that, for the most part, certain groups of people will react a certain way to a given situation.

But now I'm going to ask you a question that's like a bomb!

How about racial intermarriage?

I've heard people say that the Bible teaches against it. They say that God wants 'a pure line - He does not want to mix the races.

A. If God demands a pure line of Israelites, why did He allow Joseph to marry ASENATH, the Egyptian, and then bless their sons Ephraim and Menasseh -who were half breeds? (Gen. 41:45,50,52)



Why did God **allow Moses to marry ZIPPORAH the Midianite (Ex 2:21 & Num. 25:16-18)** and the Cushite Ethiopian woman (Num. 12:1)? Why did God strike his sister Miriam with leprosy for complaining about the racial intermarriage?

Why was Jesus Christ's lineage through the union of Salmon with Rahab the Harlot Canaanite? (Matt. 1:5, Josh. C 2 & 6)

Why was Jesus Christ's lineage also through the union of Boaz with Ruth the Moabite. (Ruth 1:16, 2:6, Deut. 23:3)

Are you suggesting that racial intermarriage is good and that God promotes it?

A. I am not! In each case mentioned there was a lot of social trouble because of it.

In fact, I have never recommended a racial intermarriage in counseling, but I have never brought condemnation on anyone because of it.

Q. What do you mean?

A. Advise people to conduct their lives so that they can stay out of trouble, but offer them hope instead of condemnation after they get into it. Our God is the God of another chance.

Is that why Jesus did not condemn the adulterous woman?

A. When Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you -go and sin no more" - He was giving her another chance by not condemning her.

He warned us - judge not - that ye be not judged. Condemn not that ye be not condemned. (Luke 6:37)

Is that why you write on controversial subjects like racial intermarriage? I know that most preachers will not touch a lot of your subjects with a ten foot pole. We all know that when a preacher does - then he loses a lot of support.

The sigh of relief, the gleam in the eye and the letter of thanks are better rewards to me for bringing the God of another chance into the life of a person - than is a big offering, but I wish that things weren't that 'way.

Q. What do you mean?

A. Well, I found out last year that, for the most part, Christians cannot tell the-difference between no condemnation - and approval.

Q. I still don't understand!

Let's apply the concept to racial intermarriage. Most Christians have been taught that everything in life is either black or white (pardon the pun). That they must give approval to or else bring condemnation against every issue. In their minds - my refusal to bring condemnation means that I approve. They feel that they should take a stronger stand than Jesus did when He talked to the adulterous woman. When Jesus refused to bring condemnation against the woman - it does not mean that he approved.

In the same manner, we teach people to keep their noses out of other people's business and to not bring condemnation in the case of racial intermarriage. But, that does not mean that we recommend it as a norm. In fact, in every case that I have met so far, I have recommended against it when I had a chance to counsel the people before the marriage. But, I feel that it is counterproductive to condemn it after the marriage,' and especially after the children have come.

Those of us who do marriage counseling have discovered that every marriage goes through shaky times. There is no real reason to start one when every member of your whole society is against it. But, generally when two people are in love, they are not rational and they do what they want in spite of society. If you can get to them before the marriage - advise against it, here in the U.S. (or in any society like ours). But, if you get there after the act - bring the God of another chance, not condemnation to the broken hearted people.

Why did you say, "advise against it here in the U.S."?

A. Because there are places in this world where racial intermarriage is not against the social custom or norm. In those places it works. So our Christian counsel would be entirely different there, than here.

Q. Then please allow me to ask you one more question. Some people have told me that only Anglo Saxon Israelites can be saved. They say that other nations (like mine) will not be in heaven.

A. A person who taught that would be hard put to convince the Ethiopian Eunuch who was led to Jesus by Philip, that their theory was right. (Acts 8:37)

And I don't think that Cornelius, the Captain of the Italian band, would agree, either. (Acts 10:1, 28, 34; li:18)

In fact, St. John saw every kindred, tongue, people and nation. (Rev. 5:9)

I think that I'll side with John.

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