

Church of God, The Eternal

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Tranquility of Mind in the Midst of a Corrupt Society

January 1993

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

This short letter will serve as a link between your brethren here in Europe and you, for with regard to you I echo the words of the Apostle Paul who said:

. . . I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another (Rom. 15:14).

Yes indeed, knowledge contributes to the edification of everyone when we know how to use it appropriately, with judgment.

It is sometimes difficult nowadays to have positive conversations with people around us when our eyes are turned to the conditions of our world. It is difficult for youth to set themselves attainable goals; they are living through a period of time in which insecurity has been the order of the day for several years now. Many proposals are made by those of the older generation through all kinds of debates and meetings, but nothing positive results from them. The more the years go by, the more troubled, in debt, confused, and chaotic our society becomes. Wherever we live, we are at a gray crossroads. Whether the wind blows from the north or the south, it in no way brings us the sound of the harp.

And yet a positive change is assured to us. Everything is but a matter of time. In Isaiah 32:56 we read:

The vile person shall be no more called liberal, nor the churl said to be bountiful [The fool will no more be called noble, nor the knave said to be honorable, *RSV*]. For the vile person will speak villainy, and his heart will work iniquity, to practice hypocrisy, and to utter error against the Lord, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail.

God is not going to offer mankind proposals which get them nowhere or make the situation even worse as do those today who are considered to be nobles. God is just simply going to take action in order to turn around the situation.

Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind [Each will be like a hiding-place from the wind, *RSV*], and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land (Isa. 32:12).

God promises that humankind will be liberated from the fear of tomorrow. The wisdom and the honesty of the leaders established by God, and the re-education of the peoples will resolve the problems of fear, disease, unemployment, and poverty which afflict so many people today.

For those of us who have been called, as well as the young people who have been raised in the truth, what attitude must we adopt, what orientation must we maintain while waiting for the change in the situation?

For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved [Only in returning to me and waiting for me will you be saved, *Living Bible*]; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength. . . (Isa. 30:15).

Returning to God is being always willing to listen to Him, to repent when we are wrong and submit to His will. The natural tendency of man is to draw away from God by trusting in his own thoughts and in wanting to do things hastily on his own. In Proverbs 1:33 we read, "But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil." The better we apply the knowledge which God gives us, the more we are going to have tranquility of mind as we wait for the intervention of God in this world. As the prophet Isaiah prophesied by divine inspiration, mankind will not have rest as a result of the discussions and debates which men have, but only when God has filled the earth with His knowledge. Therefore, staying close to God and living with the orientation and the attitude which He requires of us should be our primary concern, for God says to us, "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength."

David experienced that, for he said:

Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me. Surely I have behaved and quieted myself, as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child. Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and for ever (Psa. 131).

David encountered a lot of hostility, a lot of turmoil, but he was able to give the proper orientation to his life. He knew how to return to God through repentance when he had made a mistake, and how to hope in the Lord when in trial. The result was a calm and tranquil spirit.

That is a great blessing which is within the reach of all those who know God and rely on Him. We read in Psalm 50:14–15: "Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." God grants us the privilege of being able to live with a sound orientation in the midst of a confused society where violence, lying and stealing seem to be its only means of survival. But to us God says, "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." That is what will enable us to live honestly with courage and conviction.

Our position in the midst of this society in the coming years can be compared to our ancestors when they were caught between Pharaoh's army and the Red Sea. They could not pull through on their own. They had to show confidence and see the salvation which the Lord was going to work for them on that day. Likewise our future is going to depend on the hope which we will have set on God and the moral strength which we will have acquired by our calm and our assurance in the knowledge which God has given to us. To turn one's back on God and to immerse oneself again in this world in order to derive a few momentary material advantages from it is not a wise solution.

Woe to the rebellious children, says the Lord, who carry out a plan, but not mine; and who make a league, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin; who set out to go down to Egypt, without asking for my counsel, to take refuge in the protection of Pharaoh, and to seek shelter in the shadow of Egypt! Therefore shall the protection of Pharaoh turn to your shame, and the shelter in the shadow of Egypt to your humiliation (Isa. 30:13, *RSV*).

The advantages which we can derive from the midst of this society by compromising with God's way are not going to benefit us. That is a decision which before long creates a lot of frustration and agitation of mind. That is why God says to us, "In returning and rest shall ye be saved." We have rest in staying close to God and fulfilling His will. God says so! Therefore there is no other solution. I, along with all the brethren here in Europe, greet you and send our affection to you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Aviolat', written in a cursive style.

Jean Aviolat