

FAITH IS ACTION

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We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, insure domestic Tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Article I

Section 1. All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

FREEDOM!

"Hate the evil, love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: Let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream."

Amos 5:15; 24



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COHAINS OF CHRIST

By R.G. Hardy

“O *taste and see that the Lord is good!*” declared the Psalmist, and to better illustrate just *how good* the blessings of God are, he stated that He will “*satisfy thee with honey out of the rock.*”

I wonder how many have ever given any real thought as to what *honey out of the rock* implied? The children of Israel to whom he spoke knew very well what he meant! Now, I don't know of any way one can get honey out of a rock, but this saying was well known amongst the Israelites, and they knew what the inference was: It referred to the time of their *exodus* from Egypt and their forty-year journey through the wilderness where God sustained them.

Wandering in the desert, their daily diet consisted of the *manna* which God rained down from heaven each day. When they lusted after quail, God sent quail until it was up to their knees. When they ate it, He killed them while its meat was still in their teeth! If they tried to hoard the manna, it rotted overnight (except for the Sabbath's portion).

THE BREAD OF AFFLICTION

For forty years they ate what was referred to as the *bread of affliction* that they might remember the day that the Lord brought them out of Egypt. Oh, but He not only led them out—He *brought them into* a land flowing with milk and honey, and He “*made them to suck honey out of the*



rock,” signifying a land so lush, so full of flowers for the bees, that the honey flowed from out of the crevices of the rocks! (Deut. 32:13). This was the inheritance that the Lord gave to them: The Land of Promise, but sadly, only *two* of the generation who *came out of* Egypt were allowed to *go in*.

In fact, when Moses was gone up into the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments, he was gone so long that the people began to look back to the land of Egypt, and they desired to go back to its *leeks and melons* rather than to go on into the land of the Promise! A *leek* is similar to a *spring onion*, and they preferred to go back to the onions of Egypt than to go on to the honey of the Promised Land! And a lot of people today would rather go back into the stinking mess of the world than to go on into the Promise! You see, *there is a difference between coming out of the world, and going into the Promised Land*. Everybody that came out, did not go in! Likewise, a lot of Christians who have come out of the world, have not entered into the land of the promises of God! They’re still living in privation, want, fear, sickness: They’re in a wilderness experience, in a dry land, eating the bread of affliction, and not the honey out of the rock!

For forty years in the wilderness God tried Israel and proved them. They did not have the dainties of the land. They ate the manna, the water out of the rock that followed them, and, of course, the milk of the goats, and maybe some cheese for their bread. In Bible numerology, the number *forty* always typifies a period of trial and testing. God allowed Goliath to try Israel for *forty* days. Jesus was tried *forty* days in prayer and fasting in the wilderness, and every child of God who is going to follow the Lord has to go through what I call “a

forty experience” as well.

Each one will go through that period of trial and test. When he comes out of the world, he is a child of God, but he is still going to have to face that *forty experience* like Israel did. And this is where many Christians *give up and go back!* This is what the New Testament writers always call our attention to so strongly: *That although God brought them out of Egypt*, those who disobeyed, *He did not take into the Promised Land!* (Heb. 3:15-19). Their carcasses were strewn all over the desert, and except for *Joshua and Caleb*, He did not take in *one of them!* Only their grandchildren who were two generations removed were permitted to enter in! Do you know why?

He did not want to take *anything of Egypt* into the Promised Land! He did not want even any remembrance of it, so He eradicated two entire generations and took in a generation who did not know anything about Egypt! He took in Joshua and Caleb, because they didn’t look back to Egypt. They were looking on! I believe ole Caleb had his eye on his mountain the whole forty years! God had promised him a mountain, and the first thing he did when they got into the Promised Land was say, *“Joshua, Give me my mountain!”*

Caleb was *eighty-five years old at this time*, but he declared to Joshua: “I was forty years old when Moses sent me in to spy out the land, and he promised me that the land whereon I trod would be mine inheritance, because I wholly followed the Lord. And I want you to know that I am as strong now to go in and come out and make war as I was then: Now therefore, give me my mountain whereof the Lord spake in that day!” (Joshua 14:6-12).

He wanted *his promises*, and I want *mine!* Like we learned in Sunday School: *“Every promise in the Book is mine!”*

THE EXODUS & THE EISODUS

God's purpose in allowing Israel to wander in the wilderness for forty years was to weed out all of the rebels, and they so provoked Him to anger until He disowned them! God called Moses up into the mountain to deliver unto Him the holy oracles, and while he was there, the people began to eat and to drink and to play and make the molten calf. God became so angry that He told Moses: "Get out of my way—For *thy* people, which *thou* broughtest out of Egypt have corrupted themselves." He told Moses: Get out of My presence that I might stir Myself up and break out on them!"

(Can you see how important intercessory prayer is? When there is no intercessor to intervene, God stirs Himself up to break out on the disobedient, and God didn't want to do that. That's why He chose Moses, because He knew Moses' make-up, and he knew that Moses would do what He did, and say what He said in that situation.)

And Moses told God: "Now God, if you kill these people now, then all of Your enemies will say that You brought them out of Egypt, only to let them die in the wilderness. They will say that You could not provide for them... And what about Your promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?"

No less than six times Moses interceded on behalf of the people when they had so provoked God to anger that He commanded Moses to get out of the way so He could break out on them in His fury! And in each incidence, God was merciful, and repented the evil which He would do to His people. One of the greatest moments of Moses' intercession on behalf of the people was when he returned to the mount with God the second day after the incidence of the molten calf. Even Moses was

angry with the people, but he told them that He would seek to make an atonement for them. He told God: "I know how great *their sin is*; yet now if You will forgive their sin—and if You won't, and You are going to destroy them—start at me!"

And so God was merciful again. As angry as He was, He delayed His judgment for Moses' sake. God had destroyed an entire Egyptian dynasty to bring them out of Egypt and deliver them and lead them into the Land of Promise, and He proved them for forty years to remove the last remnants of Egypt's influence before taking them in.

Ah, there are some wonderful lessons in this Book of Exodus: *The going out* of the children of Israel from the house of bondage and the land of servitude, but He also had to *bring them into* the Land of Promise, a land "*flowing with milk and honey.*" This was a Hebrew idiom meaning that it was full of cattle bringing forth milk and butter from the lush grass. It was a fertile land, unlike the desert of sand and rocks wherein they wandered those forty years. That was their *exodus*: This was their *eisodus*, their going into the Promised Land.

Now, we can say that their *exodus* out of Egypt which started with the *Passover* was the physical beginning of Israel as "a people unto God." At this point they were God's *natural people*. but they did not become His *spiritual people* until fifty days later at *Pentecost*, which was the *day of firstfruits*, seven sabbaths after *Passover*. That was the day that God set the mountain on fire. (You talk about putting on a *4th of July* fireworks show!) The mountain quaked as the Lord descended upon it in fire. Surrounded by thick clouds and the sounds of thunders and lightnings, and the trumpet of God that sounded exceedingly loud and long, the people in the camp

trembled. God called Moses up into the mountain, and Moses went up. God told Moses to tell the people:

“Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles’ wings and brought you unto Myself. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then shall ye be a peculiar people unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.” (Exodus 19:4-6).

God’s desire was to make them a *special people*. Not only that, but a *kingdom of priests*. I hope you see that they were all supposed to be priests! They were to be a priestly people, a nation of priests, and God was to dwell among them. Israel was to be a nation of priests of all of the nations of the earth, *but she failed*.

THE DRAWERS-NIGH

The Hebrew word for *priest* is *cohen*, and even today it is a very common Jewish surname. Modern pronunciation, however, has changed its phonetic spelling to *cohen*. (plural—*cohenim*). God intended for the entire nation of Israel to be a “*kingdom of cohains*,” and the meaning of the word *cohen* is “*those who draw nigh*,” because the priests could draw nigh to God. Under the old covenant, *only the priests* could draw nigh to God and into His very presence, and then only once a year with the blood of the Passover lamb could the high priest go into the Holy of Holies. But God’s original purpose was for the *whole nation* of Israel to be a peculiar people and a kingdom of priests to represent Him to all of the families of the earth!

COME UP TO THE MOUNT

God called to Moses and commanded him to tell the people to “*sanctify them-*

selves.” Now sanctification literally has a two-fold meaning: “*To separate from*,” and “*to consecrate to*.” They were to separate themselves from everything unclean, and naturally, in the O.T., this was always with physical washings. They were to wash themselves and their clothes, and everything in the camp, because God said, “*I will come down in the midst of them!*” God will not come down where there is uncleanness! If He did, He would destroy it. That is why whenever God comes into contact with sin, He obliterates it. God gave them three days to get everything clean and remove all the vestiges of Egypt. And before God is going to really manifest Himself to one, he is going to have to get all of Egypt, all of the world, out of his life. I’m not just talking about being clean on the outside only, but as Peter brought it over in the N.T.:

“Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings...”

Remember, Peter is talking to God’s people, not sinners! This would be like unto the children of Israel whom God had just delivered out of Egypt, and is now preparing to let them have the privilege to *draw nigh as priests*, and as He commanded them to clean up and wash up, so Peter also commands us to “*lay aside...*” which is a prerequisite to the verses that follow:

“...As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

If so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,

Ye also, as lively (living) stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God, by Jesus Christ.”

He has offered to us the very same thing that He offered to Israel: To be His priests! That's why we do not need a man to stand between us and God. *We are priests. We are cobains. We are those who draw nigh unto God!*

"...But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises (virtues) 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 Peter 2:9-10).

We are the *drawers-nigh!* We do not have to have someone else to be our priest. God has made us a *royal priesthood*, or it could have been translated as God told the children of Israel: *"a kingdom of priests."* In fact, it is brought over in Revelation 5:10 which states: *"And has made us unto our God kings and priests," (or a kingdom of priests) unto our God... and we shall reign on the earth."*

God had chosen all of Israel, His special people, to be His *cobains*, and to have the unique privilege to draw nigh unto His presence. Not only that, but what is the other function of a priest? *To intercede for others, to find favor in God's sight for others.* This is what God intended for Israel in the O.T., and this is what He has called us to in the New! We should see ourselves as God's *cobains* – *as those who can draw nigh unto God's holy presence!* Therefore, we must be clean, we must be holy, we must *"cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."*

Now, what was Paul talking about in this verse (2 Cor. 7:1) where he commanded: *"Wherefore, having these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves..."? What*

promises? The answer is in the last verses of the preceding chapter which should have never been broken up:

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you (promise),

"And will be a Father unto you (promise), and ye shall be my sons and daughters (promise), saith the Lord Almighty."

These are the same promises that God gave to Israel, and these are the same prerequisites that He gave them to obtain these promises. But they failed. They did not go up into the mountain that day. They did not draw nigh unto God's presence that day: *Only Moses did.* These were the ones who had tasted and seen that the Lord was good; who had come out of Egypt. They did not have to come out: It was up to them. They could have remained in Goshen, but they came out and saw that the Lord was good. He protected them from the plagues, and not one of them came on the land of Goshen. When the judgment of the firstborn came, He spared their firstborn. That's why He claimed their firstborn as His, because He saved them in Egypt.

But on the day when they were to *"come up into the mount"* at the sound of the trumpet, they did not go: Only Moses went up, and there he received the graven tablets, The Ten Commandments. For forty days, Moses stayed before God, and before he returned, the people rose up to play, fashioning and worshipping the molten calf, and God's wrath was kindled against them to destroy them! Moses was the *cobain*, the *intercessor*, to stand between God and the people to plead for mercy. God needed someone to *draw nigh* and to find favor in His sight that He might be merciful to the disobedient. He com-

manded Moses to get out of the way so that He could stir Himself: He was ready to destroy them, but Moses found favor in God's sight, and God spared.

Moses was the *cohain*, the one who could draw nigh into God's presence, and there he pled for the people. God told Moses, "These are a rebellious people, a stiffnecked people! I will kill them all, and make a new people out of you!"

But Moses answered: "You can't do that, God."

"Why can't I?" God said.

"Because Your enemies and the nations are watching, and if You kill them, they will say that You could not provide for them!"

God said, "All right, you go down there and take care of them, and I am going to show you that I can provide for them. I am going to take care of their needs: That's nothing for Me, but I am only delaying the sentence, because I swear in My wrath that they shall not enter in!"

When Moses saw what the people had done, he got angry too and broke the tablets on the ground. (And just think, God said that *Moses was the meekest man on earth!*) You can always tell when someone has been with God, because when Moses came down out of the mountain, his face shone with the *shekinah* and glory of God until the people could not look upon him. They had just made the golden calf, and they were sinful and unclean, and they could not even look at the glory of God on Moses' face, much less look at God... much less go up into the mountain... much less go up into the cloud!

Moses had to put a veil over his face, and Paul said that the veil is on their hearts even to this day, until when they read the O.T., the truth and the glory are taken away (2 Cor. 3:14-15). *They were supposed*

to be the recipients of the glory, the cohains, the drawers-nigh to come into God's presence! But because of their sin, God had to alter His plans.

No longer could He dwell amongst the people, but He commanded a tabernacle to be built that He might dwell within with walls and curtains to separate them from His glory. They could not be priests and *cohains*, because they were sinful, and so He chose the firstborn of the tribe of Levi to be His priests. They belonged to Him, because He spared them in Egypt. The people could no longer draw nigh, but they were separated by walls and curtains.

He gave them a temporary place of worship and temporary carnal ordinances of the flesh. He had wanted them to be His *spiritual people, His cohains*, but they failed. God altered His plans, but He did not discard them: He was still going to have a people that He could dwell in, a priestly people who would draw nigh unto His presence, and when Jesus went to the cross, He became our *Passover, and all who would accept Him, became God's chosen people!*

NEW TESTAMENT COHAINS

As with Israel, many came out of the world, but many went back. At His crucifixion almost all went back except for five hundred. And at the resurrection, they were His people just like Israel was His people when He led them out of Egypt. At that time, Jesus commanded them "*Wait in Jerusalem until you be endued with power from on high.*" They were being given the promise: "I am going to make you *My cohains—My drawers-nigh.*"

He gave them a forty-day post graduate course, and opened up the Word to them how that Christ should suffer and enter into His glory, and that all scriptures should be fulfilled. Everyday they went

to the temple to offer a sacrifice, which according to Jewish law was to be done from the day of Passover to the day of First Fruits, or Pentecost. Therefore, the five hundred who received Jesus' command to wait in Jerusalem until the coming of the Promise, went about their daily way of life, but going to the temple each day. Then on the day of Pentecost, they would all go to the temple, and that's why the seventy nations from around the world were represented there.

(Another fact to be noted is that during the fifty days from Passover to Pentecost, no leaven was to be eaten, and in Bible typology, leaven refers to sin.)

"And when the day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all in one accord in one place. ...And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind..." (Luke does not say that it was a wind – but the sound of a mighty rushing wind. It was the Angel blowing the trumpet like he did on Mount Sinai when God came down and set the mountain on fire!)

"...And it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts 2:1-4).

Instead of glory and fire of God filling the mount as it did on Sinai, it filled all them that were in the house, and they became the *cobains*: God's spiritual people and priests!

Now, I want to say this: Those Christians who do not possess the Baptism of the Holy Ghost are *not cobains*. They are God's people, but they are not *cobains*, and God is not dwelling in them as He does in those who have received the Baptism. Until Jesus was glorified, no one had received

it. Now, they were all His children, and their names were in the Book of Life. They had the new nature spirit, but God did not *dwell in them as cobains*, and many Christians today have not received it.

God is calling us to be His *cobains*: To lay aside all the leaven and sin and filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and to be filled with His glory and anointing, that we might *draw nigh* unto His presence and fulfil the office and function of His priests to intercede for the people. Israel failed and drew back, but Paul said in Hebrews 10: 39, *"But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition (destruction), but of them that believe unto the saving of the soul."*

James commanded us, *"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you..."* (Js. 4: 8). This is the **promise**, but he also qualified how we must draw nigh: *"Cleanse your hands... purify your heart... have an attitude of repentance and godly sorrow for sin... humble yourselves in the sight of God. Put aside evil speaking and judging of your brother..."* (vv. 8-11). Just as Moses commanded the Israelites to wash themselves before they came to the mount of God, we too must be washed by "the washing of the Word," and then we can draw nigh to the holy place of God's presence.

What a beautiful revelation: We are no longer fenced off from God and separated by a veil from His presence! But *"we have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; by a new and living way which he has consecrated for us through the veil of his flesh"* (Heb. 10:19-20).

The tragedy is that Israel failed, but through their failure God has temporarily set them aside as His nation of *cobainim*, and has opened wide the door to the Gentiles, fulfilling His original promise to Abraham that *"through thee all the families of the earth shall be blessed"* (Genesis 12:3).

This was ultimately fulfilled through his seed, the Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ, the Son of God:

“Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles, in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:11-13).

He dwells in us by His anointing, and we are His priests to represent all the families of the world and find favor for them, to find favor for our nation that is in trouble, for our boys and girls who are steeped in drugs, and our moms and dads who are lost in sin.

STAND IN THE GAP

We can be the *drawers-nigh*, and God will accept us like He did Moses. Even when He is angry and wants to break out upon them, we can be the intercessors to stand between them and God. As in the case of Ezekiel 22:30, when there is no one *to stand in the hedge and make up the gap*, God must destroy the wicked: *“And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the*

gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none.”

The first illustration of this is Abraham’s intercession on behalf of his nephew Lot who was about to be caught in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. Genesis 18: 23 states: *“And Abraham drew near and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?”*

Abraham had already fellowshiped with God, ate with God, when he received personal promises from Him for Sarah to bear a son. But then he **drew near** to God to intercede for his loved one! The only thing that can hold back judgment are those who *draw nigh* unto His presence in intercession, to offer up holy sacrifices unto Him for the people.

Today, many who are called to be God’s *cochains* and who stand in the pulpits of this nation, are offering up *false worship* as the sons of Korah did in the wilderness, and God sent fire out of heaven and destroyed every offender! (Numbers 16). I’ve made up my mind that I am not going to fail God. I am thanking Him for such a great privilege to be a *cochain of Christ*, and I am going to be daily at the altar of God offering up holy sacrifices:

“For the law made nothing better, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God” (Heb. 7:19).