

Church of God, The Eternal

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Dearest brothers and sisters:

Very friendly greetings to you all.

When we look at natural events, we see that nature is increasingly volatile. There are floods in some areas, while in other areas there is drought or other cataclysms. There are many evils which should lead man to ask questions. Jesus predicted these cataclysms in nature, describing them in Luke 21. ". . . And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. . . . and there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory" (vss. 11, 25-27).

In the midst of all these circumstances, the called of God are generally impatient. It is true that we all hope to see, as soon as possible, the establishment of God's Government on this earth. We see certain things come to pass, but without making a thorough evaluation we say: "It is at hand!" The manner in which we think and react proves that it is difficult for us to be as patient as we should; and we forget that in reality it is God who "is longsuffering to us-ward," as the Apostle Peter expressed it in II Peter 3:9. We live in times which put each one's perseverance to the test; these are times which make it necessary for us to think thoroughly before making any decision, to weigh carefully our thoughts and to understand the reason for certain circumstances through which we go. We should carefully judge ourselves. Paul told us: "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" (I Cor. 11:31-32).

In Proverbs 8:1-9 we read: "Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man. O ye simple, understand wisdom: and, ye fools, be ye of an understanding heart. Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things. For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them. They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to

them that find knowledge." So if we have wisdom, we can think and reflect wisely and intelligently. We can then make appropriate decisions and understand the reason certain things happen to us. Most of our mistakes are due to our lack of knowledge or to our impatience. We often jump to conclusions or make hasty decisions. To be intelligent is to listen to the things wisdom tells us; it is to understand those things and to come to think, plan, and decide in accordance with the Truth. It is to come to do all things in harmony with the laws of God. Wisdom is the knowledge of what is true and right. It is the capability of considering all the known facts and coming to wise direction in our lives; it is the ability to consider all the circumstances and to make wise decisions.

". . . Incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding" (Prov. 2:2-6). Thus, brethren, instead of centering our thoughts on the time which we have left to live in this society, and having our minds troubled by the things which happen around us, we should rather hearken to this wisdom which cries out and has excellent things to tell us. It tells us what we still have to do in our lives in order to be allowed someday to enter God's Kingdom. Let us not forget, my dear brethren, that it is God who has patience toward us, and not we toward Him. The wisdom of God can make us a people who perceive things which seem invisible to others, who are therefore able to make appropriate decisions. When the events and cataclysms of the last days befall the earth, how many people will understand their causes? Will they have made themselves ready spiritually? Will they be able to make wise decisions, decisions for their own good, decisions that are pleasing to God? Most will trust their natural wisdom, what they naturally think is wise under the circumstances.

"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Prov. 3:5). There is, then, a distinction between the wisdom of God and human wisdom. Human wisdom makes us see only the present, it drives us into taking action for the present, because it seeks present satisfaction; it creates in us impatience, hasty reactions; it makes us short-sighted and causes us many problems. The wisdom of God urges us to look beyond the present; it warns us; it exhorts us; it points our mistakes out to us; it induces us to reflect, to evaluate; it delivers us from evil and constantly gives us more teaching and capability. It cries out continually because many called of God turn a deaf ear. "Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets: She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying, How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you" (Prov. 1:20-23).

The mere fact of growing older and possessing white hair does not necessarily make a man wise. A wise man is one who evaluates the circumstances of his life and acquires discernment and understanding; he submits himself to the will of God. True wisdom builds, and if we are determined to listen to it attentively, it is going to build in our lives till we reach the perfect stature of Christ, as the Apostle Paul says in Ephesians 4:13. The

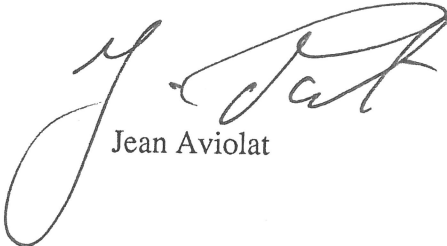
human being who reaches that point will be a success. He will know how to live the perfect Way of God; he will know how to keep a check on himself, how to control himself; he will know how to make appropriate decisions in any circumstance. He has made his ear attentive to wisdom; he knows; he understands. But woe to those who do not reach that point because they refused wisdom. Is it surprising that God says, "How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?" "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil" (Prov. 1:22, 24-33).

Brethren, if we lack this wisdom, let us ask God for it, for He gives to all generously and without reproach; and it will be given to us, as James wrote. And then let us make it our friend. Thus it will be with us in our prayers; it will be with us in the difficult and critical times which we go through in this life; it will be with us to help us to forgive and become reconciled after our quarrels; it will be with us to tell us what we have to do in our moments of unfaithfulness and disobedience; it will be with us to comfort us till the end of our earthly pilgrimage, for we know that we can depart this world having our hearts filled with assurance. Indeed, "happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding" (Prov. 3:13).

There are great and generous gifts which God is always ready to offer to us. He gives them to us in all simplicity and without regret, because man is too poor to buy them and God too rich to sell them. Let us be grateful for these things.

May the peace of Christ be with you all and may everyone be blessed with the riches of our heavenly Father.

Affectionately,



Jean Aviolat