



AUTHORITY IN RELIGION

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When God found that the children of Israel were becoming disobedient to Him, He spoke to them through Moses and warned them that He would bring forth a man like Moses to speak to them. Whoever disobeyed His word would perish (Deuteronomy 18:15-19).

This promise to the children of Israel was fulfilled by the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-26). He was born to redeem the world. But He was rejected by the children of Israel among whom He was born and grew up.

One day during His earthly ministry our Lord took three of His disciples and went up into a high mountain ". . . *and He was transfigured before them. And His raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. And there appeared unto them Elijah with Moses: and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah. For he wist not what to say; for they were sore afraid. And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear Him"* (Mark 9:2-7).

What was the meaning of all this? Moses stood for the Law. People should no longer follow the Law of Moses as a system of worshiping God. Sabbath-keeping, tithing, animal sacrifices, and instrumental music are no longer required. Elijah stood for the prophets who spoke about the coming on earth of a Saviour from the seed of David. Now that the Saviour has come, men should **not** go back to the Law and the prophets, but obey the words of Jesus Christ!

Whatever Christ said was not of His own, but words from God the Father. "*And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my*

words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him at the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, He gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that His commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak"(John 12:47-50).

Many people do not obey the words of Christ. Even many religious people have turned away from the words of Christ and substituted their own thoughts. They do not think that Christ was right when he said: **"I will build my church"** (Matthew 16:18). "My" indicates ownership. It is completely wrong for a man or a group of people to form their own denomination and worship the Lord there. Jesus said: **"Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch"** (Matthew 15:13-14). The founders of human denominations are blind leaders. Those who worship therein are blind followers. This is why Jesus warned: **"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."**(Matthew 7:21-23).

At the Judgment, Jesus will deny certain ones, **not** because they did not worship Him, but because they did not do it according to His will. God promised to build a house (Isaiah 2:2-3). This house is what Christ called "my church." Jesus bought this church with His blood, **"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood"** (Acts 20:28). No one has a right to form any other church or call it by any name of his own choosing.

Let us respect God's authority! We must not add to the things which God has commanded! We must not subtract any of the things God has commanded (Revelation 22:18,19). If we do not respect God's authority in the Bible, we can not be saved (2 John 9-11).