

The King's Highway.

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness.

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness. Isa. 35-8

VOL. XXXVII.

MONCTON, N. B., FEB. 29, 1928

NO. 4

BITE AND DEVOUR ---- CONSUMED.

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"If ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." (Gal. 5:15).

If ye bite and devour one another, the outcome is consumed one of another. If ye do not bite and devour one another ye shall not be consumed one of another.

These are strong words, indeed, and very expressive.

The word translated "bite" in this passage is from the Greek *dakno*; and signifies to irritate; the Old Testament equivalent is from the Hebrew *nashak* and signifies simply to bite as in Gen. 49:17; Num. 21:9; Prov. 23:42; Eccl. 10:8-11; Amos 5:19; 9:3; Mic. 3:5; to bite violently as in Num. 21:6; Jer. 8:17.

The word translated "devour" in the Hebrew has about nine shades of meaning; in the Greek, it is used with at least three different shades of meaning. The Greek word is *esthio*, to eat up, 'whic'h' shall devour the adversaries" (Heb. 10:27); *Katapino* to drink down, swallow up, "walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I. Pet. 5:8); *Dataphago*, to eat down, "ye devour widow's houses" (Matt. 23:14; 12:40; Luke 20:47) "the fowls of the air devoured it" (Luke 8:5), "which hath devoured thy living with harlots" (Luke 15:30), "if a man devour you," (2 Cor. 11:20), "fire proceedeth. . . and devoureth" (Rev. 11:5), "to devour her child" (Rev. 12:4), "fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured" (Rev. 20:9), "the fowls come and devoured them up" (Matt. 13:4; Mark 4:4), and the text (Gal. 5:15),

The word translated "consume" in the Hebrew is *akal* and is used with a great many shades of meaning, such as to eat, to feed, to wear away, to crop off, to possess, to be completed, finished, to lay waste, and such like; in the Greek, it is *analisko*, to consume, to finish, "consume them, even as Elias did" (Luke 9:54), "Whom the Lord will consume with the spirit of his mouth" (2 Thess. 2:8), and the text, "Take heed that ye be not consumed one of another."

Note the order—bite, devour, consume. The climax or the end is to be ruined, finished, destroyed. If it is between two Christian people, their influence and spirituality are destroyed; if in a society or local church, the society or local church is no more, consumed, destroyed, and the church building closed; if in a denomination, it is ruined, destroyed. That is the ultimate ratio of bite and devour. A house divided against itself cannot stand.

The commencement of this tragedy of devastation and destruction is very significant; bite, irritate, a little nibbling so to speak, but it irritates; emphasize the point that is unpleasant to the other person or persons in preaching, testimony, exhortation, conversa-

tion, as the case may be; just stress especially the point that irritates. It may be usage or the point that irritates. It may be interpretation of doctrine, may be interpretation of Scripture, may be usage or custom, may be church polity, may be the mode of baptism, may be the millennial question, may be leadership locally or in a larger sphere, "I am of Paul," may be something else. It irritates; it bites!

Then the rebound from the other side is an irritation, a bite! You bite (irritate) me; I bite (irritate) you. Then the "closing up" and devouring; and then—oh, a matter of time—the whole affair is finished—consumed one of another." Paul to the Corinthians put it in a little different way but the same tragic end is quickly reached—thought, carnal thinking; words, contentions, acts, divisions.

As to the cause, it may have been merely a "hear-say" but it was thought over, expressed to others, who, in turn, thought it over and passed it on. Thus it travelled, drawing its line of division, and doing its deadly work. The cause of many of the terrible divisions among Christian people may be traced to hear-say or a misunderstanding. Here the irritation commenced—which led to awful issues. And the alarming aspect of the whole situation is that if our Lord's injunction, recorded in Matt. 18:15-17, briefly covered in three words, "go," "tell," "take," had been followed the whole tragic situation would have been averted. It may have been an untruth from beginning to end.

Oh, if Christian people, yea, holiness people, would follow the Word of God, would mind God on this line, what breaches would have been healed, what hard feeling avoided, what divisions prevented, what glorious revivals of Bible holiness instead of devastation, what healing of the nations!

Take our Lord's directions again; nothing could be clearer: "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church, but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." God promises that His blessing shall rest upon His own order if carried out: "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Take the epistles and note the repeated sacred cautions against "anger, krath, malice, blesphemy, filthy communication" (Col. 3:8), "debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbit-

ings, whisperings, swellings, tumults" (2 Cor. 12:30). "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh against a brother, or judgeth his brother, speaketh against the law, and judgeth the law; but if thou judgest the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. One only is the law giver and judge, even he who is able to save and to destroy; but who art thou that judgest thy neighbor?" Three effects upon one's self is sure, "He that doeth wrong shall receive again for the wrong that he hath done; and there is no respect of persons." Water finds its level.

Oh, dear reader, let us walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and Father of all who is above all, and in you all. Here is a Christian Endeavour which we may all join.

Many of the cruel divisions, which meant the rise of new denominations, have been the result of a like manner of procedure as is indicated by the text of this article, and which would not have been had the Word of God been followed. It could be said, of course—and justly so—that some denominations came into being in the Providence of God, and not the result of any bitter division cause from unscriptural procedure. Thank God. It is our deep conviction, nevertheless, that if we, especially the holiness folk, would move into the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and observe our Lord's injunction, stop our irritating the other brother who may not see on every point as we do, and work for unity and spirituality, that on tomorrow a glorious coming together would ensue, and the country would soon face a mighty holiness force going forth, conquering and to conquer.

As we pen these words, from a Canadian standpoint chiefly, living as we do in the country (though it is, we are sure, applicable elsewhere) we cannot escape the fact that we know of at least nine different holiness denominations in Canada and if they were all, that is, those in this country, put together there would be but a small holiness denomination with a membership not exceeding, we fear, nine thousand members. Is this God's best for us? Nay! God, we are sure, has something better for us!

On rising from our knees this morning, we uttered a muffled tone, and in response to that sweet voice within, "Yes, we will write on the topic, "Bite, devour and consumed;" and we have done it the same day. May He use it to help His glorious cause of full salvation! Amen! Annesley College,

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