

Mennonites Brethren: Our Pagan Spiritual Nature

As children most of were taught that we are all sinners and that we needed to confess our sins in order to be saved. Now as adults we continue to believe that we have a sinful nature that conflicts with our desire to be perfect as our heavenly Father desires us to be. This inner conflict is what Shual was describing in the latter part of Romans chapter seven with the conclusion that we will be saved through our Master Yeshua Messiah.

In my letters I have never ceased to acknowledge the faith and zeal of my Mennonite brethren. Have they believed in the Messiah? Yes they have! Do they demonstrate their faith by many good works? Yes they do! Are they obedient in the preaching of the gospel of salvation throughout the world? Again, the answer is a resounding yes! On the basis our faith and zeal, it would appear that the Mennonite people have already won the victory over sin. After all, by the testimony of others and even in our own conscience, we are "good people." But are we, and do we still have two natures?

To answer this we need to go back only a little more than 500 years to the time of the Protestant Reformation when our identity as "Mennonite Brethren" was born. At that time our forefathers (most notably Menno Simons) went much further in their return to the original faith of the apostles than did Martin Luther and his supporters. Stressing adult baptism, the priesthood of all believers, separation from society, and the authority of the Scriptures, our people became beacons of light in a world only beginning to come out of the darkness of the Roman Church. Yet, mostly unawares, our forefathers did not make a complete break from Catholicism and they continued in the doctrinal teachings, sacred festivals and idolatrous practices of the Mother Church. Today, we are even less aware of what we share historically with Catholicism than was Menno Simons, and we blindly continue in what the Scriptures clearly define as sin. Of course we don't recognize it as sin because it is in our "nature" to do those things. We have inherited this nature from the Mother Church.

To really understand our inherited carnal nature, we need to go back another 2700 years to the time of Yosef (Joseph) in Egypt. Yosef had two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, that his father Yaakov (Jacob) adopted into the twelve tribes of Yisrael (Israel). Two profoundly significant results came out of this event. First, the promise of multiplicity that YHWH made to Avraham, that his seed would be as the sands of the sea and as the stars of heaven, were to come through Ephraim and Manasseh. This is the blessing that Yaakov prophesied about his two grandsons. Secondly, the mother of Yosef's sons was Asenath, the daughter of Poti-pherah, the Egyptian high priest. The result of this union of Yosef and Asenath was that Ephraim and Manasseh and all their children after them inherited two natures. They would grow up to be partly good Hebrews because of Yosef, and partly very spiritual pagans because of their descent from the Egyptian high priest. Today, all the countless descendents of Ephraim and Manasseh have the same two natures: they revere the "G-d of Abraham, Isaac

and Jacob" and yet taint their acts of faith with numerous pagan rites, rituals, and days of worship. There is only one group of people that exemplify these two conflicting natures; and that is.....Protestant Christians!

This short paper cannot amply evince the undeniable connection between the sun-worship of ancient Egypt and its continuation in the Roman Catholic Church. Suffice it to say that virtually all of the Mother Church's creeds, rituals and language have their roots in the sun-worship of the ancient past. The most blatant example is that third century Christians were commanded to worship on the Day of the Sun instead of on the Hebrew Sabbath. It is more important to point out that we, as Mennonite people, have inherited that same pagan nature from long ago; and that, because it is our nature, we don't think of it as sinful. It is entirely natural for us to carry on in the spiritual practices of the society around us because that is the way we are. We do indeed have Menno Simons and Avraham as our father, but we also have the Roman Church and an Egyptian priestess as our mother.

And YHWH warned Yisra'el and Yehudah, through all of His prophets, and every seer, saying, "Turn back from your evil ways, and guard My commands and My laws, according to all the Torah which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets." But they did not listen and hardened their necks, like the necks of their fathers, who did not put their trust in YHWH their Elohim, and rejected His laws and His covenant that He had made with their fathers, and His witnesses which He had witnessed against them, and went after worthlessness, and became worthless, and after the gentiles who were all around them, of whom YHWH had commanded them not to do like them. And they left all the commands of YHWH their Elohim, and made for themselves a moulded image, two calves, and made an Asherah and bowed themselves to all the host of the heavens, and served Ba'al. (Melachim Bet (2 Kings) 13-16)

Yisrael your salvation is at hand. Believe in Yeshua.

Shalom