

**June 8, 1850**

**To the Parish in Strassburg**

**by Samuel H. Froehlich**

The Lord and Saviour has everywhere begun His work of gathering together His chosen ones, a work which He will finish, for He leaves nothing incomplete; and although some may weaken and desert, their unfaithfulness does not nullify God's faithfulness; but on the contrary, makes it so much the more manifest in the faithful instruments of grace and mercy, who remain in the favor of God and give Him the honor through faith. The work which our Lord is doing in our day is the forerunner of the second advent, as John the Baptist was the forerunner, who before Christ's first appearance in the flesh, was to prepare the way for Him. Therefore Jesus has himself thus confirmed the two appearances of Elias; "Elias must truly come first and restore all things (in accordance with the teaching of apostolic truth as purified from all human and devilish falsifications). But I say unto you, that Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed".-----Not indeed, the person of John the Baptist is to precede the second advent of Christ, but the manner. The circumstances which accompanied the appearance of John will repeat themselves before the second advent of Christ. For also John the Baptist was not Elias in person, but he came in the spirit and with the power of Elias. Although Elias performed signs and miracles and John did not, still John came in the spirit and with the power of Elias. For as Elias at a time of universal desertion from the Lord to Baal, was called to restore the teaching and authority of the Lord, so John was sent before Christ to disclose the prevailing spirit of hypocrisy among the Pharisees; to arouse the consciousness of the need of salvation and redemption from sin, through preaching repentance and through baptism, to awaken faith in the hearts of the descendants of those to whom God's promise of future salvation had been given. Even so is the third Elias charged with bringing the Word of Truth of the Gospel of our salvation to the light of day, from the mould and ruins of human ordinances. For because of so much false worship of God, the people no longer attain the salvation in CHRIST and to the deliverance of their souls. They desire to serve God BEFORE they have been freed from the power of sin, through the grace of Christ. Therefore their worship is but carnal, rather than after the spirit, and avails nothing; it is also damnable, since by their false gospel they have made fruitless and have suppressed the true gospel of Christ.

The spiritual movement of our time has this essential characteristic, which corresponds to that which marked the appearance of John before Christ; namely, the baptism of believers, without which the gospel is proclaimed in vain, or rather, is not the true gospel. For those who proclaim the true gospel of Christ do not baptize children ignorant of Christ, but they baptize those, who with the knowledge and desire forsake sin and accept righteousness. In this manner, the baptism of Christ has never perhaps since the first time, been practiced with such good results except by Menno Simon, 300 years ago, but these results were, however, afterward frustrated by the Mennonites themselves. But with our work this will no longer answer, for the times no longer suffer it, because our preaching and our baptism are the forerunner of the appearance of Jesus Christ in glory, as the preaching and baptism of John were the immediate forerunners of the Lord in His first appearance in

the flesh. The Lord wishes, in our times, to see who will still accept the truth when it is preached to them, as He said: "When the son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Now must be shown whether the people are immovably attached to untruth or whether they still are ready to accept help advice and help. But the majority have no desire to hear the truth; they decide in favor of damnation, through their false worship of God, through godless lives and their enmity against Christ. Now Christ intends to show through His teaching that God's people are greatly reduced in number among the false Christians. At the time of ELias, Isabel was the great whore and seducer; Ahab was sold in order that evil might be done and the people were mislead and deceived by the priests of Baal and walked haltingly on both sides, because they allowed themselves to be intimidated by the fear of the furious Jezebel. When, however, Elias on Mt. carmel called upon the name of the Lord God of Israel and He answered with fire from heaven, the people fell upon their faces and cried, convinced: "The Lord (Jehovah, not Baal) is our God: The Lord is God". But with how jmany did this shock and the convictions following it, bear a healing and lasting fruit, so that they would have turned ot the Lord with their whole hearts? That we learn afterwards, when Elias protested against Jezebel upon Mt. Horeb and the Lord answered him: "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal and every mouth which hath not kissed him". Is that a large or small percentage of a great people which had seen such signs and miracles from the Lord and had cried ou tin deepest awe, "Yea, the Lord is God". I think that seven thousand is but a small remnant. Just so is it also with the true believers of the present time. They are but few, the rest are hardened in deception and unrighteousness. The so-called clergy is Jezebel-the wordly authorities are Ahab-sold into sin. The people walk haltingly on both sides, for they are deceived and mislead and believe their Baal is Christ.

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