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The Societal Hedge of the Church—P2

“There is a kind of man whose teeth are like swords and his jaw teeth like knives, to devour the afflicted from the earth and the needy from among men” (Pro. 30:14).

The righteous have been charged by God to be a hedge around the most vulnerable and exploited in society. May it be said of us that we were like Job when he *“delivered the poor who cried for help, and the orphan who had no helper...I put on righteousness, and it clothed me...I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. I was a father to the needy, and I investigated the case which I did not know. I broke the jaws of the wicked and snatched the prey from his teeth”* (Job 29:12-17).

To prey upon the poor, the Jobs of this world must be removed or neutralized. And so, a campaign of bearing false witness against Believers ensues. Bearing false witness, or character assassination, is a common occurrence in the Scriptures. The innocent Naboth was first assassinated in character and then actually assassinated to remove him from the picture: *“Then the two worthless men came in and sat before him; and the worthless men testified against him, even against Naboth, before the people, saying, ‘Naboth cursed God and the king.’ So they took him outside the city and stoned him to death with stones”* (1 Kings 21:13). In the same way, the Pharisees tried to character assassinate Jesus when they *“kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus, so that they might put Him to death. They did not find any, even though many false witnesses came forward. But later on two came forward, and said, ‘This man stated, “I am able to destroy the temple of God and to rebuild it in three days””*” (Matt. 26:59-61).

In the same way, today, the modern town square of social media and television broadcasting spends every day distorting the words and actions of the Church—assassinating the character of Believers. Why? To demoralize them and incite societal action against them.

The righteous are regularly accused in public of the worst kinds of behavior (usually everything that the enemy is actually doing) - labelled traitors, terrorists, racists, haters, bigots, etc. Their character is assassinated again and again in public to demoralize them. The worst motives are insinuated for their every word and action. Historically, the mobbing of Believers becomes so frenzied that the character assassination becomes real assassination and violence is done. We are increasingly seeing this happen today, as it was done to Naboth and Jesus.

Beaten down by the constant assault of reprimand and punishment, Believers naturally retreat from the public sphere and leave their vulnerable neighbors exposed to the designs of the wicked who know that *“a righteous man falling down before the wicked is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt spring”* (Prov. 25:26) to the rest of society—they are counting on it. The historical pattern of their works is to plant economic upheavals and radical social change that forges generational chains.

So, what should we do? Rather than being beaten down by the constant assaults on our character and actions, Believers must see the attacks against them for what they are—an attempt to destabilize a society built on brotherly love by undermining the ministry of Believers to their neighbors, which keeps society stable and free. That should renew our confidence in our ministry, for it is the ministry to our King Who says, *“I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me...Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me”* (Matt. 25:34-40).

In light of this, let us affirm our commitment to the First and Second commandments and *“let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary”* (Gal. 6:9). Even so, Amen.

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