

Special Edition

(Missive 5)

Refutations By Our International Brethren Against The Allegations And Cavils Of The Church Of Judas Iscariot Sent Out By

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The only reason we are dignifying your letter with a response is because we want to defend and affirm our blessedness under the ministry of our pastor, Mr Elijah Thomas Chacko, through the Gospel he has expounded from the Holy Scriptures. Born in the house of God, we are witnesses to the faith, life and manner of person of our pastor (2 Timothy 3:10-15). We reject and denounce your letter completely. Not only is it full of baseless allegations, it is undoctinal and un-Scriptural.

We refute your claims on the following:

(1) ‘Chacko publicly supports Haziel to cause schism in the church, confusing truth and falsehood, without any fairness and justice’.

Citing a miniscule point from the Cambridge Platform and comparing it to a phrase of pastor made in the preaching of Deuteronomy 32, you allege that the doctrine of the Church is not being upheld in our midst. You have failed to capture pastor’s focus in the message of Deuteronomy 32.

In the preaching on Deuteronomy 32, (at which we were present), pastor stated that Deuteronomy 32 is a prophecy concerning the people of God who will apostasize (Deuteronomy 32:5). It is not the first time that he has preached to us on the mixed multitude in the house of God - even those who profess to know God and His doctrines, Christ will wield His sword against them (Deuteronomy 32:41). Judgment begins in the house of God (1 Peter 4:17). The message on Deuteronomy was intended to instill urgency in the congregation to seek for their justification and let Christ rule in the midst of the church. In pastor’s subsequent messages from Joshua and Judges, the constant refrain and emphasis is that Christ is the Head of the Church (Judges 8:23). Instead of seeking to establish our own righteousness and playing church politics, the exhortation was to let Christ rule in the midst of the people of God! It was in such a context that you twisted pastor’s statement that ‘he would not judge’. His statement regarding ‘worshipping alone/with another group’ was also grossly misrepresented; in line with the message, it was to encourage everyone that the paramount issue was to follow the truth; if someone does not agree with the practices or doctrines within the congregation, he has the freedom of conscience to worship alone or with another group that he believes follows the Word of God. In the interest of the safety of the brethren in China given the current political situation, pastor is also encouraging them that the time may have come where worship may have to be held in smaller congregations. This is consistent with pastor’s constant reiteration that we are a ministry; we do not aim to set up churches, establish churches, or ‘steal sheep’. Our onus is to bring the doctrines of grace to everyone and to establish them in the Word of God. In the same vein and spirit of Deuteronomy 32 and the book of Galatians, pastor denounced the Antichrist and False Prophet spirits that have caused apparent factions in the house of God. *‘Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.’* (Galatians 5:7-8) Yet, at no point in time did pastor ever mention any names. If the writers of the letter believe that they are the ones pastor was referring to, perhaps they should examine why they thought so. Could it be that their conscience is still working within them?

We understand that you think pastor is inconsistent in saying he ‘would not judge’ and then apparently ‘judging’ by commending Haziel Qi’s preface in NJT 19th August. This shows your immaturity that you cannot comprehend the difference between ‘judging on the situation and problems in China’ as opposed to ‘judging the content and spirit of Haziel’s letter’. Pastor is never prone to flattery. However, pastor has always taught us that it is important to recognise grace working in our brethren (Philippians 4:8-9) because that is giving glory to God. Haziel’s humility to examine his motives and propensity to spiritual pride is in accordance with the Calvinistic appreciation of the Holy Scriptures (1 Corinthians 9:27). Pastor is simply commending Haziel to the conscience of those who are under him. And why not? If a leader is acknowledging and shaming himself publicly, if a leader follows Christ, if a leader conforms to the doctrines from the Word of God, should the congregation not follow him? Besides, pastor does not only commend Haziel; where praise is due, pastor has on many occasions written blurbs to encourage the brethren who wrote in and also to encourage other brethren reading the NJTs to respond with such thoughtfulness and depth of spiritual maturity

(Hebrews 10:24). This is experimental Calvinism at work. Haziell has also, on multiple times, confessed his sins and weaknesses. You exhort us in your Open Letter that ‘all divisions and strife come from the wicked one’ but you are so warped in your spiritual ambitions that you cannot even recognise the grace of God working in another brother. As Christ said, *‘He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her’* (John 8:7b) and God turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his three friends (Job 42:9-10). If you are truly concerned about the souls of your fellow brethren, why are you vilifying them and criticizing their repentance? Or is there some other ulterior motive which drives this hostility and anger within you? Now on smaller issues - pastor comparing Haziell Qi to Genghis Khan is not ‘rebuilding the middle wall of partition of ethnicity.’ This is a ridiculous and unfounded claim to all who have heard pastor’s preaching, especially on the doctrine of the Church and the coming in of the Gentiles (Isaiah 2:1-5 and many other Scriptural portions). Anyone who understands basic English rules will know that it is a metaphor - pastor is using the example of Genghis Khan to illustrate certain characteristics within Haziell and is inspiring him to be like a Genghis Khan for Christ. In contrast, we too know the manner of person Joel Chia is and we can affirm that when we hear his conveyances sometimes, it is chock-full of Chinese cultural anecdotes. Why is it that wherever he goes for mission trips, including India and Central America, he only seek out the Chinese?? Throughout these years, many of his actions have betrayed that he is the one who retains his Chinese strongholds! And yet you accuse Mr Elijah of being the one destroying the unity of the church?

(2) “Chacko trespasses the Congregational Church Polity and principle of Tripartite System; he rules as a tyrant in the church of God”

If the writers of the letter have any modicum of honesty at all, they would admit that pastor does not make arbitrary decisions on his own but rather consult the elders. From the letter itself, there were proofs that consultations took place with the other leaders – it was not just Zephaniah, but also ‘Eliezer Pandey, Zechariah Tan and Phinehas David Yeoh’. It is also known to Chia and Lim who have been with pastor these numerous years that decisions are always made based on the principle of consultation and consensus – mission work, financial expenses, and many other things (Proverbs 11:14). Calling pastor Elijah a ‘tyrant’ in the house of God and that the members in his church were like ‘slaves serving a king with trembling’ is absurd. The definition of a ‘tyrant’ is: *a person exercising power or control in a cruel, unreasonable, or arbitrary way*. It is so laughable that you would slander the character of the man of God and compare him to a real tyrant like Mao Zedong. But we will speak of better things; as young people having grown up in the house of God under the tutelage of Mr Elijah, we can and will testify that we have been given nothing short of the best. In terms of academic education, we have been encouraged and pushed by pastor to strive to hone our skills of independent and logical thinking and deductions. In terms of physical welfare, pastor has treated us like his very own daughters - teaching us to appreciate music, culinary tastes, sports, nature, gardening, travelling; not to make us worldly, but rather to make us discerning, so that we can be winsome in bringing the Gospel across to others (John 17:14-15). In all things pastor has taught us to give the glory to Christ; and his anger is when we abuse these blessings for our own lusts and covetousness. We enjoy the time spent with pastor and do not feel afraid of him; the Law may be applied, but only when our spirits are defiled and when we sin against God. If God does not apply His rod on us, then we are bastards (Proverbs 27:6, Hebrews 12:8, Revelation 3:19). Pastor could very easily mollycoddle us all the time (2 Corinthians 12:15). But for the sake of our souls, he never fails to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine (2 Timothy 4:2). If we have to list our blessings one by one, we are sure this letter would not end. Chia and Lim had been great beneficiaries of this love and now they turned around and attacked the man who has been practically their father, hence their damnation is just (Deuteronomy 5:16). You yourselves have testified of numerous occasions of the blessings you have gotten under pastor’s ministry and the light and liberation you have gained through the preaching of the Word. Pastor can very well ask you the same question as Paul did, *‘Am I therefore your enemy, because I tell you the truth?’* (Galatians 4:16)

(3) Chacko proclaims his identity as the Elijah of the last days, who is specially anointed for the special mandate committed to him. All such proclamation robs our Lord Jesus Christ of His glory.

What you are essentially arguing is that there is no place and role for anointing of preachers in our times as all that has been preached about the Scriptures has already been preached. By denying that anointing of a preacher in the New Testament age is scriptural, you are in fact, denying: (a) The chief ordinance of the New Testament age which is preaching; (b) The work of the Holy Spirit in anointing all the faithful and true preachers of the New Testament age; (c) Ecclesiastical history. *'For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel' (1 Corinthians 17a) 'And how shall they preach except they be sent?'* (Romans 10:15a.) By what authority and power do they preach? *'Not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power'* (1 Corinthians 2:4b). If Paul were to say that Christ had already preached all things, there it would be pointless to write the 21 epistles. In the time when the Jewish leaders were murky about the doctrine of Justification by Faith (and instead were still upholding the need for circumcision), Paul preached with immense clarity that Justification is by grace alone and not by the works of the Law (Romans 3:24; 4:4-5, Galatians 2:16, Ephesians 2:8)! In the pitch darkness of the middle ages where the Roman Catholic church controlled the souls and lives of men, God anointed and raised up Martin Luther, John Calvin and the Protestant Reformers to debunk the heresies of Catholicism, expose Babylon the Great, restore and affirm the all-sufficiency of the Scriptures and re-establish the doctrine of Justification by Faith. (Daniel 12:3, Revelation 11:3-4) Were they ashamed of their niche, calling and duty to declare faithfully the doctrines of the Scriptures? (Romans 1:16, 2 Corinthians 11:5) If it is not already evident to you, we are living in the days when Christendom is now inundated with heresies from the counter-Reformation Movement - all of which cast darkness and murkiness on this doctrine of Justification by Faith. False preachers would only preach *'peace, peace'* (Jeremiah 6:14). In contrast, anointed preaching is accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit. The preaching – *'reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine'* is meant to rout presumption and to bring men to fear and trembling for their spiritual disposition (Jeremiah 1:10, Micah 3:8. Looking at the state of Christendom, false assurance and easy salvation is propagated throughout! If there is much darkness, how much greater must be the light to dispel the darkness? Therefore, for us to testify of the anointing and strong measure of the Holy Spirit upon pastor Elijah is not unscriptural. It gives glory to God and attests to the mercies of Yeshua Christ and the work of the blessed Holy Spirit that there is such great clarity in which the doctrines are being preached faithfully at the pulpit. The empirical evidence are not far-fetched nor 'crafted'. You yourself had testified of the deliverance experienced at the place of preaching from the murkiness of heresies in Christendom, the darkness of paganistic strongholds and the oppression of the Communist ideology (2 Corinthians 3:2). You attested to the measure of the Spirit of God upon the messenger because of the messages he preached. Therefore, to all those blinded by the 'vain-janglings' of Chia and Lim, we appeal to your conscience. To 'rob Jesus Christ of His glory' is when you do not uprightly acknowledge the Holy Spirit in those raised up of God to bring the light of the Word of God to the pitch darkness of your soul. Moreover, you are belittling the sacrifices of the godly forebears who gave their lives to defend the truth (Revelation 6:9). By attacking the place of preaching and the preacher, you are denying that your soul was once cleansed (Matthew 12:43-45, 2 Peter 2:20-22) and you were illuminated to understand the deep truths of the Word of God. *'But if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins'* (Hebrews 10:26).

(4) Chacko utilizes the platform of NJT as a means of propaganda and control of the church, to brainwash the congregations.

The NJT is meant as a spiritual forum for edification and discussion regarding the doctrines of grace and experimental Calvinism. They are also meant as the church newsletters to update and connect the brethren across the 127 provinces regarding one another's welfare and the mission work; we are to exhort one another while it is called today (Malachi 3:16-17, Hebrews 3:13; 10:24). It is like the time of Esther when the posts were being sent out (Esther 8:14). The NJTs do not take precedence over the Scriptures; the reading of the Word of God is ultimately most important. This is shown in how we distribute the Bible Reading Calendars every year without fail. However, it is not easy to

understand the depth of the Holy Scriptures (Psalm 119:33-34). Therefore, there is the need not only to hear preaching from the Word of God but also to apply and do it. (Matthew 7:24-27). For those who give responses and write in to the forum of the NJT they are exercising their spiritual faculties to doctrinally and practically respond to the Word preached or to the workings of providence in their lives. They are exercising repentance and oft confess their sins even publicly to the edification of all and to the glory of God. We should be emulating such examples instead of being censorious and picking on their faults and sins (Matthew 7:1-3). For those who respond to the NJT, the reading and discussion of the contents thereof further reinforces what was preached and teaches them how to also apply it to their own lives.

It promotes soul-searching and introspection when we read about the pastoral struggles of our brethren, be it communal living, financial problems etc; it is full of wisdom on how to practically trust in God. We commiserate with our brethren when they are in trouble (funerals, natural disasters, sickness, examinations, etc) and rejoice when they are blessed (weddings, births, gainful employment, etc). After all, God has given us fellow pilgrims in this journey of faith (Psalm 84:7). The NJT is the perfect means by which we learn from our fellow pilgrims, whether good or bad examples! Through the constant fellowship in the Word of God through the means of NJT, we are directed and encouraged to return to Christ, to have the fear of God, to seek our salvation with fear and trembling (Philippians 2:12), and to love Zion above our chief joy (Psalm 137:5-6). A simple perusal of the NJT archive will debunk your absurd claims that the NJT is a means for propaganda. We recommend that you read the NJT more carefully before making such allegations.

(5) Apostasy brings about corrupted living and moral turpitude

'A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.' (Matthew 7:18) Will the Spirit of God work in a man you claim is morally corrupt? By numerous testimonies of the strength of the Holy Spirit in the preaching of Elijah Thomas Chacko, (and of course, you were one of those who spoke glowingly), are you now saying that the working of the Holy Spirit in you is a lie? (Matthew 12:25-37). Furthermore, if you feel so strongly about this matter, why wait until now to say something? Or are you grasping at straws trying to concoct an argument?

Conclusion

Of course, you will say that this letter is to make your doctrinal stance in separating from Mr Elijah's ministry. However, what we inferred from your letter is that you feel your reputation as 'teacher Chia' or 'missionary pastor' is threatened. As seen from the incessant rant about how teacher Chia, though an 'elder', has no 'fair trial', you yourself have exposed your self-righteousness. This whole episode shows that you do not truly understand the doctrine of Justification by Faith; you do not understand the especial need of the application of the Law to bring down all our high mountains of pride. The book of Romans reminds us that there is none righteous, no not one! No matter what anyone says about us, it is probably only the tip of the iceberg. Your warped idea of justice and judgment is to vindicate yourself and your righteousness. It is no different from the Scribes and Pharisees in the days of Christ who boasted of their own righteousness. Recently, Chia's wife, Charity, asked one of our elderly folks, 'Can Joel apostasise?' The very Bible you purport to stand by is replete with examples that debunks your self-righteous claims. Did Balaam apostasise? Did not Korah, Dathan and Abiram fall away? Do not forget that Ahithophel and Joab went against David, the anointed of the Lord. Was not Gehazi, Elijah's servant, tempted by covetousness? Even Paul himself said, *'Lest that by any means, I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway'* (1 Corinthians 9:27).

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