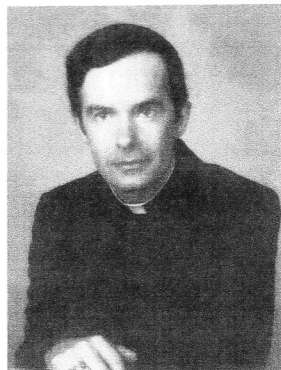




Chaplain's Corner, Hughes Camp Chaplain Richard W Rudd



Note: Due to the failed adherence to the published schedule for the Confederate memorial ceremony at Higginville, my remarks to have been delivered then were developed into the following article.

A priest noticed that a tree on the lawn of the rectory

appeared unhealthy. From a consultation with a horticulturist who conducted an examination, he learned that a fatal disease in the roots would eventually lead to cutting down and uprooting the tree. Trees not only provide shade and fruit, they memorialize people and symbolize nations. After the 9/11 Moslem attack on America, most of us are familiar with Jonathan Cahn's *The Harbinger*. A harbinger is a precursor or sign of a future event. In this case, it is a warning of God's impending judgement of a nation that rejects Him. Isaiah 9:10 reads that "...the sycamores have been cut down, but we will put cedars in their place." As the fig tree traditionally symbolizes Israel, after 9/11, the sycamore, also known as a fig mulberry or buttonwood tree, has come to symbolize America. Destroyed in the 9/11 attack, the sycamore was defiantly replaced with an Erez or Cedar tree. While the surrounding vegetation thrives, the Cedar is withering. Called a tree of hope, one must ask if that hope is in our own abilities or God's protection.

Each year, we gather to celebrate and memorialize our Confederate roots. Those roots are buried in the hollowed ground of cemeteries throughout the South. Each successive generation is the Erez tree and new hope of America. Each attack on our Confederate ancestors, their descendants, the Founding Fathers and principles on which America was established is a fatal disease threatening the roots of this nation. Like the Erez tree, America, under these persistent attacks, is withering.

The Apostle Jude in his epistle warns us of the events that will transpire in the last days. He writes that we will witness moral decay and the denial of Christ. He foretells of false teachers propagating

false doctrines and leaders who oppose truth. These seducers and counterfeits are not foreigners; they originate from among us. Jude calls them "...fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted..." (Jude 12) America as a nation is in jeopardy of being twice dead. Before 1776, America did not exist. With victory at the end of the Revolutionary War came life with the spirit of 1776. Today, the life the spirits of 1776 and 1861 infused into America is being threatened with what our ancestors would not have hesitated to call treason. America is in jeopardy of being uprooted by the winds of change and the judgement of God.

God judges us as individuals in the next life for the deeds we commit in this life. But, as history repeatedly records, God judges nations in this life. Those nations that honor God prosper; those that dishonor God suffer judgement. King Solomon petitioned God on behalf of the nation that He would hear and answer their prayers. In His response, God set three conditions for national blessing or judgement. "If My people who are called by My name (1) humble themselves, and (2) pray and seek My face, and (3) turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land." (II Chron. 7:14)

just before Gen. Lee died, he uttered, "Strike the tent." A military expression, it was an order to move the camp. Lee knew he was about to move from this world to the next. For us who follow him, it is an order to move from one battle front to the next. In the military, messages are communicated by bugle; in the *Bible*, they are transmitted by trumpet or shofar. When the bugle or trumpet is blown, our Confederate ancestors hear Taps and a call to rest. We are to hear reveille and a call to awaken to vigilance and action. St. Paul instructed us "...not to be quickly shaken in mind or excited..." He said, "Let nobody deceive you..." (II Thess. 2:2-3) We "...must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience." (I Tim. 3:9) We "...must hold firm to the sure word as taught, so that (we) may be able...to (defeat) those who contradict it." (Tit. 1:9)

we honor our Confederate ancestors best by what we do each day, contending with the issues that challenge us in our time. May each annual memorial ceremony not be an end in itself, but a renewal and re-dedication of our true allegiance to America's original ideals and faith in the God of our Fathers.

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Hughes Camp Chaplain