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The Advent Lightbearer



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A Born Again Savior

By Dr. Michael Snyder

We find in John chapter three a discussion between the Pharisee Nicodemus and Jesus. His curiosity had been piqued by the things he had heard about this extraordinary man and wanted to find out for himself what He was all about. So, at night, when few would be able to spy him out, he quietly went to see Jesus that he might have an interview with Him. He says to Jesus that "we know that you are a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that you do, except God be with him."

Jesus' response is quite strange to the ears of Nicodemus. "Verily, verily I say to you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus ponders this response and probes Jesus concerning how a man can return to his mothers womb and be born a second time. In this statement, Jesus introduced a concept in the mind of Nicodemus that men have pondered for millennia.

Whole systematic theologies are built on man's interpretation of what this means. We as a church are somewhat divided over this issue ourselves. Not that we would disagree that we need to be born again, that is indisputable. But do we really understand what this means? We are told that this "only concerns our walk with Christ" while completely overlooking that the fact that Jesus ***was*** "born again." How He was born again is somewhat of a mystery to us, but it is clear that there was no immaculate conception as the Papists assert—there was no return to the womb as Nicodemus supposed, So what really happened here?

Jesus actually reveals the answer to this mysterious inquiry in the subsequent dialogue with Nicodemus. In verse 5 He states the following, "I say to you, except a man be born of the water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." He lays down two premises that are required for salvation: One, you must be born of the water and two, you must be born of the Spirit.

When we consider the birth of Christ, it is clear that He was born of the Spirit, this is highlighted during the encounter between Elizabeth, when she was pregnant with John the Baptist, and Mary while she was pregnant with Jesus. This visit is detailed in Luke 1:39-56. In verse 41, when Mary came into the presence of Elizabeth, baby John "leaped in her womb." In the next verse, we are told that Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost and then proclaimed "blessed is the fruit of thy womb…" Mary responds, "my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior" (vs. 42 and 47). Clearly, since both women were under the influence of the Holy Spirit their children were to be born of the Spirit. So, for their part, they needed to be born of the water. John would baptize Jesus in the river Jordan and declared Him to be "the Lamb of God" in John 1:36.

What Nicodemus needed to understand that this man Jesus was the Son of God. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son . . ." John 3:16. You see Jesus had literally been born again. He was God, and then He came down to the world to be born again as both the Son of God and the Son of Man. That He was "***born***," is a little more uncertain since God is eternal, we do not understand His beginnings or lack thereof. But, clearly, Jesus was trying to get Nicodemus to

understand that in order to be saved, God had to send His Son to be born. Since Jesus is our pattern, we must do likewise, hence the verbiage, “you must be born again.”

After a further discussion about the nature of the Holy Spirit, Nicodemus asks the question, “How can these things be?” John 3:9. Jesus’ response likely brought an element of shame to Nicodemus but was actually designed to bring him to conversion. “Are you a master of Israel and know not these things?” Jesus wants Nicodemus to understand what God had taught the Israelites about the coming of the Messiah. So Jesus, in verse 14, brings Nicodemus face to face with the truth about his heritage and the history of his people:

> “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.”

What was Jesus talking about and why did He refer him to this piece of Israel’s history? For the answer we must explore what happened in Numbers chapter 21. Here we find the story of the Brazen Serpent:

> “And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way” Num 21:4.

The setting for us is that the children of Israel are still wandering in the wilderness and Jesus is getting them ready to enter into the promised land; however, instead of taking the easy way in, Jesus has led them the long way around Edom to enter much further north than they anticipated. This was a very rugged, dangerous and difficult area to traverse. It is a great parallel for God’s people today to realize that Jesus is still leading us although the Way is becoming more difficult, mostly because of poor compliance with the plan that Christ has for us. Ellen White tells us:

> “The work which the church has failed to do in a time of peace and prosperity, she will have to do in a terrible crisis, under most discouraging, forbidding circumstances.” The reason given for this she says on the same page, “the work has not been done.” Ev 31.

Notice in Numbers 21 that the people became discouraged. It should be understood that discouragement is a cousin to depression. As long as we continue to be noncompliant with the directions of the Lord, the way will continue to get more

difficult. It did so for the children of Israel in the wilderness, as they spoke out against Moses and the Lord, accusing them of bringing them to this place to die—after all, there was no water, no bread and they were getting very tired of manna everyday. Christ's response was as follows:

> "The Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died." Numbers 21:6.

Within the course of these events, many of the children of Israel were brought to realize their sin. They confessed to Moses that they had sinned against the Lord and were pleading with Moses to intervene that they may find forgiveness from Jesus. They enjoined Moses to ask the Lord to take away the serpents; however, Jesus instructed Moses thusly:

> "Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looks upon it, shall live." Num 21:8.

One would think that this was an easy fix and everyone would just look at the brazen serpent that Moses had made and live—unfortunately, that was not the result:

> "Many had already died, and when Moses raised the serpent upon the pole, some would not believe that merely gazing upon that metallic image would heal them; they perished in their unbelief. Yet there were many that had faith in the provision which God had made. Fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters were anxiously engaged in helping their suffering, dying friends to fix their languid eyes upon the serpent. If they, though faint and dying, could only once look, they were perfectly restored." PP 430.

It is clear that many had faith, but many others did not. Whether through discouragement that led to depression or just a plain disbelief in the Word of God and the testimony of His prophet, they refused to listen. So, it will be in the last days, many will disregard the Way, disregard the Word of the Lord and the testimonies of his prophetess, Ellen G White.

Here is the real big question: Why would Jesus instruct Moses to make an image of a serpent to put on that pole that whosoever looked at it would live? When we discuss the serpent, peoples's minds automatically go straight to Satan. A serpent is a symbol of Satan. Why would we be saved if we look at a serpent, an image of Satan? This is such a great question and I have heard many theologians, pastors

and leaders give so many confusing answers either because they don't actually understand it themselves or to avoid the depth of the truth of this lesson.

Our people are extremely confused on this issue. It speaks to the Nature of Christ. Look, when Jesus told Moses to make a serpent, the question remains, why a serpent? We need to understand the nature of sin first. Where did it come from, who is responsible for it and how is it really remedied? In Eze 28:14-17 the prophet states the following:

> "**You *are* the anointed cherub that covers**; **and I have set you *so*:** you were upon the holy mountain of God; you have walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. **You *were* perfect in your ways from the day that you were created, till iniquity was found in you**. By the multitude of your merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and you have sinned: therefore I will cast you as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. **Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty**, **you have corrupted your wisdom by reason of thy brightness**: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee."

It is very clear that this statement is talking about Satan, formerly known as Lucifer. He was created a perfect being and made a high ranking angel—a covering cherub. That is an angel that stands at the throne of God and covers it with his wings. But, something went wrong, iniquity or sin was found in the heart of Lucifer. He was a beautiful angel but was corrupted by his own beauty. His reason was tarnished by this sin and he could not bring himself to repent and give up his idea that God was somehow wrong. The bible goes on to teach us that:

> "**there was war in heaven**: **Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven**. And **the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan**, which deceives the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." Rev 12:7-9

This war in heaven was over ideas that were very strange to the perfect creation of God. The controversy was over whether or not God was a just God and the contention that His requirements are not fair. Isaiah makes the issues clear for us:

> "**How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!** ***how*** **art thou cut down to the ground**, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, **I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High**." Isa. 14:12-14.

So, Lucifer, now Satan, has been thrown out of heaven because his countenance was changed, he has now created and spread the sin that was found in his heart and this lead to the fallen nature. Satan has become a creator—he has created the Fallen Nature. He was cast out of heaven for his lack of harmony with God, his fallen nature and his propensity to sin could not be tolerated in Heaven. He has in a word become ***evil.*** He is no longer safe to stay in heaven. Scripture records in Revelation 12 that a third of the angels of heaven were cast out with him.

Finally, in this quick tour of the origins of sin, we come to the garden of Eden, sometime after the creation of man.

> "**Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field** which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, **Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?**" Gen 3:1.

You know how this story goes, Eve eats the fruit, gives it to Adam who also eats of it. Now, man has repeated the sin of Lucifer, they have doubted God and followed after the guidance of Satan. Man has, since that generation, inherited the Fallen Nature that Lucifer created in heaven. The bible says that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" because of this fallen nature.

This brings us back to our question, why was Moses instructed to make a brazen serpent, an image of Satan, to put on a pole for God's people look to for their salvation? Now we can easily surmise the answer. The only way for man to be saved from their sins, Jesus, the Son of God, would have to be born a man in that same satanic nature. If he does not take that nature, He would not have been able to reach across the great gulf that sin has created between God and man to rescue us from our sin. When we look at the story of the brazen serpent, we see the ***promise*** that God has given to humanity—that He was going to come in the satanic nature to rescue man from his sin. He had to come all the way down to us to make this happen and yet do it without sin. Fortunately for us, He did and without sinning.

> "For we have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; **but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin**." Heb 4:16

And the scriptures are clear that when combined with this story in Numbers 21, we can come to no other conclusion than this:

> "Forasmuch then as **the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same**; that t**hrough death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil**; And **deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage**. **For verily he took not on *him the nature of* angels; but he took on *him* the seed of Abraham**. **Wherefore in ALL things it behoved him to be made like unto *his* brethren**, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things *pertaining* to God, **to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted**." Heb 2:14-18

There can be little doubt about what nature our Lord took to save us. It is only theologians, confused pastors and leaders along with their followers that believe otherwise. There are many avenues that can be explored to discover why they take these positions, but the bottom line is that they do not believe the Truth as it is in Jesus. Our Lord is a Perfect Savior, He humbled Himself completely because He loves us. He wants to save us ***from*** our sins, not ***in*** our sins. Perhaps in a future edition we will explore some of the reasons why there are alternative views on this subject. But if we stick to the Word of God there can be no doubt.

If you are still not sure, let the pen of inspiration speak on this scenario in Numbers 21;

> "**What a strange symbol of Christ was that likeness of the serpents** which stung them. This symbol was lifted on a pole, and they were to look to it and be healed. **So Jesus was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. He came as the sin-bearer**. Under the symbol of the uplifted serpent he was presented before the vast congregation of those who were entrusted with the sacred truth. It was God's purpose that when Christ should appear in person, men might recognize his mission, and co-operate with him in the saving of humanity. **Christ was to be lifted on the cross, and this cross is to call the attention of all the people**. He was crucified, at one of the yearly gatherings of the Jews, when representatives from all nations were present at Jerusalem.

> The knowledge of the cruel work done to Jesus was to go to the remotest regions of the inhabited world. **The message, Look and live, had been given in a most decided manner, and it meant hope, courage, faith, pardon, and life**." 1888 1451

Paul knew this Truth as well as he penned in Romans 8:3:

> "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, **God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh**:"

In Conclusion, the bible reveals, that Christ was awakening Nicodemus to the fact that He is the Messiah. He came in the fallen nature of Satan and Adam so that he could rescue humanity from the depths of sin caused by that very nature. There are many ideas about the nature of Christ, but only one matters, that is the bible view.

The Prophetic Faith of our Pioneers



This is a continuing series of articles that began with our first issue.

By Dr. Michael Snyder

Start with Simple Concepts

Let's start with an easy prophecy to understand. Even though we are focusing on Revelation, there is a real simple prophecy that we can learn very quickly found in the book of Daniel. In Daniel chapter two, we find a prophetic vision given to an non-believer that is revealed to, and interpreted by Daniel. The background is simple, King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream he could not remember. He summoned his wise men and astrologers requesting that they reveal and then interpret the dream. They thought this was crazy and pressed the king to reveal the dream and then they could interpret it. But, the king could not remember the dream so, he threatened all the wise men with death if they could not accomplish the king's command.

Daniel and his friends are told about the conundrum and realizing they were considered part of the wise men, took the matter to God and the Lord revealed both

the dream and the interpretation. We can pick up the story after God has revealed this secret to Daniel.

In Dan 2:31-36, we read:

> "Thou, O king, saw and beheld a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. You saw till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and we will tell the interpretation thereof before the king."

So, we see that King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream about a great image made up of gold, silver, brass, iron and iron mixed with clay. Now, if the Bible did not tell us what all this meant, we might speculate and entertain many different theories about what is represented here. But, we do not have to guess, the Bible goes on to tell us what it all means.

From verse 37 to the end of the chapter we read:

> "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potters'

> clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

So again, we do not need to guess. The Bible reveals the interpretation to us. The head of gold is Babylon, starting with King Nebuchadnezzar. The silver chest is the next kingdom in history, the Medo-Persian Empire, followed by the Grecian Empire represented by the hips and thighs of brass. Next comes the legs of iron, which is Rome and finally the feet of iron and clay which is the second phase of Rome as seen in Papal Rome. The Bible goes on to tell us about a kingdom that destroys all earthly kingdoms—the kingdom of God. The features of the gold, silver, brass, iron and iron mixed with clay have specific characteristics that help define those kingdoms more clearly. For example, Babylon was known for it's abundance of gold adornments in the city. While gold is valuable, it is relatively soft compared to the iron of Rome. So, taking a little more time to do more in depth study is encouraged here. Just remember we are trying to keep it simple.

Small Clues of Great Importance

By Carl Person

Often times, while reading our Bibles, we will pass over what appear to be minor or irrelevant words that seem to be there merely to make the narrative or prophecy more literary. Let's consider a couple of these that seem small but, turn out to be extremely important:

> "Hurt not the ***earth***, neither the ***sea***, nor the ***trees***, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." Rev. 7:3.
>
> "And I stood upon the ***sand of the sea***, and I saw a beast rise up out of the sea … And I beheld another beast coming up ***out of the earth***" Rev. 13:1 & 11.

I have highlighted the words that we will concentrate on. First, let's consider the highlighted part of Revelation 7:1. If we take the symbols, ***earth, sea*** and ***trees;*** we can ask, "what is the significance of these three words?" The obvious first step is to search the Bible to find the meaning of these symbols.

The sea is a body of water, and we are told in Revelation 17:15:

> "The ***waters*** which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are ***peoples***, and ***multitudes***, and ***nations***, and ***tongues***."

The clear meaning of the waters is people. The sea therefore is a representation of people. But, there's a bit more to it. The seas are ***salt water***, whereas, in other places in the Revelation, ***fountains*** and ***rivers*** are used as well, and they are ***fresh water***.

In Prov. 13:14, we read:

> "The law of the ***wise is a fountain*** of life, to depart from the snares of death."

The fountains logically seem to be the elders (the Wise) to feed the rivers (the congregation) which will carry the Gospel to the sea (multitudes). Remember that Christ told us that "other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must

bring, and they shall hear my voice and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." John 10:16.

YOU are to give the third angel's message that the sea may hear His voice. In fact, we have an admonition from James referring to us as fountains:

> "Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can ***no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.***" James 3:11:12.

Finally, the rivers. Ezekiel 47:6-9 explains them for us:

> "And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river. Now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other. Then said he unto me, ***These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed***."

The rivers are for the healing of the nations (*cf.* Rev. 22:2).

Now, we will consider trees. Matthew 7:15-20 reads:

> "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. You shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? ***Even so every good tree brings forth good fruit***; but a corrupt ***tree*** brings forth evil fruit. A good ***tree*** cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt ***tree*** bring forth good fruit. Every ***tree*** that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Why by their fruits you shall know them."

In this admonition to His disciples, Christ compares false "prophets," which includes teachers preaching a false Gospel, to "corrupt" trees. He even adds that we cannot harvest good fruits from thorns and thistles—a direct reference to the curse (Gen. 3:18).

Speaking to the "Daughters of Jerusalem," which were crying as He carried His cross, He says:

> "If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" Luke 23:31.

There are many more scriptures that compare God's people to trees—both those who are true to His Word (fruitful) and those who are not (dry). Simply put, if Christ is a green tree, one that bears good fruit, a dry tree bears thorns and thistles. Trees therefore represent those among God's people—good or bad. In Revelation 7:1, the trees are about to receive the seal of God, therefore they must be green trees.

So this leaves us to understand the meaning the earth. In Revelation 10:1, we read:

> "And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot on the ***sea***, and his left foot on the ***earth***."

We know that the sea represents multitudes of people so, what of the earth? It would seem that these two symbols represent different regions but, in order to understand it fully, we must return to the first verse we looked at:

> "And I stood upon the ***sand of the sea***, and I saw a beast rise up out of the sea … And I beheld another beast coming up ***out of the earth***" Rev. 13:1 & 11.

Notice that one beast rises from the sea, the other comes up from the earth. How can we know what these two regions are? For this, we must look to the book of Daniel:

> "And four great beasts came up from the sea …" Dan 7:3.

Most of us already know what these four beasts were: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. Out of the fourth beast a new type of kingdom would arise—of this one we are told that it would:

> "speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." Dan. 7:25.

This is clearly a new kind of political system, specifically a ***religio-political*** system that comes out of Rome, and would reign for 1260 years. There is of course, only one thing that this could possibly be: the Roman Catholic church.

Now, when we consider the idea of the "***sand of the sea***," again, we already know that sea is the multitudes of people. But why add the little part "stood upon the sand"? Christ, when speaking of following His word, relates a comparison between the wise who build their houses upon the Rock and the foolish that build their's upon the sand (Matt. 7:25-26). Sand is not a sure foundation. In fact, anyone who lives by the seas or oceans know well how much the sands shift—wind, rain and waves move it around with ease, constantly changing the coastlines. This is a great description of the "Old World." The countries of the Mid-East and Europe have changed so many times throughout the ages, it's hard to even keep track of it all—countries joining, then splitting, being conquered and divided by the conquerers, etc. Look at the difference in a map of Europe between 1900 and 1918, and then compare it to 1945, and finally to today—you would think you're looking at completely different places!

All of these symbols, as insignificant as they may seem, are meant to solidify exactly what God is trying to tell us. You will notice that this beast is also said to reign for 1260 years (Rev. 13:5); this ties the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation together.

Now, we can come to the earth. The beast that comes up from the earth comes ***after the 1260 year reign of the first beast.*** Since we know that the 1260 years ended in 1798, we can figure out quickly which new world power was on the ascendancy at that time—the United States. To this day, we refer to the Americas as the "New World," and Europe, etc. as the "Old World." I here want to emphasize the idea of ***"New."***

This brings us back to "hurt not the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree." Neither the entire Old World, nor the entire New World will receive the Seal of God. The sea is referring to the multitudes world-wide that have accepted the message whereas, the trees represent the elders. It is my assertion that the earth, in this context, represents ***new*** believers—those who have responded to the final warning in the loud cry of the third angel.

Last Day Events

By Carl Person

Who is able to make war with the Beast?

> In Revelation 13:4, we read, *"And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying,* ***Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?****"*

This verse describes the rise of the Papacy who is given her power from Satan himself—the Roman Catholic church is never referred to as a part of the church of God. The mere fact that it is referred to as a beast informs us that this pseudo-religious organization is primarily a political institution. For 1260 years, no king, governor or other leaders would dare to go against her dictates. She used the power and armies of the states to enforce her dogma, levy taxes (called offerings but, what would happen if you didn't "offer" something?) and extort various institutions to build a "grand empire" of their own. In speaking of the power the Roman church wielded during this time, Malachi Martin states:

> "The centerpiece of it all was the man who sat on the throne of Simon Peter in that Holy See of Rome. Among the other players at the Round Table of international politics, no ruler could take command, no government could govern, no commerce could function, without the spiritual blessing and the ***imperial nod***.
>
> "Moreover, whatever overlordship this man, the Roman Pontiff, exercised—whatever armies or fleets he commanded or could assemble, whatever binding laws he laid down governing civil, political, artistic and personal life throughout Europe—ultimately his right and claim to do so was based on his possession of Peter's keys of supreme spiritual authority" Keys of this Blood, p. 134.

How was this accomplished? It is interesting to read what Malachi Martin has to say on the topic of the rise of the Roman church:

> "Roman Christianity adopted not merely the framework but ***many of the traits of the recent Roman imperialism.***" *ibid.*

Having the power over Europe as stated above, as verified through history and predicted in the Bible, no leader would dare defy the pope. The Papacy had amassed armies from the various nation states to try to wipe out any Christian

"sect" or political power that disagreed with it: who was able to make war with him? All the leaders during the Papacy's terrible reign, no matter how powerful were terrified of being excommunicated—it could be a death sentence.

In 1798, the papacy would receive its "deadly wound" courtesy of General Berthier during the French Revolution. She would regain her sovereign authority in 1929 via the Fascist dictator Mussolini with the Lateran Treaty (in fact, both Fascist leaders of the time, Hitler and Mussolini made deals with the Roman church to extend their powers—and they both ultimately turned on the church—this too will be repeated. See *Hitler's Pope, The Secret History of Pius XII, John Cornwell, 1999*).

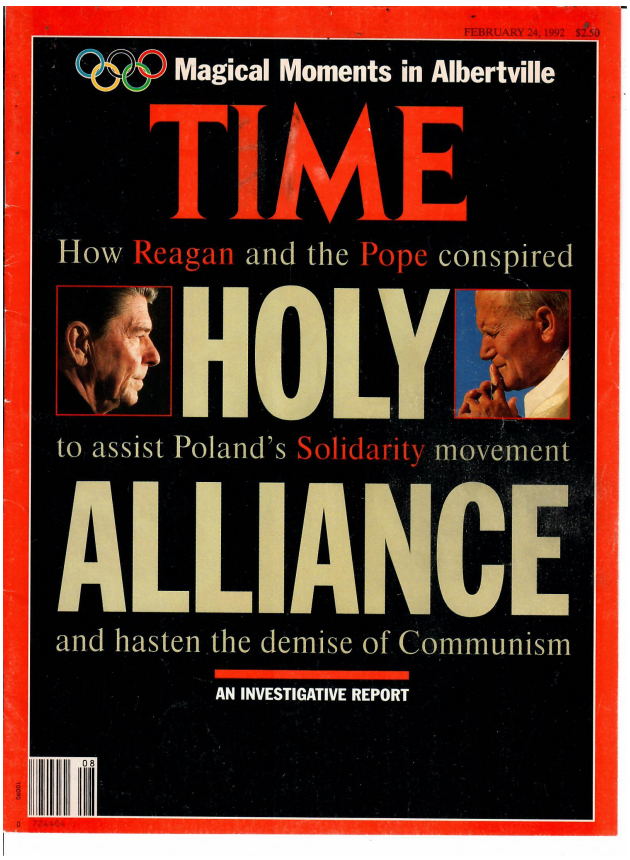
We are then told in the scripture that there would be another beast but, this one's origin would be different:

> "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth: and he had two hours like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them that dwellers therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed." Rev. 13:11-12.

We know that this prophecy is a description of the United States, and that she will take on the same attributes as the prior Roman Imperialists of the papacy. The question is: Can we see this in our day?

First, a historical review: Following WW II, the U.S. would become a world superpower; however, this title was also given to the Soviet Union. War between the two superpowers would have resulted in a catastrophe that few would survive. The two powers had built up their nuclear arsenal to keep them at a stale-mate—the doctrine of "mutually assured destruction." The Soviet Bloc included the Baltic States, Poland, Ukraine, Georgia, etc.—that is to say, much of Eastern Europe. During the 45 year period, from 1945 to 1990, it was not likely that the U.S. could completely fulfill its prophetic destiny.

In 1990, everything changed—the fall of the Berlin Wall heralded the demise of the communist's hold on its vassal territories. The Soviet Union basically collapsed from within; strong economic pressures as well as the pressures from without primarily through the union of President Regan and John Paul II working with the solidarity movement in Poland.




COVER STORY

Faced with a military crackdown in Poland, Ronald Reagan and John Paul II secretly joined forces to keep the Solidarity union alive. They hoped not only to pressure Warsaw but to free all of Eastern Europe.

The Holy Alliance

By CARL BERNSTEIN

Only President Ronald Reagan and Pope John Paul II were present in the Vatican Library on Monday, June 7, 1982. It was the first time the two had met, and they talked for 50 minutes. In the same wing of the papal apartments, Agostino Cardinal Casaroli and Archbishop Achille Silvestrini met with Secretary of State Alexander Haig and Judge William Clark, Reagan's National Security Adviser. Most of their discussion focused on Israel's invasion of Lebanon, then in its second day; Haig told them Prime Minister Menachem Begin had assured him that the invasion would not go farther than 25 miles inside Lebanon.

But Reagan and the Pope spent only a few minutes reviewing events in the Middle East. Instead they remained focused on a subject much closer to their heart: Poland and the Soviet dominance of Eastern Europe. In that meeting, Reagan and the Pope agreed to undertake a clandestine campaign to hasten the dissolution of the communist empire. Declares Richard Allen, Reagan's first National Security Adviser: "This was one of the great secret alliances of all time."

The operation was focused on Poland, the most populous of the Soviet satellites in Eastern Europe and the birthplace of John Paul II. Both the Pope and the President were convinced that Poland could be broken out of the Soviet orbit if the Vatican and the U.S. committed their resources to destabilizing the Polish government and keeping the outlawed Solidarity movement alive after the declaration of martial law in 1981.

Until Solidarity's legal status was restored in 1989 it flourished underground, supplied, nurtured and advised largely by the network established under the auspices of Reagan and John Paul II. Tons of equipment—fax machines (the first in Poland), printing presses, transmitters, telephones, shortwave radios, video cameras, photocopiers, telex machines, computers, word processors—were smuggled into Poland via channels established by priests and American agents and representatives of the AFL-CIO and European labor movements. Money for the banned union came from CIA funds, the National Endowment for Democracy, secret ac-

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Solidarność, [Solidarity in English], led by an electrician, Lech Walesa, it was a landmark independent trade union and anti-communist social movement founded in Poland in August 1980. Originating from a historic workers strike at the Gdańsk Lenin Shipyard, it became a nationwide peaceful resistance coalition encompassing over 10 million members championing workers rights, civil liberties, and democratic reforms. Again, this movement was strongly supported by both President Reagan and John Paul II—the ***Polish pope***. Its creation marked the very first time an independent trade union was recognized within the Soviet bloc—and also heralded the beginning of the end for the Soviet Union.

While this was happening, in the U.S., we were regaining a sense of renewed patriotism, growing economic stability and a sense of hope that had been largely lost during the late ‘60s and ‘70s. On November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall fell—the west won the “cold war.” Now, the United States was free to fulfill its ultimate destiny and become ***the world superpower.*** But, what of China?

China, under the auspices of President Clinton, would gain ascendancy by joining the World Trade Organization and being granted the status of both a “developing nation” and a “most favored nation.” These designations allowed them to grow into an economic and military powerhouse but, this is not to remain. President Donald Trump, being a strong nationalist, is reshaping the world order in front of our eyes.

Beginning with tariffs, forcing other countries to stop “ripping us off” and bringing manufacturing back to the U.S.—to the tune of 19 trillion in investments, we are returning to an economic powerhouse. At the same time, he has rebuilt our military, including a new branch of armed forces: The Space Force.

How strong is our military? First, let’s consider our recent foray into Venezuela. This country was one of China’s main oil suppliers and as such, along with the Russians, supplied advanced air defenses and radars to Venezuela—they made no difference. Here is a post from White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavette on her “X” account quoting a Venezuelan guard that witnessed our capture of President Maduro:

> “It was a massacre. We were hundreds, but we had no chance, they were shooting with such precision and speed, it seemed like each soldier was firing 300 rounds per minute. We couldn’t do anything.
>
> “At one point, they launched something, I don’t know how to describe it … it was like a very intense sound wave. Suddenly, I felt like my head was exploding from the inside. We all started bleeding from the nose. Some were vomiting blood. We fell to the ground, unable to move.
>
> “We didn’t hear anything coming. We were on guard, but suddenly all our radar systems shut down without any explanation. The next thing we saw were drones, a lot of drones, flying over our positions. We didn’t know how to react.
>
> “Helicopters arrived, ‘barley eight’ he estimated, from which a small number of US soldiers descended. ‘Maybe 20 men. But those men were

> technologically very advanced. They didn't look like anything we fought before.
>
> "Those 20 men, without any casualties, killed hundreds of us. We had no way to compete with their technology, with their weapons. I swear, I've never seen anything like it.
>
> "I am sending a warning to anyone who thinks they can fight the United States. They have no idea of what they are capable of. After what I saw, I never want to be on the other side of that again. They're not to be messed with."

You can know that all adversarial governments took notice—especially those that supplied their most advanced defense equipment to no avail.

Next comes Iran. Iran has indeed killed thousands of Americans throughout the world, usually from their proxy networks of terrorists. They were trying to develop nuclear weapons and long range missiles capable of hitting targets the world over. But, is that the only reason for our current attack? NO! Iran also supplies approximately 30% of China's oil. Their economy was not on good footing before Venezuela and Iran—they're definitely hurting now.

Those who claim that Iran has any cards to play have completely missed the behind the scenes events: OPEC, the Mid-eastern oil cartel (which also included Venezuela) is breaking up; Saudi Arabia is on the cusp of joining the Abraham Accords and the U.S. is selling more oil than ever—including Venezuelan oil that we receive to pay for our operation against them. The Mid-eastern countries are also building pipelines to bypass the Strait of Hormuz—Iran will have no cards to play. This is called global economic check-mate. Also keep in mind that the U.S. is the world's largest consumer market—many countries, including China are dependent on exports to the U.S. to survive.

Internally, the United States is in a struggle for its own soul but, regardless of the outcome, the Bible informs us that she will remain the only superpower on earth.

We now have radical leftists that are becoming very popular—even getting elected to office—communists and Muslims alike. Can you imagine electing a Muslim mayor in New York City—ground zero for 9/11?

The Roman church is in league with these people because they both favor tyrannical forms of government—

> "John Paul knows it does not matter in Gorbachev's long-range view that he has had to loosen the control reins of the Central European Satellites. The Soviet president knows that schools of Marxist and para-Marxist thought and persuasion have been born throughout the claimant intellectual elites of the West—at ***Stanford University***, among ***Critical Legal Studies Groups of Harvard Law School***, in ***Frankfurt's School Critical Studies Group***, among France's "Structuralists" and "Deconstructionists," in the ***leftist Black Studies movements***, the ***World Council of Churches***, the ***Third World Studies*** group, among the ***radical feminists***, and throughout ***the art departments of a majority of major universities***. On top of that ***Marxist-colored wave, there are scores of clergymen and nuns, seminary professors, intellectuals, writers, all from John Paul's Roman Catholic Church and all translating Marxism into hallowed Christian terms*** so that basic Marxist thought can become palatable for hundreds of millions of Catholics in Third World countries, particularly in Latin America." Keys of this Blood, p. 456.

The above quoted book was written in 1990—look how pervasively Marxist ideology has infiltrated our country! This plays well for Satan and the ultimate formation of the second beast.

Another telling sign is that, for the first time in history, the pope is an ***American Pope!*** How much easier will it be for Apostate Protestantism "reach across the gulf"?

Remember this quote from the pen of Inspiration:

> "…***our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government*** and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near." 5T, 541.

When this occurs, and we have seen many attacks on it already, liberty of conscience will no longer be protected. We can know for a certainty that Sunday sacredness is close at hand. In most states which had previously enjoined Sunday "Blue-laws," still have them on their books, typically with the caveat:

> "Any municipality having an ordinance prohibiting retail sales or deliveries of merchandise on Sunday may repeal the same by a referendum election for the ratification or rejection of the ordinance." Tennessee. Code Ann. 6-32-208.

And since the Supreme Court asserted that Sunday Laws are constitutional because they serve a secular purpose, the assertion will be that it is constitutionally sound. But, how will the U.S. be able to "*causeth*" all the world to worship the first beast and her dogma?

Since the U.S. will be in control of most of the world's energy production and commerce with unmatched military power, it won't be hard—after all "*Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?"*



An artist's rendition of Ms. White in vision

From the Pen of Inspiration

By Ellen G. White

Controlling the Appetites and Passions

"Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul," is the language of the apostle Peter (1 Peter 2:11). Many regard this text as a warning against licentiousness only, but it has a broader meaning. It forbids every injurious gratification of appetite or passion. Let none who profess godliness regard with indifference the health of the body, and flatter themselves that intemperance is no sin, and will not affect their spirituality. A close sympathy exists between the physical and the moral nature. Any habit which does not promote health degrades the higher and nobler faculties. Wrong habits of eating and drinking lead to errors in thought and action. Indulgence of appetite strengthens the animal propensities, giving them the ascendancy over the mental and spiritual powers. SL 25.1
It is impossible for any to enjoy the blessing of sanctification while they are selfish and gluttonous. Many groan under a burden of infirmities because of wrong habits of eating and drinking, which do violence to the laws of life and health. They are enfeebling their digestive organs by indulging perverted appetite. The power of the human constitution to resist the abuses put upon it is wonderful, but persistent wrong habits in excessive eating and drinking will enfeeble every function of the

body. In the gratification of perverted appetite and passion even professed Christians cripple nature in her work and lessen physical, mental, and moral power. Let these feeble ones consider what they might have been had they lived temperately and promoted health instead of abusing it. SL 25.2

Not an Impossible Standard

When Paul wrote, “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly” (1 Thessalonians 5:23), he did not exhort his brethren to aim at a standard which it was impossible for them to reach; he did not pray that they might have blessings which it was not the will of God to give. He knew that all who would be fitted to meet Christ in peace must possess a pure and holy character. “Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Corinthians 9:25-27). “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20). SL 26.1

An Unblemished Offering

Again, the apostle writes to the believers, “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Romans 12:1). Specific directions were given to ancient Israel that no defective or diseased animal should be presented as an offering to God. Only the most perfect were to be selected for this purpose. The Lord, through the prophet Malachi, most severely reproved His people for departing from these instructions. SL 27.1

“A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible. And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the Lord of hosts.... Ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the Lord” (Malachi 1:6-13). SL 27.2

Though addressed to ancient Israel, these words contain a lesson for the people of God today. When the apostle appeals to his brethren to present their bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God," he sets forth the principles of true sanctification. It is not merely a theory, an emotion, or a form of words, but a living, active principle, entering into the everyday life. It requires that our habits of eating, drinking, and dressing be such as to secure the preservation of physical, mental, and moral health, that we may present to the Lord our bodies, not an offering corrupted by wrong habits, but "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." SL 27.3

Stimulants and Narcotics

Peter's admonition to abstain from fleshly lusts is a most direct and forcible warning against the use of all such stimulants and narcotics as tea, coffee, tobacco, alcohol, and morphine. These indulgences may well be classed among the lusts that exert a pernicious influence upon moral character. The earlier these hurtful habits are formed, the more firmly will they hold their victim in slavery to lust, and the more certainly will they lower the standard of spirituality. SL 28.1
Bible teaching will make but a feeble impression upon those whose faculties are benumbed by self-gratification. Thousands will sacrifice not only health and life but their hope of heaven before they will wage war against their own perverted appetites. One lady who for many years claimed to be sanctified, made the statement that if she must give up her pipe or heaven she would say, "Farewell, heaven; I cannot overcome my love for my pipe." This idol had been enshrined in the soul, leaving to Jesus a subordinate place. Yet this woman claimed to be wholly the Lord's! SL 28.2

Lusts That War Against the Soul

Wherever they may be, those who are truly sanctified will elevate the moral standard by preserving correct physical habits, and, like Daniel, presenting to others an example of temperance and self-denial. Every depraved appetite becomes a warring lust. Everything that conflicts with natural law creates a diseased condition of the soul. The indulgence of appetite produces a dyspeptic stomach, a torpid liver, a clouded brain, and thus perverts the temper and spirit of the man. And these enfeebled powers are offered to God, who refused to accept the victims for sacrifice unless they were without a blemish! It is our duty to bring our

appetites and our habits of life into conformity to natural law. If the bodies offered upon Christ's altar were examined with the close scrutiny to which the Jewish sacrifices were subjected, who would be accepted? SL 29.1

With what care should Christians regulate their habits, that they may preserve the full vigor of every faculty to give to the service of Christ. If we would be sanctified, in soul, body, and spirit, we must live in conformity to the divine law. The heart cannot preserve consecration to God while the appetites and passions are indulged at the expense of health and life. Those who violate the laws upon which health depends, must suffer the penalty. They have so limited their abilities in every sense that they cannot properly discharge their duties to their fellow men, and they utterly fail to answer the claims of God. SL 29.2

When Lord Palmerston, premier of England, was petitioned by the Scotch clergy to appoint a day of fasting and prayer to avert the cholera, he replied, in effect, "Cleanse and disinfect your streets and houses, promote cleanliness and health among the poor, and see that they are plentifully supplied with good food and raiment, and employ right sanitary measures generally, and you will have no occasion to fast and pray. Nor will the Lord hear your prayers while these, His preventives, remain unheeded." SL 30.1

Says Paul, "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 7:1). He presents for our encouragement the freedom enjoyed by the truly sanctified: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:1). He charges the Galatians, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16). He names some of the forms of fleshly lust—"idolatry, ...drunkenness, ...and such like" (verses 20, 21). And after mentioning the fruits of the Spirit, among which is temperance, he adds, "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" (verse 24). SL 30.2

Tobacco

James says that the wisdom which is from above is "first pure" (James 3:17). If he had seen his brethren using tobacco, would he not have denounced the practice as "earthly, sensual, devilish" (verse 15)? In this age of Christian light, how often the lips that take the precious name of Christ are defiled by tobacco spittle and the breath is polluted with the stench. Surely, the soul that can enjoy such uncleanness must also be defiled. As I have seen men who claimed to enjoy the blessing of

entire sanctification, while they were slaves to tobacco, polluting everything around them, I have thought, How would heaven appear with tobacco users in it? God's word has plainly declared that "there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth" (Revelation 21:27). How, then, can those who indulge this filthy habit hope to find admittance there? SL 30.3

Men professing godliness offer their bodies upon Satan's altar and burn the incense of tobacco to his satanic majesty. Does this statement seem severe? Certainly, the offering is presented to some deity. As God is pure and holy, and will accept nothing defiling in its character, He must refuse this expensive, filthy, and unholy sacrifice; therefore we conclude that Satan is the one who claims the honor. SL 31.1

Jesus died to rescue man from the grasp of Satan. He came to set us free by the blood of His atoning sacrifice. The man who has become the property of Jesus Christ, and whose body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, will not be enslaved by the pernicious habit of tobacco using. His powers belong to Christ, who has bought him with the price of blood. His property is the Lord's. How, then, can he be guiltless in expending every day the Lord's entrusted capital to gratify an appetite which has no foundation in nature? SL 31.2

An enormous sum is yearly squandered for this indulgence, while souls are perishing for the word of life. Professed Christians rob God in tithes and offerings, while they offer on the altar of destroying lust, in the use of tobacco, more than they give to relieve the poor or to supply the wants of God's cause. Those who are truly sanctified will overcome every hurtful lust. Then all these channels of needless expense will be turned to the Lord's treasury, and Christians will take the lead in self-denial, in self-sacrifice, and in temperance. Then they will be the light of the world. SL 32.1

Tea and Coffee

Tea and coffee, as well as tobacco, have an injurious effect upon the system. Tea is intoxicating. Though less in degree, its effect is the same in character as that of spirituous liquors. Coffee has a greater tendency to becloud the intellect and benumb the energies. It is not so powerful as tobacco, but is similar in its effect. The arguments brought against tobacco may also be urged against the use of tea and coffee. SL 32.2

When those who are in the habit of using tea, coffee, tobacco, opium, or spirituous liquors are deprived of the accustomed indulgence, they find it impossible to engage with interest and zeal in the worship of God. Divine grace seems powerless to enliven or spiritualize their prayers or their testimonies. These professed Christians should consider the source of their enjoyment. Is it from above, or from beneath? SL 32.3

To a user of stimulants, everything seems insipid without the darling indulgence. This deadens the natural sensibilities of both body and mind and renders him less susceptible to the influence of the Holy Spirit. In the absence of the usual stimulant he has a hungering of body and soul, not for righteousness, not for holiness, not for God's presence, but for his cherished idol. In the indulgence of hurtful lusts, professed Christians are daily enfeebling their powers, making it impossible to glorify God. SL 32.4

Our Personal Path

Written by: Irene Guzman

Scripture Reading: Joel 2:25-26 (ESV)

"I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter... You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame."

From the Room to the Fold

Pondering this thought, it's just me alone in this room,
With no speech to offer, just sighs that consume.
But far from this loneliness lies a watchful proof,
Of One who remains when the others stand aloof.

The morning comes, and my eyes open wide,
As daylight chases the shadows aside:
I am not worthy of such a tender care,
When all I do and think seems far from fair.

Yet in this space, I make a point to be still,
To report my deepest woes and submit to Your will.
My deepest fears are now ready to be told,
As I let the hidden layers of my sin unfold.

My heart is found in an unsteady state,
Tied to the things that cause me total disgrace.

To the One who sees my wreckage and my
mistake, I bring my disobedience for You to
remake.

Plainly I talk, as friend to trusted friend,
To the Savior who has a patient ear to lend.
This Friend I seek provides healing and repair,
Where the cankerworm has eaten more than its share.

My words become softer as I continue to speak,
Holding back tears as the truth starts to leak.
Does He truly know, and does He truly hear?
The shame hidden in my voice starts to appear.

I have now become keenly and deeply aware,
That my soul needs to be found in constant prayer.
I cannot hide, and I cannot safely keep,
From Him all these secrets that cause me such grief.

My only consolation is that right here and now,

My heaviness has come and unfurled my brow. I
am choosing to prepare and hand over these fears,
Releasing the weight of these worthless cares.

They took up my space and caused me much pain,
With nothing of value or spirit to gain.
I ask You to keep my fragile heart from failing,
Due to the heaviness it has long been carrying.

I plead, make it plain, and make it so sure,
That all of this wreckage is now fully Yours.
I hand it over in complete, true surrender,
That You may replace it with heavenly splendor.

I need to feel relief, to feel shiny and bright,
In the comfort and warmth of Your revealing light.
Bring peace and the gentleness of sweet repose,
To all that once had taken a grasping hold.

Oh, take it, Lord, and make me entirely whole,
Never again will I choose that broken road.
Do what only Your sovereign hand can do:
Bring me close, Lord, and show me more of You.

The love I have missed and did not fully
know, I ask now that it may take within me
ahold.
Within my heart and within my open hands,
To walk and to talk of Your righteous plans.

I once felt a deep and heavy disregard,
To deserve the love You so freely
impart.
But within this moment, I now find my sight:
My life and my joy are alive in Your light.

Please, Lord, anchor my restless, drifting soul,
Cover me with Your blessing, and do not let go.
This thought that I started with, feeling so alone,
Was my gentle calling back to the fold and my home.

The Last Word

By Carl Person

Do you remember where you were on September 11, 2001? My own children barely remember it (in fact, my daughter was born in 2005), and anyone else born even a few years before will not have any real recollection of it; however, I will never forget it! I also know that our entire world stood still that day as we tried to comprehend the event itself and what was to come. The only thing that I am certain of is that for the almost 3,000 souls that perished that day, this verse was fulfilled:

> "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Pet. 3:10.

At first glance, you would think this is a reference to His second coming but, what does Christ say about His second coming?

> "For as the lightening cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall the coming of the Son of man be." Mt. 24:27

> "Behold, He cometh with the clouds and every eye shall see Him …" Rv. 1:7.

Nothing quiet or sneaky about His second coming! So, in order to understand this verse, we must consider the entire context in which this verse occurs. 2 Peter, chapter 3, is about the spiritual condition of the final generation and continues on to the new heavens and new earth. He states that "they" will ask smugly: "Where is

the sign of His coming?" v. 4. The answer given is that God "is long-suffering … that all should come to repentance." v. 9. It is following this that we see the warning "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night." v. 10.

Peter then follows this statement to describe the events surrounding Christ's ***third*** coming but, how does this sentence even fit any of it, especially since absolutely none of the events described are even close to quiet? Kind of ironic that in this chapter, Peter comments on how difficult some of Paul's writings are! (vs. 15-16)

Since it clearly has nothing to do with Christ's second coming but is tied to His third in some way, it must be some kind of warning for each of us personally, and particularly in regards to the executive judgement.

No one that went to work on the morning of 9/11/2001 in the World Trade Center Towers had any idea that their probation was about to end—it came upon them like a thief. What ever relationship they had with God ended that day—and next the judgement. Remember, "the dead know not anything …" Ecc. 9:5-6. They went to sleep and the last thing they remember will be being at work and perhaps the attack and fear, and in the next minute when they awake, it will be the resurrection of the righteous or the wicked. Since Peter is speaking of the scoffers in the last days, it seems as though he is focusing on the resurrection of the wicked.

Not one of us has any idea when our time on this earth is up, we are mortal beings: Will it be tonight in my sleep? Tomorrow in a car crash? A snake-bite next month? I don't know. What I can know is that preparation is now because I might not have tomorrow.

But God's Prophet had Issued an Ignored Warning:

"On one occasion, when in New York City, I was in the night season called upon to behold buildings rising story after story toward heaven. These buildings were warranted to be fireproof, and they were erected to glorify their owners and builders. The scene that next passed before me was an alarm of fire. Men looked at the ***lofty and supposedly fireproof buildings*** and said: '***They are perfectly safe***.' But ***these buildings were consumed as if made of pitch.*** The fire engines could do nothing to stay the destruction. The firemen were unable to operate the engines." 9T 12-13.

This was written in 1909 when the tallest building in New York was the Metropolitan Life Building standing at approximately 700 feet but, they kept getting taller. However, the Spirit of Prophecy just three years prior to this vision warned that:

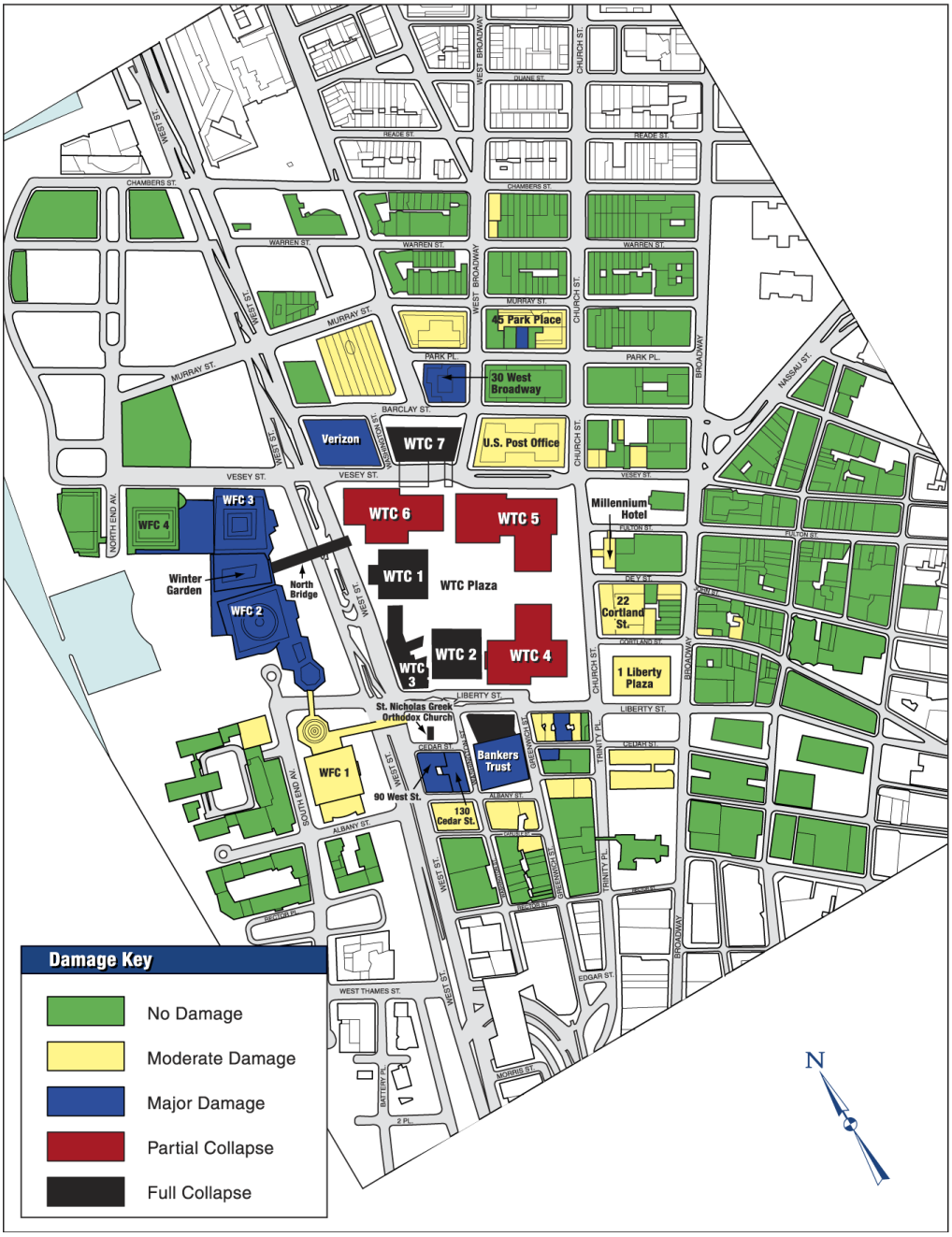
"Men will continue to erect expensive buildings, costing millions of money. Special attention will be called to their architectural beauty and the firmness and solidity with which they are constructed, but ***the Lord has instructed me that despite the unusual firmness and expensive display, these buildings will share the fate of the temple in Jerusalem.***" 5BC 1098. Remember, the Temple was supposedly indestructible, even the disciples questioned Christ concerning His prophetic utterances concerning its destruction.

And build they did. Apparently, men and women have a real problem listening, a severe learning deficit, particularly from history, and a definite tendency to disbelieve God and His prophets.

By the time the World Trade Towers were completed, they reached a staggering ~1360 ft.—110 stories high. They were supposed to be fire proof—of course, no one could prepare for, or imagine 13,000 gallons of jet fuel being crashed into these buildings. Also keep in mind that it was not only the two towers that were destroyed but, the Federal Emergency Management Agency lists ***56 buildings damaged or destroyed*** in New York City due to the attack on that fateful day: ***Five buildings fully collapsed***, three partially collapsed, 11 buildings suffered major damage, and 37 buildings sustained moderate damage.

Lesson of the day? Believe God, His Word and His Spirit of Prophecy and be ready because you know not the hour!





A map showing the true destruction of the 9/11 attack on New York—it is much more extensive than most think due to the focus on the towers. Also keep in mind that the Pentagon was also targeted resulting in more lost lives. Finally, there was the jet that the passengers crashed into a field in Pennsylvania—again, more lives lost.