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THE ASSYRIAN ENUMA ELISH EPIC

The Battle Between Michael & Lucifer

PART I

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Our story goes back to the time after the flood and to the place where civilization was first established in the post-diluvian world. Between the two great rivers of the East, the Euphrates and Tigris, which flowed around the perimeter of the ancient garden of Eden, saw the birth of two cities of two great empires who ruled the world: Nineveh of Assyria and Babel of Babylon. Both capital cities were founded by Nimrod, the great grandson of Noah. “Nimrod... began to be a mighty one in the earth... And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Accad... in the land of Shinar... Out of the land [he] went forth [into] Asshur [Asiria], and builded Nineveh.” These were a few of the many cities, which flourished in the crescent valley of Mesopotamia or Sumeria. The book of Genesis refers to this valley as the “plo-i in the land of Shinar” in the East. Genesis 11:2.

The inhabitants of Shinar were the authors of an ancient creation epic whose first line read “Enuma elish” which literally means “when on high” (1). It is written in the Akkadian language, possibly the language of the Biblical “Accad” which was originally founded by Nimrod (2). “Akkadian, the language of ancient Babylonia and Assyria, is the earliest recorded Semitic language... Its writing system was borrowed from Sumerian, the world’s oldest written language” (3). The Enuma Elish epic was written in cuneiform on seven clay tablets (2). Its story was rehearsed as a play on the fourth day of the New Year in Babylon and other cities of Mesopotamia (1,2).

The original clay tablets are on exhibit in the British Museum in London. I saw them in 1996 while collecting data on extrabiblical sources to document the historicity and accuracy of the Bible. Other ancient copies, older than the Enuma Elish, have been discovered, like the Atrahasis Epic from the 17th century B.C. (4). Yet, since the Enuma Elish was the first cuneiform text describing creation, which the early decipherers worked on; it gained a significant public interest, which it has retained in both popular and scholastic circles.

The Enuma Elish clay tablets were originally found in the city of Nineveh, the ancient Assyrian capital, by Sir Austen Henry Layard from Great Britain in the 1850’s. The cuneiform clay tablets were unearthed in King Ashurbanipal’s (669-627) Assyrian palace library together with thousands of other texts (3,5).

Ashurbanipal is mentioned in the Bible as “Asnappar” the king who conquered Babylon and transported the Babylonians to Samaria. “...The Babylonians... and the rest of the nations whom the great and noble Asnappar brought over, and set in the cities of Samaria...” Ezra 4:9,10. He was also the grandson of Sennacherib whose army was defeated outside the walls of Jerusalem in King Hezekiah’s time (6). “And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord vent out, Lord smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.” II Kings 19:35,36.

The Enuma Elish clay tablets discovered in Asnappar’s palace library belong to the seventh century B.C.. Later, more cuneiform clay tablets containing the same Enuma Elish epic were discovered at Ashur, Uruk, and in the mid-1920’s at Kish. Yet the tablets were copies of much more ancient sources, dating to the second millennium B.C. (3). In all, seven clay tablets were discovered, each having an approximate height of 80 centimeters or 31 1/2 inches. (7).

George Smith, who also deciphered the Gilgamesh Epic, which will be discussed in a future article, was the first to translate the Akkaidian text into English (5).

For the Bible scholar and student, the Enuma Elish epic presents irrefutable evidence to the existence of an ancient oral Bible known by all the aborigines of our planet. In vivid poetic language, Adam related the story of creation to his posterity before the flood. Noah, the tenth descendent from Adam, knew the details of the origin of our world and related them orally to his offspring. The knowledge of Genesis 1 through 11, transmitted through 25 generations from father to son, was eventually registered in the books of Genesis and Job by Moses ben Amram, while living in Arabia.

The Jews believe that the oral Bible existed before the written Bible. They also believe that at Sinai God communicated other important laws, which were not registered in the Torah-the first five books of the Old Testament written by Moses. These are referred to as the oral Torah and carry the same weight as the written Torah, according to Jewish Rabbis. “These are various laws handed down by God to Moses orally and transmitted orally thereafter from one generation to another. These laws have the same authority as those commandments found in the Torah itself, even though there is no allusion to them in the Torah” (8). Of course, we do not believe that oral tradition has the same validity as the Holy Scriptures, but the statement provides light concerning the oral Torah and “oral Genesis” which continued to be transmitted after the first five

books of Moses were completed.

Thus, details not included in the book of Genesis or Exodus are later included in some of the books of the Prophets, Psalms, and even in the New Testament by Jewish authors. For example, Paul tells us the names of the two magicians which withstood Moses before Pharaoh in Egypt. II Timothy 3:8. Jude tells us the struggle between Michael and the devil over the body of Moses on Mount Pisgah. Jude 9. Jude also narrates one of the prophecies of Enoch, the seventh descendant from Adam. Jude 14,15. John describes the supernatural war in heaven before the creation of our planet and solar system. Revelation 12:7-9. Such details were handed down orally through the generations among the Jews and may have been common knowledge till they were finally written in books of the Bible.

The Enuma Elish epic tells the story of the great celestial battle between good and evil, the birth of our living planet earth, the conception of our human race, and the construction of the tower of Babel. The battle between Michael and Lucifer is vividly described and chronologically placed before the creation of planet earth. The creation week is retold with a special emphasis on the seventh day. Man appears as a created, rather than an evolved, being; the final creature of God's handiwork. The tower of Babel is presented as the foundation of the city of Babylon, which occurred after the deluge.

Surprisingly, many commentators, both Christian and secular, stress that there are only a few similarities between the Enuma Elish epic and the book of Genesis (3,5,7). Such statements are the product of a poor understanding of the oral Genesis later described in subsequent books of the Bible, and merely a superficial rendering of the Enuma Elish epic. Obviously, some differences exist between the two accounts due to the introduction of pagan polytheistic ideas with the passage of time in the Enuma Elish story.

Nevertheless, a common and striking message is communicated in the text of the Enuma Elish epic validating the Biblical story of origins, particularly from the clay tablets IV and V. Strong parallels run side by side in comparing and contrasting the Enuma Elish epic to the book of Genesis.

As Jesus foretold, the stones would cry out calling men and women to return to the forgotten book: the Holy Bible. "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." Luke 19:40.

The Protagonist Marduk and Michael

At first glance, the Enuma Elish epic recounts the battle between Marduk, the city God of Babylon, and Tiamat, a goddess turned evil. Marduk defeats and ultimately destroys Tiamat, and from her body creates planet earth. But further scrutiny reveals that Marduk refers to the Biblical Michael, and Tiamat, although of a female gender, refers to Lucifer.

Tablet IV of the Enuma Elish epic says: "Thou, Marduk, art the most honored of the great gods... They addressed themselves to Marduk, their first-bom: 'Lord, truly thy decree is first among the gods. Say but to wreck or create; it shall be'.... When the gods, his fathers, saw the fruit of his word, Joyfully they did homage: 'Marduk is King!' They conferred on him scepter, throne, and vestment... He mounted the storm-chariot irresistible and terrifying. He harnessed and yoked to it a team-of-four" (2).

Marduk is the protagonist of the Enuma Elish epic and his description parallels Michael's in the Bible. Marduk, just like Michael, is called the "first-bom," "the Lord," "the King," who has a "Father," who has a "scepter, throne, and vestment," who rides a "chariot," with a "team-of-four," and whose word has creative power (2).

Both Marduk and Michael are considered to be God. Michael in Hebrew means "the one who is like God." The Bible says that Michael was the preexistent name of Christ before He became Jesus by being conceived of the Holy Spirit in Mary's womb. Jesus is the only one who is like God. It was He who expelled Lucifer from heaven as told by John, who resurrected Moses as told by Jude, who appeared in Daniel's visions as told by Gabriel to Daniel.

Both Marduk and Jesus are described as being the first bom. Michael, who is Jesus, is called "the firstborn of every creature" and "the firstborn from the dead." Colossians 1:15,18. "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible... all things were created by Him, and for Him." Colossians 1:16. Jesus is the firstborn, because He is the most prominent figure in creation being not a created being but the Creator. Jesus is also the first bom from the dead, because He is the first and only to have resurrected from suffering the second death.

Both Marduk in the Enuma Elish epic and Jesus in the Holy Bible are referred to as Lord. Jesus made multiple references to His Lordship during His earthly ministry. 'Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.' John 13:13.

Both Marduk and Jesus are Kings. Jesus is the King of Kings. While being interrogated by Pontius Pilate,

Jesus admitted to being the King not just of the Jews but of the kingdom of grace which encompasses all believers of all times, both Jews and Gentiles. Jesus made many clear references to His kingdom. "Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world..." John 18:37. Consequently, Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross of Calvary. "And the writing was, Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews." John 18:19. Yet when Christ shall return to earth He shall wear multiple crowns of glory and a vesture which shall say, "King of Kings, and Lord of Lords." Revelation 19:16.

Like Marduk in the Enuma Elish epic, the Biblical Jesus is said to have a Father. Jesus repeatedly referred to and prayed to His Father in heaven. Jesus even taught us to pray "Our Father which art in heaven..." Matthew 6:9. While being nailed to the cross, Jesus prayed audibly, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34.

Both Marduk in the Enuma Elish epic and Jesus in the New Testament have a scepter, throne, and are described to be the Creator of our earth. The apostle Paul records in his epistle to the Hebrews the grand ceremony in heaven after the ascension of Jesus into God's presence in the Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary. God, the Father, addresses Jesus and refers to Him as God, acknowledges His scepter, calls Him Lord, and praises His work of creation. "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom... And, thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands." Hebrews 1:8,10.

Jesus today sits on a "throne of grace" (Hebrews 4:16) and the Bible tells He shall come on a "throne of glory" (Matthew 25:31). His throne is a living throne with wheels, resembling a chariot, and made up of four living beasts or creatures known as cherubs. Marduk's chariot with a team-of-four is a degenerated description of Michael's throne with wheels composed of a team of four cherubs or living creatures. David, Ezekiel, Daniel, and John have vividly described the living thrones of God and Jesus. David said, "And He rode upon a cherub, and did fly: yea, He did fly upon the wings of the wind." Psalms 18:10. Ezekiel said, "Then I looked, and, behold, in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubims there appeared over them, the appearance of the likeness of a throne... And when I looked, behold the four wheels by the cherubims..." Ezekiel 10:1,9. John said, "And in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts... And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him." "And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts... stood a Lamb as it had been slain." Revelation 4:6,8; 5:6.

The Antagonist Tiamat and Lucifer

Tiamat is the antagonist in the Enuma Elish epic. She was a being who turned proud, evil, and mutinied against the gods. Tiamat is a degenerated description of Lucifer the archangel and cherub who turned proud, evil, and warred against Michael and God beyond the heavenly constellation of Orion, in the third heaven. The Enuma Elish epic thus contains the tragic origin of the entrance of sin and rebellion in our universe in the person of Tiamat or Lucifer.

Tablet IV of the Enuma Elish epic says: "[To] enraged [Tiamat] he [Marduk] sent word as follows: 'Why art thou risen, art haughtily exalted, Thou hast charged thine own heart to stir up conflict, . . . sons reject their own fathers, Whilst thou, who hast born them! . . . Against Anshar, king of the gods, thou seekest evil; [Against] the gods, my fathers, thou hast confirmed thy wickedness. [Though] drawn up be thy forces, girded on thy weapons, Stand thou up and I and thou meet in single combat!'"

(2).

The above paragraph runs a striking parallel with the words of Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, which describe the rebellion of Lucifer in heaven. Tiamat like Lucifer is described as having risen, as being haughtily exalted, as having a heart to stir up conflict, as rebelling against the Father(s), as being confirmed in wickedness, and drawing up forces for combat.

Observe how some of the same key words or concepts, which appear in the Enuma Elish epic, reappear in Isaiah. Isaiah 14:12,13 says, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!... For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God..."

Lucifer is called a "son," while Tiamat is stated to have rebelled like "sons who reject their own fathers." Lucifer wants to "ascend" while Tiamat has "risen." Lucifer wants to "exalt" himself, while Tiamat is "haughtily exalted." Lucifer rebels against "God" and "the stars of God," while Tiamat rebels against the "king of the Gods" and the "gods." The Enuma Elish story, being a pagan version derived from the oral Bible, has erroneously labeled the "angels" or "stars of God" as being "gods."

Reading from Ezekiel 28, some other parallels can be cited with Tablet IV of the Enuma Elish epic. "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the

multitude of thy... violence... thou hast sinned... Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness..." Ezekiel 28:15-17.

Notice how Lucifer is described as having been created perfect but turning evil. Likewise, Tiamat is regarded as having "charged" or changed her "heart." Lucifer is described as being full of "iniquity," while Tiamat is portrayed as being "confirmed" in "wickedness" and seeking "evil." Are not iniquity, wickedness, and evil all synonyms? Lucifer is said to have stirred up "violence," while Tiamat is known to "stir up conflict" and to have drawn up her "forces" for "combat."

Like in Isaiah, Ezekiel depicts the change of heart in Lucifer to have been the origin of his transformation to the dark side. It is a fact in nature that before outward actions become evident, a seed of evil is allowed to germinate and flourish in the mind and heart. The mind and the heart are the citadel of our being, any change in words, actions, or habits must first be born in the heart. As the preamble of the United Nations states, since it is in the heart of men that wars are initiated, it is there that peace must start.

In the book of Proverbs, the Lord says, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life" Proverbs 4:23. Jesus also made special mention of the heart and appealed to the heart in His ministry and mission. He said the first and greatest commandment was to love God with all your heart and mind. "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment." Matthew 22:37,38.

The Battle between Marduk and Tiamat

The rebellion of Lucifer started in his heart and led up to the first war of the universe. Remnants and summaries of this great war are found in among many oral traditions around the world, including the Enuma Elish epic.

Tablet IV of the Enuma Elish epic states: 'When Tiamat heard this, She was like one possessed; she took leave of her senses. In fury Tiamat cried out aloud.... She recites a charm, keeps casting her spell, While the gods of battle sharpen their weapons. Then joined issue Tiamat and Marduk, wisest of gods. They strove in single combat, locked in battle.... After he had slain Tiamat, the leader, Her band was shattered, her troupe broken up; And the gods, her helpers who marched at her side, Trembling with terror... He made them captives, and he smashed their weapons. Thrown into the net, they found themselves ensnared; Placed in cells, they were filled with wailing; Bearing his wrath, they were held imprisoned.... The band of demons that marched. [...] before her, He cast into fetters, their hands [...]. For all their resistance, he trampled (them) underfoot" (2).

Tiamat is described as some type of magician or witch, who recites charms and casts spells. Truly, Lucifer is the founder of the realm of witchcraft, wizards, divination, enchantments, consultants with familiar spirits, and necromancers. Under such spells, Lucifer enticed holy angels to rebel against a holy and good Lord. With such ensnares, Satan caused the founders of planet earth to forfeit their rights as rulers and join him in rebellion against God. The apostle Paul alludes to Lucifer's power to beguile and recalls how the serpent cast its charm upon Eve. "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" II Corinthians 11:3.

Tiamat gathers a company of monsters to fight against Marduk and his loyal followers. Tiamat's company is portrayed as a "band of demons." The Bible says that the angels who supported Lucifer and fought by his side became demons. Lucifer turned into Satan.

The book of Revelation highlights the battle between Lucifer and Michael. Listen to the narrative: "And 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 deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him" Revelation 12:7-9.

Just like Tiamat ensnared some of the "gods" to join her, Lucifer enticed a third of the heavenly angels to rebel with him against Michael. Revelation 12:3,4. In the Enuma Elish epic, Tiamat and Marduk engage in a real battle with weapons and armies. Similarly in the Bible, Lucifer or Satan, also called the dragon or old serpent, ensues a real battle with Michael or Jesus. These two strive in single combat in the midst of the celestial war. In the Enuma Elish epic, Tiamat and her demons are defeated in battle. Marduk prevails. Likewise, in Revelation, the dragon and his angels are defeated and cast out of heaven. Michael prevails. But Tiamat is killed in the Enuma Elish epic, and Lucifer is allowed to live for a "short time" according to the book of Revelation.

Earlier Tiamat was portrayed as being "possessed," as crying "out aloud", as displaying great "fury." Such is also the description of Lucifer, who is said to be a "devil... having great wrath" Revelation 12:12. Violence, murder, and ungodly wrath are the product of Lucifer's inventions. Jesus depicted the devil as a murderer from

the beginning. “The devil... was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.” John 8:44.

In the Enuma Elish epic, Tiamat’s forces are entrapped and imprisoned in dark cells. Her entire company is said to have been trampled underfoot. The apostle Peter borrows a Greek concept from Greek mythology to explain how the demons of the great dragon were thrown into darkness and will be kept in the darkness of this world till Christ’s third coming in glory, when they will finally be destroyed in the lake of fire. “...God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell [Greek term is “tartarus”], and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto the judgment” II Peter 2:4.

The word for “hell” in II Peter 2:4 is “tartarus.” It only appears here in the entire Greek New Testament. Hell is not the best choice of word to describe “tartarus.” According to Strong’s numbering system, it is word number 5020. Tartarus was “the name of a subterranean region, doleful and dark, regarded by the ancient Greeks as the abode of the wicked dead” (9). Tartarus was the region inhabited only by the wicked and it was dark. Thus, Peter and also Paul describe all who are ensnared and guided by the devil and his demons as belonging to this mystical region of spiritual darkness. Tartarus in the Biblical context really means “spiritual darkness” and “spiritual wickedness.” Writing to the Ephesians, who were known for their witchcraft and black magic, Paul said, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” Ephesians 6:12.

Jude alludes to the same event of placing the angels or demons of Lucifer in the realm of spiritual darkness till the last phase of the judgment. “And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day” Jude 6.

Both the Enuma Elish epic and the epistle to the Ephesians mention that the great battle between Tiamat and Marduk, Lucifer and Michael, culminates with Marduk or Jesus Christ placing His enemies under His feet. “And hath put all things under His [Christ’s] feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church” Ephesians 1:22.

The Final Battle

The final battle takes place within the hearts and minds of each member of our human race. The story of the great war in heaven is reenacted on the great battlefield of the human heart. It is there where each one either decides to join the forces of darkness and evil or to abandon the enemy’s ranks and join the Prince of light and peace. On this battle field millions have already fought, and millions are still fighting to determine their eternal abode. The battle is over the will. Who shall obtain the homage of the will? Shall it be Satan or shall it be Jesus? Both can not abide and rule the heart.

Historians recount how the last great Persian emperor of the East when facing total defeat at the hands of Alexander the Great, sent an embassy proposing terms of peace. Darius told Alexander, “let us both reign together over East and West.” Alexander responded, “Just like there can not be two suns in the sky, neither can there be two supreme potentates on earth.”

Likewise, God said that we would only find Him when we would be willing to yield our entire heart to Him. “The whole heart must be yielded to God, or the change can never be wrought in us by which we are to be restored to His likeness” (10). “Ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart.” Jeremiah 29:13.

In the beginning when God pronounced “Let there be light,” the darkness was dispelled by the light. In like manner, Jesus is “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” “And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not” John 1:9,5. Have you noticed that darkness can not abide together with light? Light has the quality of taking up all its space and leaving none for darkness.

In the same way, only one ruler-Satan or Jesus-can claim the heart; either for the realm of darkness or for the kingdom of light. Whom will you choose as ruler of your heart and mind?

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[Enuma]

SACRIFICE

The word "sacrifice" is very little understood in our world today. Even among professed Christians it is a strange word that does not fit into their everyday vocabulary. It goes directly against the selfish and covetous minds of the people.

The word sacrifice comes from the word "sacred". In a special sense it refers to the service of God. It means that we voluntarily give up some desirable thing on behalf of a higher object. It is not a true sacrifice when we give from our abundance or surplus, but to give something that we need in our daily life and the lack of it causes suffering to us, that is true sacrifice.

King Solomon sacrificed much when he built the Temple in Jerusalem. Jewish people have estimated that it would have cost today 85 billion dollars to build it. Yet there is someone else in the Bible who sacrificed more than King Solomon and it was the poor widow who cast two mites into the offering box.

"And He saw also a certain poor widow casting in thither two mites. And He said, Of truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all: For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all that living that she had." Luke 21:2-4.

It was not the amount that was important, but how much the giver has left after his donation. The poor widow had nothing left while King Solomon had an abundance of riches left.

A question arises: is it necessary for salvation to sacrifice? Jesus said, "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be My disciple." Luke 14:33.

To the rich young man He said, "Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow Me." Matt. 19:21

How much did the disciples of Jesus sacrifice? "Then answered Peter and said unto Him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed Thee; what shall we have therefore?" Matt. 19:27

Did apostle Paul make a similar sacrifice? “But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.” Phil. 3:7-8

“And now, as in that time and as in the days of Christ’s earthly ministry, devotion to God and a spirit of sacrifice should be regarded as the first requisites of acceptable service.” MYP p. 303

“To those whom He bade, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men’ (Matt. 4:19), He offered no stated sum as a reward for their services. They were to share with Him in self-denial and sacrifice. Not for the wages we receive are we to labor. The motive that prompts us to work for God should have in it nothing akin to self-serving. Unselfish devotion and a spirit of sacrifice have always been and always will be the first requisite of acceptable service.” PK p. 65

“The mighty shaking has commenced and will go on, and all will be shaken out who are not willing to take a bold and unyielding stand for the truth and to sacrifice for God and His cause. The Angel said, ‘Think ye that any will be compelled to sacrifice? No, no. It must be a freewilling offering. It will take all to buy the field.’” EW p. 50-51

In the parable of Jesus the man had to sell all that he had in order to buy the field. Also the merchantman did the same in order to buy the goodly pearl. (Matt. 13: 44-26)

“Far greater sacrifice is needed to reach the perishing souls and none of us are so poor that we cannot make daily sacrifices for Christ.” MM p. 334

In the early days of the Adventist church people sold their properties to help the cause of God, others took on mortgages on their homes in order to raise money for the missionary work. There was a spirit of sacrifice similar to the time of the Apostles when people sold their houses and brought the money to the church.

“Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them down at the apostles’ feet.” Acts 4:34-35

Dr. Livingstone describes in his book the dangers and privations that he met in his travels in South Africa. In the end he adds, “I do not consider these privations and hardships as sacrifice. The word sacrifice applies only to Him who came from heaven and died for us. We cannot really sacrifice because we have nothing of our own. All we have is the Lord’s already. God is compensating our sacrifices 1000 times to us. Is it then a sacrifice or is it a great privilege, a blessing and the best investment?”

By looking to Jesus and meditating on His sacrifice for us our selfishness disappears and service for Christ and sacrifice for His cause become a pleasure and delight to us. We will love Him and His cause more than our own lives even. Let us remember that no one will enter heaven without making a similar sacrifice as Jesus did for us. We sing in our gospel song, “Can we make a lesser sacrifice when Jesus gave His all.”

May the Lord help us to overcome our selfishness and covetousness and learn the lesson of true sacrifice.
AMEN

PEACE IN THE VALLEYS

True success in life is not measured by the occasional heroic deeds done, but rather by the patient, humble, day-to-day faithful performance of every day duties in the valleys of life.

Those that are truly successful in the material world are those who have obtained their wealth in an honest way, by diligent labour. Those who obtained their wealth by inheritance, by winning a lottery or by some dishonest scheme often don't appreciate what they have and therefore don't manage their goods wisely. They become more self-centered and hoard their wealth rather than freely giving as they see a need.

When my mother goes to work in the city, she occasionally sees some healthy, young people begging for money on the street. She never gives them any as she feels that they are healthy and capable of getting a decent job rather than looking for the easy way out by simply begging on the street. Welfare programs in the Western World were created for a good purpose, but often-dishonest recipients have abused them. It has led to some people becoming too lazy to work since they can get free money from the government.

Often those who perform heroic deeds in life are praised and raised up on a pedestal and sometimes even worshipped. Many times this has led to their downfall. I am reminded of Gideon. Before the Lord called him he was a very humble man. He was so unsure of himself that he had to ask the Lord twice for a sign to confirm the fact that he was really called to perform this heroic deed. After the victory, however, he did not descend into the valley of every day life very well. Gideon was faithful on the mountaintop but did not remain so faithful in the valley. The mountaintops are special times when the Lord asks for heroic deeds or special seasons of time alone with God. In those times alone, God is preparing us to be useful in every day life in the valleys.

“But Gideon was betrayed into another error, which brought disaster upon his house and upon all Israel. The season of inactivity that succeeds a great struggle is often fraught with greater danger than is the period of conflict. To this danger Gideon was now exposed. A spirit of unrest was upon him. Hitherto he had been content to fulfill the directions given him from God; but now, instead of waiting for divine guidance, he began to plan for himself. When the armies of the Lord have gained a signal victory, Satan will redouble his efforts to overthrow the work of God. Thus thoughts and plans were suggested to the mind of Gideon, by which the people of Israel were led astray.” PP, p. 555. Gideon decided to make himself a priest even though he was not from the lineage of Aaron. The people were happy to follow him after such a great victory. He had them bring him the gold taken from the Midianites and he made himself an ephod and breastplate similar to that of the high priest. This proved to be a snare to his family and for Israel. Many were led to forsake God and worship idols due to Gideon's apostasy.

This was his downfall. From the mountaintop he fell into the valley. He fell quickly. The valley is not really a bad place to be. We can't stay on the mountaintop forever. Is true success measured by those who are able to remain the longest on the top of the mountain without descending into the valley? No, at some point in time we all must travel in the valleys and the valley is not a bad place to be, as I said, but rather it is our lifestyle in the valleys that shows how closely we are connected to Christ. True success is seen in those that are able to travel in the valleys of life, sometimes alone, with courage, strength and fortitude. “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” Ps 23:4.

Often it is the case that those who perform heroic deeds and are having a mountain top experience, when they come back to the valley they get depressed. All come back to the valley at one time or another. Where do we find Elijah after his experience on Mt. Carmel? We see him fleeing for his life in the desert.

Those who are called to perform heroic deeds are on the mountaintop for these experiences. Sooner or later they have to come down and face life in the valleys. It is possible for everyone to have mountaintop experiences once in awhile, but they may not always be in the form of public heroic deeds for the Lord as in the case of Elijah, Gideon or David. Sometimes they are very private; private times with the Lord when He gives special revelations for us personally or strength for helping others. Enoch is a good example. His mountain top experiences were very private. Also Elisha did not do some heroic deed like Elijah, however he was not any less successful as a prophet than was Elijah. He still had his mountaintop experiences with the Lord. Even though he did not have the privilege of being translated without seeing death, yet he will not be esteemed any less in the courts of heaven when he finally arrives there.

Usually at a conference time we all feel as though we are having a mountaintop experience. We feel on fire for the Lord from the messages we've heard and the fellowship we have had. We feel as though we could move mountains, the light of the truth is burning in our hearts. Yet we still must come down and face life in the valley. We must all return home after the conference and pick up our daily duties from where we left them off.

The speakers inspire some people but as the message fades from their memory so does the zeal. Some people are dependent on the other members of the church for strength and courage. While it is correct to gather to worship every Sabbath for fellowship with believers, sometimes we are called to stand alone in far distant lands. How will we then be able to stand? At some point in our Christian experience we must be able to depend totally on Christ, and while the fellowship will encourage us, we should be able to survive spiritually if it is

removed.

We've all had times on top of the mountain and have seen things from God's standpoint and I am sure we have wanted to stay on the mountaintop but God will never allow us to stay there. The true test in our spiritual life is our power to descend into the valley. If we had only power to climb the mountains but not to descend them something is wrong. It is a great thing to be on the mountaintop with God, but a man only gets there in order that afterwards he may get down among the sinners and help to lift them up. After a conference or revival meeting we should be able to travel life's valleys with greater vigor and strength, seeking to help and benefit our fellow man.

ENOCH

Coming back to Enoch, Enoch is a good example for us. "He continued to exclude himself, at certain periods from all society. After remaining for a time among the people, laboring to benefit them by instruction and example, he would withdraw, to spend a season in solitude, hungering and thirsting for that divine knowledge which God alone can impart." Enoch had his private mountaintop times with Jesus and he came down to the valley, renewed in strength, to continue his labour. "Enoch became a preacher of righteousness, making known to the people what God had revealed to him... He was a fearless reprover of sin. While he preached the love of God and Christ to the people of this time, and pleaded with them to forsake their evil ways, he rebuked the prevailing iniquity and warned the men of his generation that judgment would surely be visited upon the transgressor." PP, p. 86,87. We are not created to stay on the mountains, but rather for the valleys and how we manage in the valleys will prove how close we are to God in reality. Some persons cannot cope in the valleys but only on the mountaintops. On the mountaintop you feel as though you could talk like angels. These times on the mountaintops are exceptional, they have an important place in our lives with God, but we must beware lest we make those mountain top times the only time we commune with God. There is something in man that always wants to do exceptional things for God; but we must not have this constant desire. We have to be faithful in the ordinary things and this is not easily learned. Many give up in the valleys of their spiritual life but it is here that we prove our worth.

It is one thing to go through a crisis grandly but quite another thing to go through every day of *life*, glorifying God, when there is no one to watch, no limelight, no one paying the slightest attention to us. "But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." Mat. 6:3.

The great hindrance in the spiritual life is that we look for the big things to do. Jesus is our perfect example. He did not turn away from the most humble duty. "He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded." John 13:4,5. What a rebuke this was to the disciples who thought the washing of feet beneath their dignity. Do not learn to live only for those moments of inspiration, learn to be faithful in the common duties of life.

"Be instant in season, out of season." 2 Timothy 4:2.

THE MOTHER:

Often when we think of people walking in the valleys we think of the mother who is at home day after day, performing the same duties that perhaps to some may seem as drudgery. Some mothers take their duty to an extreme.

"In some families there is too much done. Neatness and order are essential to comfort, but these virtues should not be carried to such an extreme as to make life a period of unceasing drudgery and to render the inmates of the home miserable." AH, p. 152. These mothers go overboard trying to make their valley look like a mountaintop. They lose the spiritual blessing that God has for them since they are so busy with housework they have no time to read and study and gain a closer walk with the Lord. We have to allow God to give us mountaintop experiences and the greatest way we can receive them is by reading His Word and studying His will.

"The mother seldom appreciates her own work and frequently sets so low an estimate upon her labor that she regards it as domestic drudgery. She goes through the same round day after day, week after week, with no special marked results. She cannot tell at the close of the day the many little things she has accomplished. Placed beside her husband's achievement, she feels that she has done nothing worth mentioning." AH, p. 232.

Thus many women are led to complain and murmur, seeking for some kind of employment outside of the home to build their self-esteem. If this is their sole purpose in working outside of home, then the motive is wrong. Mothers should have plenty of self-esteem while doing their duties faithfully at home. It may seem as though they are walking through the valleys day by day and while this is reality, they need not make it a dark valley. They can make it a bright and cheerful, peaceful valley. Although the routine may be the same day after day, with house cleaning, cooking, laundry, etc. there can be joy in this kind of service.

Life is what you make of it. You can decide to be happy or you can decide you don't like what you have and are and miserably complain if there is no possibility of a change for the better. Even if there is a possibility for a change it may not be in the best interest of the family. If at all possible, the wife and mother should be at home during the most impressionable years of a child's life.

It has been said that happiness is a choice. You often can't change your circumstances but you can

change your attitude toward your circumstances by the grace of God.

“Many a home is made very unhappy by the useless repining of its mistress, who turns with distaste from the simple, homely tasks of her unpretending domestic life. She looks upon the cares and duties of her lot as hardships; and that which, through cheerfulness, might be made not only pleasant and interesting, but profitable, becomes the merest drudgery. She looks upon the slavery of her life with repugnance and imagines herself a martyr.

“It is true that the wheels of domestic machinery will not always run smoothly; there is much to try the patience and tax the strength. But while mothers are not responsible for their circumstances over which they have no control, it is useless to deny that circumstances make a great difference with mothers in their lifework. But their condemnation is when circumstances are allowed to rule and to subvert their principle, when they grow tired and unfaithful to their high trust and neglect their known duty.

“The wife and mother who nobly overcomes difficulties under which others sink for want of patience and fortitude to persevere not only becomes strong herself in doing her duty, but her experience in overcoming temptations and obstacles qualifies her to be an efficient help to others, both by words and example.” AH, p. 248. “Heavenly angels watch the care-worn mother, noting the burdens she carries day by day. Her name may not have been heard in the world, but it is written in the Lamb’s book of life.” MH, p. 377.

It all has to do with attitude as I mentioned earlier. Often these attitudes are learned behaviour from our parents. We are taught that certain types of work are not fun because we see our parents complain while performing these duties, so they must be unpleasant. I have met all kinds of children in my life. Some children simply detest any kind of work and grumble and complain when asked to do some work. Other children cheerfully comply with requests made to work. Going even further some children will do duties they see needing to be done, without being asked. What is it that makes the difference? I do not hesitate to say that these differing attitudes toward work often come from their mother. They see their mother’s attitude to her work and they copy her. Sister White was often heard singing as she did her domestic duties. Singing can do wonders in lifting your spirits when you feel a little down. Our children need to be trained to live effectively and happily in the valleys.

NECESSITY - NOT CHOICE

- “One great reason why physical toil is looked down on is the slipshod, unthinking way in which it is so often performed. It is done from necessity, not from choice. The worker puts no heart into it, and he neither preserves self-respect nor wins the respect of others.” Ed, p. 222.

Every duty done is not measured by the size of the duty, but the efficiency by which it is performed. “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might:” Eccl. 9:10.

“The labour of the hands should never degenerate into drudgery.” MH p. 239. “Many look upon labor as drudgery, and they try to obtain a livelihood by scheming rather than by honest toil. This desire to get a living without work opens the door to wretchedness and vice and crime almost without limit.” MH, p. 189.

Some work only because there is a job to be done, or because they are told to do something. This is not effectively walking in the valley. The valley is a place of toil and hardship. The road to heaven is described as a straight and narrow road. We must choose to leave the world behind and walk that narrow road. We must choose to do any duty that we may see before us, whether in the home, on the job, or in the church. We do it because we want to do it. We want to be a help for others and we find great delight and pleasure in helping others. We find our happiness in bringing rays of sunshine and happiness to others.

MISSIONARY WORK

In missionary work the minister is looked up to and respected, but some measure his success by the number of souls he has brought to the faith. What about the lowly canvasser? Is he really lowly? “The intelligent, God-fearing, truth-loving canvasser should be respected; for he occupies a position equal to that of the gospel minister. Many of our young ministers and those who are fitting for the ministry would, if truly converted, do much good by working in the canvassing field.” T6, p. 321.

He is quietly scattering the seeds of truth like the “leaves of autumn”. One man plants and another waters, but the Lord gives the increase. All have their different talents and gifts -one is not more important than the other is. It is not the gift or the talent that is important but rather the use that has been made of that talent as seen in the parable of talents in Matthew 25:14-30.

“All who commune with God will find abundance of work to do for Him. Those who go forth in the spirit of the Master, seeking to reach souls with the truth, will not find the work of drawing souls to Christ a dull, uninteresting drudgery.” 9T, p. 118.

“Nothing is drudgery to the one who submits to the will of God. “Doing it unto the Lord” is a thought that throws a charm over whatever work God gives him to do.” 9T, p. 150.

“It is not the length of time we labor but our willingness and fidelity hi the work that makes it acceptable to God. In all our service a full surrender of self is demanded. The smallest duty done in sincerity and self-forgetfulness is more pleasing to God than the greatest work when marred with self-seeking. He looks to see how much of the spirit of Christ we cherish, and how much of the likeness of Christ our work reveals. He regards more the love and faithfulness with which we work than the amount we do.” COL, p. 402.

Often our work for souls is not appreciated, but that should not hinder us. “Careless spectators may not appreciate your work or see its importance. They, may think it a losing business, a life of thankless labor and self-sacrifice. But the servant of Jesus sees it hi the light shining from the cross. His sacrifices appear small hi comparison with those of the blessed Master, and he is glad to follow hi His steps. The success of his labor affords him the purest joy, and is the richest recompense for a life of patient toil.” T6, p. 340.

All that we do is written hi the Lamb’s book of life. He will call into strict account our time. How have we spent it? What have we done with our time, not necessarily our time at work, but our leisure time. With employment there is no choice to be made about time management, but with our leisure time there is. We hear it said, that “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” We can also say that with whom we spend our leisure hours, is who we love the most. Most people want then-leisure hours to themselves. They need time for themselves is the plea some make. While it is true that we have to come apart and rest awhile from our busy routine, it is not appropriate to spend all our leisure hours on ourselves only. Study ways to use your time for the Lord.

DON’T QUIT

Some can’t handle walking in the valleys and give up the straggle. They become discouraged and depressed. Without Christ this can easily happen. Yet, we must not give up. Sometimes in life things can seem monotonous or things can go all wrong. I am reminded of different forms of employment. Some are very tedious, like factory work, printing, secretarial work etc. The same duties are repeated day after day. I once heard someone say, “I could never do a job like that since it is so boring.” Perhaps this person could not, and if they did happen to have one of these jobs, they would quit due to boredom. Somebody has to do these jobs and to find a person who is willing to do these jobs and be cheerful about it may be hard, but there are people out there who are willing and able, Each has his own valley to walk in and each valley is different. We must not complain of our valley, nor should we deride someone in his or her own valley. The Lord is leading us each in our own valley, but we are all walking together on the straight and narrow road. The valley is our experience. If we stumble or fail, we must not give up. We must get up and go on. The Lord will help you. There are people who will do these jobs with a smile on then” face. These people have learned to walk in the valleys and faithfully perform their duties day by day. Each new day is not just another day at work, but another wonderful gift from God. What can we do for Him today?

I recently read an article about a man who loved to spend time hiking in nature. He often went to very remote and rugged areas to experience the beauty of nature. On one such expedition he had a serious accident. This accident resulted in him needing to have both legs amputated above the knee. He was really in the valley now. What would he do? Would he ever be able to go out into the wilderness again? He could have ended up living the rest of his life in despair, but he would not. He put forth his very best efforts in his physiotherapy sessions and practiced endlessly with his new prostheses. It was difficult work but he was determined. His determination paid off. He refused to give up and let this handicap prevent him from enjoying life. He has found ways to get out into the wilderness again and enjoy the beauty of nature.

When Israel was released from Babylonian captivity, they returned to Jerusalem with high hopes. They were walking on the mountaintops. After some time they settled into the routine of life in Jerusalem. There was much rebuilding and renovating to do. The mountaintop experience was gone as they settled into the valley of the routine of life in Jerusalem. After some time they had become discouraged at the condition of the city walls surrounding the city. They had given up hope of ever building the wall. That was until Nehemiah came along with a plan and he encouraged them with the idea that it could be done. Their spirits were encouraged and together they built the walls up again. Often the Lord will send someone to bring encouragement at the right time when we get discouraged hi our valley.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” 1 Cor 15:58. Sometimes it may look as though there is little result from our work for the Lord, however we must never give up. Our efforts will never be in vain for the Lord. We may not know until we are in heaven, the results from our work so we must continue faithfully performing our duties now.

“And let us not be weary hi well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.” Gal. 6:9. Christians should never be weary of bearing the burdens of their fellow men. Such service, prompted by love, will never become monotonous. Jesus gave us an example in ministering to the needs of those around Him. Often He was tired and hi need of rest, but the people kept coming to Him with their sick and needy ones. He never told them to leave because He was too tired today. He was there for them - He met with them, He really loved them. It doesn’t matter when they came, whether it was morning, noon or night, or even the middle of the night as in the case of Nicodemus - He answered their needs. His own needs became subservient to the needs of the people that He loved so much.

Christian life is perseverance and persistence in good works. No duty is wasted if it is done to the Lord. And no duty is of no significance or unimportant. All that is done for the Lord is recorded in the book of remembrance.

Although the Christian is motivated by love, rewards are still promised to him/her. Jesus compared the reward time to harvest time in Galatians. God has a specific time for the earth's harvest. Those who sow good seed in this life even though it may look as though the seed is wasted on inhospitable soil, they are promised recognition in the great day of harvest. Then every man will receive his reward according to his works.

Only those who endure unto the end can expect to receive the promised reward. Too often in the battle of life, many have fainted and given up the struggle. Overcome with temptation or disheartened in the way, they have turned wearily from following Jesus. This has happened many times throughout history, however there has always been a remnant who remained faithful. They kept on with the struggle throughout the most difficult circumstances. Many have had to face a martyr's death in order to have a clean conscience before God. Some have given up the faith when faced with death, but Jesus encourages us to be, "faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Rev. 2:10.

We all have times when we feel at our best (on the mountaintop) and we say, "I feel as though I am ready for anything; if only I could be like this always!" This is not the Lord's plan. Those mountaintop moments are moments of insight, which we have to remember during those times when we're down in the valley. We have to learn to be as diligent on the grey days as we are on the sunny days. Sometimes it is not easy; it takes great discipline, but it can be done. If we have Jesus abiding in our hearts then we can keep the truth burning in our hearts even on the dull and dreary days with the commonplace duties and people. We can have sunshine in our hearts and we will have peace in our valley. Amen.

Wendy Eaton

A MOST PRECIOUS GEM

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls that when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.'

Matthew 13:45.

A pearl is a deposit formed in the shell of certain mollusks and is valued as a gem. Pearls can be seen adorning the neck of women, embroidered into rich apparels, inlaid in the crowns of queens and princesses, set on rings, etc. This gem is considered so precious that it is said that Julius Caesar undertook the conquest of the British Isles because of rumours that fine pearls were to be found there.

A true pearl is an abnormality which results from the intrusion of some foreign object into a shell, such as a grain of sand, or a small worm. The mollusk then starts segregating a fluid called mother of pearl, a form of calcium carbonate, which covers the foreign body with multiple layers. Most pearls are white, but some of them may be pink or purple. As they are extracted from the mollusk they do not need a special treatment (as gems that originate from rocks do), but pearls are very sensitive and may be eroded by acids, including perspiration or perfume.

Pearl oysters are found on coral reefs at depths of 10 to 20 meters and collected in bags by divers, usually working out of small boats. As it happens in the Greek Island of Kalymnos, when the men, at certain time of the year, leave the island to go to high sea to dive for sponges. Only the women, old people and children are left in the island. These divers are looking for pearls.

The kingdom of heaven is like a pearl. One has to venture in search of it, to dive deeply in order to find it. One

needs courage to sail into the deep sea, away from one's beloved ones. It is in toil and loneliness that one may find this treasure, not among the crowd and the "security" of one's family circle. When the oyster is found, there is the need of a sharp tool to open it. Spiritually, we may say that the oyster is a Bible verse that entails a precious teaching. But without the help of the Holy Spirit, the sharpest of tools, its mystery is not revealed to our heart.

The Spirit of Prophecy tells us that the parable of the pearl "has a double significance: it applies not only to men as seeking the kingdom of heaven, but also to Christ as seeking His lost inheritance. Christ, the heavenly merchantman seeking goodly pearls, saw in lost humanity the pearl of price. In man, defiled and ruined by sin, He saw the possibilities of redemption... God looked upon humanity, not as vile and worthless, He looked upon it in Christ, saw it as it might become through redeeming love." (COL, p. 118) It is only through a personal revelation that we may possess this precious gem; Jesus Christ, as the Holy Spirit, that sharp tool, opens its unpretentious case. "He has no form of comeliness, and when we see Him, there is no beauty that we should see Him!" (Isaiah 53:3)

When we consider this pearl as each one of us, since a pearl originates from a grain or sand, or a worm (and both things correspond to our carnal nature) which got into the shell (Jesus Christ), we experience that He, as soon as we come into His arms, covers us with His grace. He gives us His robe of righteousness (the mother of pearl) so that our insignificance is not seen. In the process of a lifetime, we are turned into a precious gem that will one day adorn His royal crown.

In Japan there are cultivated pearls; man intervenes to make this process possible so as to produce a larger quantity to satisfy the demands of the market. In Mallorca, one of the Balearic Islands, in Spain, there are factories that make the best imitations of pearls, and only experts can distinguish between a real one and a fake or cultivated one. The precious pearl that the Lord wants to make out of us requires no participation of the human hand. It is a delicate, time consuming, mysterious process which happens, even in spite of ourselves, once we have fallen into the protective, warm and caring shell of His infinite love, from which there is no way to escape. As it happens to the caterpillar, which after some time wrapped in a cocoon, turns into a beautiful butterfly, in due time, the Lord, once His work is finished, will reveal to the world the gems that He so patiently and lovingly has been preparing in the depth.

Whichever interpretation we may give to this verse, we should plead for the help of the Spirit to open the Scriptures to us. As well, we must ask for a revelation of Jesus Christ as our Saviour. We should humbly pray to the Lord Jesus to take us and keep us under His shelter, to cover us with His righteousness and never let us go. This will be until He, the Author and Finisher of our faith, finishes His work, so that we may have the privilege one day, very soon, to go through the pearly gates and enter the Holy City. AMEN

By: Teresa Corti

VICTORY AT THE CROSS

Part 1

Paul writes in 1 Cor. 2:1,2 about the victory of the cross of Jesus Christ. "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."

The central message of the church of faith is and always must be the Lord Jesus Christ. Two thousand years ago, Christ died on the cross outside of Jerusalem. This act of God made it possible for us all to be saved and have

eternal life. So in Christ all be made alive.

The total effect of the death of Jesus Christ is as universal as the effect of the sin of Adam and Eve. You and I were not there when Adam and Eve sinned. We could not go up to Adam and ask him not to sin. We had no choice to be born into sin. But, in the death of Jesus Christ we have a choice whether or not we will accept the benefits to ourselves, that He might dwell in us. That is why Paul in 1 Cor. 15:57 “But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

This article will discuss the victory of the cross, probably in the most practical manner you have ever heard in your life. The greatest needs met, unlimited powers and resources are available to us through our Lord. Many are aware that the resources are there and are available to us, but do nothing to use them. It is like having life-giving water in our house and not drinking. To have food available to us, but refusing to eat has not value.

The greatest need is to lay hold of the Lord and make available to us the victories He won and make them available to ourselves because we are saved by Him, not by any works we have done but by grace are ye saved, it is the gift of God.

I don't want anyone to say that they have been in the truth for a long time and that we have heard this same thing a thousand times before. Well, I don't think so. I am going to share with you what God through the Holy Spirit has revealed to me by touching my heart about the Lord Jesus Christ and the victory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We read in the text 1 John 3:8, “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.” That is about the shortest reason in the Bible why Jesus came to this earth. You are familiar with “to have everlasting life”. But, as a counterpoint to this is, “He came to destroy the works of the devil.”

There is a killer abroad, loose in the universe and he must be stopped. How? Only by the cross of Jesus Christ, which reveals how serious a matter this is.

What are his works? He doesn't manufacture automobiles, doesn't make clothing, operate farms, factories retail stores. What are the works of the devil? Here in the scriptures we find a list of what the works of the devil are... he is a “murderer and liar from the beginning.” You tell lies? He is the father of it. We must never tell lies. Never let a dishonest word come out of our lips. To do so is to do the works of the devil. He is a liar. We must always tell the truth as far as we know it to be the truth. We may not have all the facts, but at the time those words come out of our lips, they are the truth.

The devil manufactures doubt. The Lord is safe. Be careful that we are not buying doubt at the devil's retail store.

The devil manufactures murder. He is a murderer. He is a destroyer. Apollo (which is derived from the Greek word “appolo”) was the god of war. He makes wars. He makes hate.

If you had one word that best describes the character of God, what is that word? Love. If you had one word that best describes the character of the devil (Satan) what is that word? Hate. He hates us. He hates you.

The Son of God, the kingdom of God is held together by love. The kingdom of Satan is held together by hate. I can tell you from personal experience that the devils hate each other. They have no use for each other. There is no love in the kingdom of Satan. The only thing that holds them together is that they all have a uniform hatred for the Son of God. Like the worldly churches, they all hate each other but all agree and are unified in the hatred of the Sabbath. One unifying character of Satan and his millions of angels or demons is hatred for the Son of God.

The devil makes hatred, strife, profanity. Is there anyone reading this article who uses profanity? Is there? The devil manufactures profanity. “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord in vain.” Ex. 20:7.

The devil manufactures violence and theft. You wouldn't take anything from your employer, would you?

He also manufactures greed and fear. For the Lord has not given us the spirit of fear. I meet people all the time who are afraid. Fear is one of Satan's products, one of his big products. These are the works of the devil and Jesus Christ came to destroy them, to destroy the fear, hatred, greed and the lying and profanity, as well as the worry and frustration,

He came to destroy it all.

Now, let us make this a little more personal. The devil attacks us by arousing hatred and anger. He sets husbands and wives yelling at each other, he transforms men into animals, beating their wives, their children, venting their hostilities. He awakens lust in both men and women, which leads them to abandon their home and family. He clouds the mind with depression, drives souls to the brink of suicide.

So, it is in these mental emotions, these emotional areas, moral areas that the battle for eternal life is either won or lost. We can't win this battle ourselves. There is no hope for us outside of Jesus Christ. We can take this victory in Christ for our souls or go down to eternal loss in the grave. We cannot control ourselves. We serve one of two masters. There are no shades of gray, no compromise. We are decidedly servants of Jesus Christ or Satan. We do the bidding of one or the other.

What I am trying to say so far is that we have to take it deeply into our heart the truth that Jesus not only died to forgive us where we failed, but he died to keep us from failing.

Any doctrine or gospel anyone teaches, no matter how seductive, now reasonable or rational that teaches that Jesus Christ does not give us the power to defeat the enemy and live above sin, is no gospel at all. It is a false gospel. Sis. White said that in the latter days there will be many false doctrines, gospels, anti-christs. These false gospels are born of Satan. It is the Lord Jesus who has power to destroy the works of the devil in us.

I now wish to discuss some practicalities with you. How, we by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ can defeat the enemy that Jesus came to destroy and how to claim this victory. Jesus won the victory on a basic issue first. Very soon after baptism He was hardly dry from the water, when He was led by the spirit into the wilderness, fasting 40 days. After 40 days at the end of the fasting, the devil came to him in a weakened condition. The Lord met the enemy face to face.

The first temptation the devil offered was that he picked up a rock. It was not a nondescript rock, but one in the colour and shape of a loaf of barley bread. The devil held it up to Him and said, "consider that this rock is a loaf of barley bread. If you are the Son of God, command that this stone be made bread. There is nothing wrong with feeding your body. The Lord said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Mat. 4:4. The words that proceeded out of the mouth of the Father only 40 days before, the voice from heaven, "You are my beloved Son". Jesus was not to work a miracle to prove what the Father already affirmed. In the first temptation our Lord gained a victory over His body. His victory came under the most advantageous opportunity for the evil one after 40 days of fasting. The victory that He gained over His body is a victory that He gained for you and me. Any victory over the flesh that we desire with all of our hearts, the Lord will give us, because He is the only one who is able to do so.

He is the heavenly merchantman who counsels us to buy of Him. He is the only source of supply. Not your pastor, wife or husband, brother or sister, relative or friend. Do you have a problem with lust or appetite? The victory is there through Jesus Christ. "It is assured through faith and obedience." (7BC 966).

There is a key phrase in the Bible that I would like to discuss. "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do." John 14:13. "And the 70 returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Thy name." Luke 10:17. What does it mean, "In My name"? We hear it all the time.

Let's say there is a piece of property in another state where we want to settle down, perhaps in Florida. We want to live there, and have a couple of dogs, a horse for the kids, near the sea. To sell, I must give power of attorney, even if I am absent, to my lawyer. When he signed my name down, it would have all the legal effect of my presence without me being there... in my name.

The Lord has given us authority over all of the devil's products and we have to realize this. We need an awakening, that in Jesus we have authority, that the Father has put all things under His feet. We read, "you shall tread on serpents and scorpions, and give you power over all the powers of the enemy and nothing by any means

shall hurt you.” (Luke 10:19).

We can come up against the forces of evil in the name of Jesus Christ. We have power of attorney and it is as if Christ Himself was present and is legally binding. If you have a problem with lust or hate, this is part of the devil's products. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ be gone! Get thee behind me Satan... be gone! Tell the devil to get hence We have authority over him in the name of Lord Jesus.

I would like to discuss materialism. You have met materialistic people. Everything is a dollar sign, a drachma sign. They may not know it but it is materialistic. It can destroy a person or destroy a marriage. The Lord was offered all the kingdoms of the world and He turned it down. If anyone here believes in a new car, a new home, a few more stocks and bonds, or more money in the bank is going to make you happier, all this... it won't. It doesn't work that way. How much more does Nelson Rockefeller have? He doesn't have a penny!! He's dead.

We forget so easily that in this world that is not where it is. It is not what we have but what we are. “Here is the patience of the saints, here are they that keep the commandments of God... (Rev. 14:2). The only important thing in this world is our relationship with Jesus.

Let us talk more about this victory. I meet people plagued and almost destroyed by fear. People can't turn lights off, they leave the TV or radio on 24 hours a day. They can't tolerate the silence. They must feel their senses being bombarded constantly.

Did the Lord defeat fear? Do you know where? In the Garden of Gethsemane, before He died on the cross. He was sweating drops of blood. Why was that? Fear. Remember, He feared if He drank the cup that there would be an eternal separation between Him and His Father; this separation which happened at the cross, where He cried out, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?”. He feared that this separation would be eternal and He sweat blood over it. He defeated fear. This was the victory of the Lord. Sis. White says that there is no need to fear the power of man or the enmity of Satan, lest you surrender the truth (DA 356); and except as we forget God's leading (LS 196).

There are several different types of courage. There is the courage to react at the spur of a moment. You look back and say, What? Did I do that? But there is another type of courage, where you fully know the possibility of danger yet you walk straight in, knowing that you could lose your life. Christ went to the cross, not knowing whether He would ever come out. It was at the risk of eternal loss that our Lord went to Calvary. He defeated fear!

What else did He do? He overcame pride. Pride is a terrible demon. Pride of intellect. I see it all the time. “Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness.” (Eze. 28:17). Many are proud of their appearance, proud of their intellect.

Our Lord overcame pride three times. The first time was when He was born in the stable. You can't be born under more humble circumstances, and He was the King of Glory. He defeated pride again when He washed the disciples' feet, when he was fully aware that He was the Son of God. The last time that He overcame pride was on the cross, because He was naked. He “endured the cross, despising the shame.” (Heb. 12:2).

So you have pride? Do you want the victory over it? Take it to the Lord. Ask Him to take it away from you, that in the light of the stable, on the floor or in the upper room, and in the nakedness of the cross, tell pride to go. AMEN.

John Theodorou, Greece

Part 2 continues in the next Messenger

Current Scene

RELIGIOUS WARFARE IN HIGH PLACES

In virtually all man-made religious organizations, there is continuous struggle between the liberal and conservative forces of leadership. To understand what is now transpiring inside the Vatican, it's necessary to keep this ongoing conflict in the forefront of our thinking. In Catholicism this struggle reaches a crescendo when it comes time to elect a new pope. Once locked into the Sistine Chapel, the electors can't emerge until they have decided on a new head for the church. The battles between left and right rage through vote after vote. Sometimes neither side is able to dominate, and then it's necessary to elect a compromise pope. Ideally such an individual will be quite elderly, one who can be depended on to die before long. Of necessity he will be someone with few strong enemies, and relatively benign in nature. That is, he won't "rock the boat" until they can go at it again in a future election.

Twice, at least, this compromise solution has backfired. The first time was with the election of much-beloved Pope John the 23rd. Instead of quietly biding his time in the papal apartment, John convened the Second Vatican Council with the purpose of reforming Catholicism. He shook the church as it hadn't been shaken for ages.

The second occasion was the election of the "smiling pope," John Paul I. The day after taking office, this supposedly innocuous prelate announced his intentions of initiating a thorough investigation into Vatican finance, and selling off some of the Vatican treasures to help feed the poor. The hierarchy (either right or left) deemed neither of those plans acceptable, and he had to be eliminated.

Once again, to comprehend what is going on inside the Vatican at any given moment, one must keep in mind this endless battle between the liberal and the conservative wings. One other vital point should be mentioned. The Pope is not, in the real sense, an absolute ruler. Even a strong pope rules only with the consent of the Cardinals and other powerful church leaders.

LICIO GELLI AND P2

I must not leave this volume without mentioning the author's uncovering of a sinister secret society. I grew up knowing that one of the greatest enemies of the Roman Catholic Church was freemasonry. At least six papal bulls were specifically directed against it, but truth is still stranger than fiction.

After WWII Licio Gelli, an Italian who had worked for the Nazis as an Oberleutnant in the SS, decided to move on to bigger and better things. In November 1963 he joined a Masonic Lodge. Rising rapidly in the ranks he was invited by the grand master to conceive an illegal secret organization to be known as "P2."

Eventually P2 became a world force with nearly three hundred of the world's most powerful men gracing its membership. Included were armed forces commanders. Secret Service chiefs, generals, admirals, newspaper editors, television executives, top businessmen, bankers, along with cabinet ministers and politicians of every political shade. The list of members of P2 was secret; only Gelli knew all the names. The organization was closely interlocked with the CIA.

No one knows for sure how extensive P2 became, or is today. In Italy alone it is believed that more than 2,000 belonged to the organization. The overwhelming majority of its members was, and is, made up of practicing Roman Catholics, and P2 maintained a close relationship with the Vatican.

The author says, "The most bizarre factor in the close and continuous contacts that existed between P2 and the Vatican is that various cardinals, bishops, and priests could smile so benevolently on this bastard child of orthodox Masonry." More about this relationship later.

In 1976 the Italian government was involved in an investigation that included P2. However, magistrate Vittorio Occorsio was murdered by a burst of machine-gun fire, effectively halting the investigation into P2.

A SUSPICIOUS DEATH IN LONDON

It would be wrong to close this section without honoring the courage of David Yallop in writing the book *In God's Name*. It's one thing to do months of laborious research, but it is something else to put one's life on the line for the sake of exposing corruption. Had Pope John Paul I lived a little longer, one of the financial criminals he would have bared to public scrutiny was Roberto Calvi. The latter's whole sordid career is outlined in the book, but in brief he was chairman of the Banco Ambrosiano in Milan, Italy. As such he was one of the group involved in illegal Vatican finance. He was in the process of stealing over \$1 billion, and The Bank of Italy was secretly investigating his felonious dealings.

While writing his book, Yallop was able to set up a phone interview with Calvi. Here is his account of part of that conversation:

"Through my interpreter, I began to question Calvi closely about the Banca Cattolica del Veneto transaction. He had been told that I was writing a book about the Vatican, and when I mentioned the bank in Venice he asked what the central subject of the book was. I told him, 'It's a book on the life of Pope John Paul I, Papa Luciani.'

"Calvi's manner suddenly underwent a complete change. The calmness and control gave way to a torrent of loud

remarks. His voice became excited and very emotional. My interpreter began to translate the stream of words for me.

“Who has sent you against me? Who has told you to do this thing? Always I pay. Always I pay. How do you know Gelli? What do you want? How much do you want?”

“I protested that I had never met Licio Gelli. Calvi had barely stopped to listen to me before he began again.

“Whoever you are, you will not write this book. I can tell you nothing. Do not call me again. Ever.”

“Eight days later, the body of Roberto Calvi was found hanging under Blackfriars Bridge in the City of London.”

1. THE KEYS OF THIS BLOOD

The second volume of three is *The Keys of This Blood* by Malachi Martin, published by Simon and Schuster in 1990. A former Jesuit priest and professor at the Vatican's Pontifical Biblical Institute, Martin might be considered a consummate insider. He died only recently. Martin pledged total loyalty to the pope and the Virgin Mary. In fact, he took the significant step of leaving the Jesuits because he felt his order had joined with liberal forces against the conservative reign of John Paul II. As we proceed, keep this struggle in mind, for it is a major key to understanding present Vatican intrigue.

This volume deals mostly with the Roman Catholic organization's struggle in the arena of world politics, but we are more interested in the secrets of Fatima.

THE VISION OF FATIMA

On May 13, 1981, contract killer Mehmet Ali Agca pumped bullets into John Paul II in St. Peter's Square, in full view of 75,000 people and a television audience of some three and half million. Although bullets entered the pope's torso, the two aimed at his head failed to hit their mark. At the critical moment the Pontiff bent down to greet a little girl who had a picture of Mary pinned to her blouse.

As a survivor, John Paul was sure that Mary had saved him from intended death on May 13—the official feast day of Mary as Our Lady of Fatima. While convalescing in the hospital John had, as far as is publicly known, his only supernatural vision of things to come. The vision was an exact repetition of a strange happening recorded sixty-four years before at the little village of Fatima in Portugal. It was just as if he had been present at Fatima around midday, October 13, 1917.

What happened visibly that day is not in question. All was seen and recorded by photographers and reporters, along with a crowd estimated at 75,000. Supposedly the event had been predicted the previous July, when three peasant children claimed to have seen a vision of the Virgin Mary.

Appearing monthly thereafter, Mary said she had an important message for all nations and all peoples. On October 13 she would perform a miracle to substantiate the authenticity and importance of her message.

All the night of October 12 it rained torrentially; everything was wet and sodden. Then at midday Lucia, the eldest child, exclaimed: “Look up at the sun!” This was not the ordinary sun. Instead it was described as ‘a fast-spinning plate of brightly shining silver, a giant pinwheel turning on its own axis, casting off beams of colored lights . . . All were able to stare fixedly at this brilliant disk, but yet without pain and without being blinded.’ This “dance of the sun” lasted about two or three minutes. Next the sun roamed back and forth among the clouds throwing off brilliant shafts of multicolored light. Then, without warning, the sun plunged in a zigzag fashion toward the upturned faces of the crowd. Frightened voices called out ‘It's the end of the world! We will all die!’

At last the sun returned to its normal behavior. Although not a leaf stirred, a strong wind swept through the area. When it had passed the formerly sodden crowd realized they were all dry, as was the ground beneath their feet.

THE THREE MESSAGES

Two of the three children died early in life. The other, Lucia dos Santos, is now in her nineties and lives as a Carmelite nun in Portugal. Mary had given the children three messages for mankind, and the first two became well known in the years since 1917. I won't take time to detail them here.

In 1944, under orders from her Bishop, Lucia wrote down on one sheet of paper the bare details of the secret third message. She sealed it in an envelope, and said it was to be opened and read in 1960 as “things would be clearer then.” Under Vatican order, the envelope was brought to the papal apartment in Rome.

In 1960 it was Pope John XXIII who opened and read the Third Secret. Deciding it had nothing to do with his pontificate, he returned it to its box. His successor, Paul VI, also read it and decided to do nothing. John Paul I read the content of the document, but didn't live long enough to act.

One of the first things John Paul II did on becoming Pope was to look at the Third Secret. He decided that for certain reasons he should not act immediately.

It was after John Paul's near brush with death on May 13, 1981, the feast day of Our Lady of Fatima, that he decided the time of the "Third Secret" had arrived in fullness. I have of necessity been very brief, but a reading of *The Keys of This Blood* will fill hi the details.

2. THE THUNDER OF JUSTICE

The third volume is *The Thunder of Justice* by Ted and Maureen Flynn, published hi 1993 by Maxkol Communications. A Catholic couple completely dedicated to the papacy and the Virgin Mary wrote this book. Malachi Martin, who says the volume emphasizes "the special role of the Blessed Virgin Mary", penned the Foreword. What the Flynns have done is to recount most of the significant manifestations of the Virgin Mary, beginning in the 1500s and continuing down to our own day. The idea is that by carefully noting what Mary has proclaimed, we can both understand the past and accurately predict the future.

In order to share the content of this particular volume, I have to be totally honest about my own convictions. I do not believe that this "Virgin Mary" is the mother of our Lord, nor do I count these apparitions as - telling on the side of truth. While the Virgin is said to be the ultimate prophet, I consider her a false prophet designed to deceive mankind. Who actually is she? I would suggest that the leader of the forces of darkness would not leave this key role to be played by one of his underlings.

The material in this book is of a most startling nature, and I believe that by studying it we can ascertain with a high degree of accuracy what Satan has planned for his end time strategy. It's as though we have been allowed to peer right into the devil's war room! This is an unusual opportunity, and I can assure you that much of what is outlined in this book will come to pass exactly as proclaimed.

Remember that one of Satan's most effective means of deceiving is to counterfeit what God is doing, and he is a master at that trade. So don't be surprised if much of what "Mary" says closely parallels Scripture, and goes along with what you've already anticipated will come to pass. In fact, I believe that what is soon coming upon the earth can safely be deciphered only through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. With his guidance you have nothing to fear, without his guidance you have everything to fear.

Again, what few nuggets should one share out of an entire volume? I've selected the following: "Mary declares there will be a warning and a great miracle. The warning will be a mysterious world-wide event, in which each individual will perceive the state of his or her own soul as God sees it. The warning is a call to change our ways. Within a year of the warning, a miracle—a great supernatural sign—will follow, which will, be permanent, visible, and totally inexplicable by science. A short time after the miracle, terrible chastisement will follow, and only after a thorough 'purification' will come an 'Era of Peace.' This will not be the end of the world as many may think, but the dawn of a new epoch, a new age in which God is adored." PP. 5,6.

(I was much interested in the reference to a "new age").

Much of what "Mary" revealed to the church has come through a Father Gobbi. The following was given on May 13, 1991. "My Pope, John Paul II.. .I confirm for you is the Pope of my secret; the Pope about whom I spoke to the children during the apparitions; the Pope of my love and sorrow... When this Pope will have completed the task which Jesus has entrusted to him and I will come down from Heaven and receive his sacrifice, all of you will be cloaked in dense darkness of apostasy, which will then become general." P. 236. The Marian apparitions are not merely historical but current.

In Medjugorje, in former Yugoslavia, six children (now young adults) in a rural village have been seeing Mary daily and receiving messages from the 'Blessed Mother' since 1981. That remote village has been visited by an estimated 15 million pilgrims and 15,000 clergy. It has been the hub of Marian devotion in these times." P. 8. The Marian vision at Garabandal, Spam also, is a continuing one.

The permanent sign that the Blessed Virgin promised will remain at Garabandal after the miracle at 'the pines' (a grove of nine pines outside the village at the top of a rocky lane leading up the hill). Little has been revealed about the nature of this sign. We know the following details: it will remain at the pines until the end of the world; we will be able to see, photograph, and televise it, but not touch it; no one will be able to explain it by scientific analysis." P. 327.

Can you imagine the impact on the world if this event comes to pass exactly as described above? How many will be able to reject the message of their own senses? "Mary" announced the last dogma on November 15, 1951.

"The Lady of All Nations is here, standing before the cross of her Son; her feet are placed in the very midst of the world, and the flock of Jesus Christ surrounds her. It is as Co-Redemtrix and Mediatrix that I come at these times. I was Co-Redemtrix from the moment of the Annunciation. This is the meaning; the mother has been constituted Co-Redemtrix by the will of the Father. Tell this to your theologians. Tell them likewise that this dogma will be the last in Marian history." P. 53.

The authors claim a high calling for 'Mary. She has a unique relationship to the Holy Trinity: she is the daughter of the Father, Mother of the Son, and spouse of the Holy Spirit. "P. 74.

Many will be deceived by what is coming on the earth unless indwelt by the Holy Spirit.

"The biggest temptation we will have is the devil who is going to imitate the voices of our loved ones. She (Mary) told me, 'Please do not pay attention because those are not your loved ones; those are demons trying to lure you out of the house.'" P. 347.

Remember the secret Freemason society P2 in the last volume we dealt with? In a message of June 13, 1989,

to Father Gobbi, the Blessed Mother warned of the danger of “Ecclesiastical Masonry” as it “seeks to destroy the foundation of unity of the Church, through a subtle and insidious attack on the Pope.” The authors of *The Thunder of Justice* describe the threat this way: “Nowhere is an enemy more destructive than when he is in your own camp. Satan’s primary ploys were to divide Church from state and the Church from within itself.” To date, Satan’s plan has been successful. This leads us to the topic of Freemasonry. It is a complex subject with its leaders having access and control in most economic, political, judicial, and social spheres. It is a huge world-wide network that the ‘Blessed Mother’ calls the ‘secret sect,’ which has common goals and an agenda all its own. Briefly, there is a vast network in place, which is more for earthly goals of wealth and creature comforts than heavenly ones. Sadly, this network extends into the very Church itself. What could be worse than people in high places within your camp working against you? This strategy of deceit in the Church is called Ecclesiastical Masonry.” P. 228

I’ll close the discussion of this volume with a statement that will lead us into the third and final book.

“After the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI remarked that the smoke of Satan was seeping into the Church of God through cracks in the wall. On October 13, 1977, Pope Paul VI told the world: ‘The tail of the devil is functioning in the disintegration of the Catholic world. The darkness of Satan has entered and spread throughout the Catholic Church even to its summit. Apostasy, the loss of the faith, is spreading through the world and into the highest levels within the Church.’” P. 213.

3. WINDSWEPT HOUSE

The last of our trio of books is *Windswept House* by Malachi Martin, published in 1996 by Doubleday. It is subtitled “A Vatican Novel.”

I nearly skipped this most revealing of the three because I almost never read a novel. However, I felt impressed to buy the book and peruse it. I hadn’t gone far before I realized why Martin had chosen to put this account in the form of a novel. Actually it basically isn’t fiction, but truth so bizarre and insidious that it had to be framed in that manner or not be written at all!

Let me begin by stating a premise. Suppose that tomorrow an enemy phones and tells you that within a week he intends to kill you. Knowing his background and intense hatred, you’re sure this is no idle threat. Your days are numbered. What course can you take?

One sensible strategy would be to report the threat to all the agencies and media sources possible. If they chose to publicize the matter, it would make it much more difficult and dangerous for the killer to follow through. And if he did, at least he would be the first suspect the authorities would take him to custody. I’ve already pointed out there is a never-ending battle within the hierarchy of Roman Catholicism between its liberal and the conservative forces. The liberal wing of the church has become openly defiant of many of the basic and historic tenets of Catholicism. That’s why Malachi Martin left the Jesuit order, as he details in his book, *The Jesuits: The Society of Jesus and the Betrayal of the Roman Catholic Church*. Martin believed that internal warfare had reached a crescendo amounting to a life and death crisis. The liberal wing wants to take over control of the church and make drastic changes. The main object standing in their way is ultra-conservative Pope John Paul II. Many see John Paul as a loving and malleable bridge between Protestantism and Catholicism, but the truth is that this tough-as-steel pope hasn’t given an inch in anything of consequence. Protestants haven’t noticed that they are the ones doing all the compromising. They no longer “protest” much of anything. Although Pope John Paul has admitted publicly that there is little he can do in bringing about real reform, he still blocks the liberals from taking complete control. They’ve anxiously been wailing for him to die, but somehow he just keeps shuffling on. They have tried to convince him that age has undermined his abilities and he ought to resign. Not a chance. That leaves murder, but after doing away with the previous pope, another suspicious papal death would immediately be suspect. Stalemate.

I’ve already mentioned that Malachi Martin was intensely loyal to the pope and to the Virgin Mary. He wrote *Windswept House* to bring the plot before as much of the world as possible in order to tie the liberal’s hands. It makes their plotting much more difficult. He named as many names as he dared, and it’s easy to fill in the gaps.

Before concluding, I want to mention a brief quote that ties into what we’ve already studied. In the narrative one of the characters asks, “Are you aware, Chris, that many high-ranking prelates in the Vatican are [Masonic] Lodge members?”

Confusion reigns for all of those who do not have insight into the Scriptures for the Catholic Church is infiltrated with Masons and the Masons are infiltrated with Jesuits. This too, sounds like stalemate; but it really won’t make any difference because all of business, government, news media and yes, religion are meeting at the top. “As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” The world was united in one confederacy of evil then, and it is rapidly taking place now, though to the untrained observer it is ever more confusing.

So many voices are now proclaiming the truth about the corruption of the Papal political system though, and by extension, the Roman Catholic Church itself, that the sincere are left in little doubt about the last days. God’s judgments are soon to fall on the woman who rides the beast and are of a startling nature.

“We shall not be stinted for means if we will only go forward, trusting in God. The Lord is willing to do

a great work for all who truly believe in Him. If the lay members of the church will arouse to do the work that they can do, going a warfare at their own charges, each seeing how much he can accomplish in winning souls to Jesus, we shall see many leaving the ranks of Satan to stand under the banner of Christ. If our people will act upon the light that is given in these few words of instruction, showing that they sincerely believe the truth which they profess, we shall surely see of the salvation of God. Wonderful revivals will follow. Sinners will be converted, and many souls will be added to the church. When we bring our hearts into unity with Christ, and our lives into harmony with His work, the Spirit that fell on the disciples on the day of Pentecost will fall on us. *Review and Herald*, 06-03-03

I am sure that there will be many happenings in the last days that will surprise God's people; defections, reversals and apostasy within and without our ranks. Not least of these startling things is the simple means God will use to bring about giving the final warning to all the world. May Jesus, our Redeemer and soon coming King help us in every way to prove faithful to our calling, that we can give the Loud Cry. (Thanks to Br. Henry Bering who forwarded these book reviews on to my e-mail account.)
Edited by Jerry Eaton

DO NOT WAVER

“Some persons make their religious life a failure because they are always wavering and do not have determination. They are frequently convicted and come almost up to the point of surrendering all for God; but, failing to meet the point, they fall back again. While in this state the conscience is hardening and becoming less and less susceptible to the impressions of the Spirit of God. His Spirit has warned, has convicted, and has been disregarded, until it is nearly grieved away. God will not be trifled with. He shows duty clearly, and if there is a neglect to follow the light it becomes darkness.” Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 2, p. 263.

In this passage we see the truth about people who waver in their decision to follow Christ. People, as it says above, are often convicted to surrender all for Christ, but they can't quite fully surrender so they give up and go back to where they were before. This is obviously a very dangerous situation. As it says, all the while this is happening, their conscience is being hardened. But now the question comes up, “How can people get more determination and not always waver in their decisions?” There really is only one answer and that is to pray to God and plead with Him to give you strength in deciding for Him.

In James 1:6 it says, “But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.” This is really true because one who is convicted but does not make a decision for Christ is always blown by different doctrines. It is very important that, as soon as you hear, you make your decision because the new light will turn into darkness after awhile of resistance. This is a very scary thought because often, once in darkness, it is very hard to get out of darkness.

Another verse along this subject is Ephesians 4:14, “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.” This talks about trying not to be blown by every wind of doctrine. Despite all the consequences of not making firm decisions we are promised many times in the Bible that the prayer of the weakest soul will send Satan running. And with Satan gone Christ can work much more effectively on our hearts and minds.

James 5:16 says, “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” Another help for us in making our decision for Jesus is the Holy Scriptures, which God has so graciously given to us.

In conclusion, I would like to say that we are very near the end time and there is a great battle going on for our soul. Satan wants desperately to take us away from Jesus into darkness, while Jesus wants to bring us to light and heaven. Which one do you want? So let us make our decision for God and heaven today. But remember you can only do this with God's help.

Richard Eaton

CHILDREN'S CORNER

The Missionary boxes

Last Sabbath Ruth had been given a blue missionary box, and so had her brother David. The missionary boxes were to be kept for two months. All the money saved in the missionary boxes was to go toward sending the news about Jesus to the heathen girls and boys across the ocean. The Sabbath School superintendent said so, and so did the sweet old blind missionary woman, who had talked to the leaders.

Ruth and David carried their missionary boxes across the fields toward their tent. They and their mother, aunt and cousin had come several miles from their farm to the tent, with an number of other people, near the Farmers' Cooperative Fruit Drying buildings, during the fruit season, to cut fruit for drying.

Another girl was going across the fields with a blue missionary box. She was a Chinese girl, Louie Ming, whose father and mother had come from the city to cook for some of the owners here.

"Louie Ming has a missionary box," said Ruth.

David laughed. "Do you really think she will save anything in it?"

"I don't really think so," said Ruth.

Ruth and David carried their missionary boxes into their mother's tent. "We're going to cut apricots and peaches to help the heathen," announced Ruth.

Mother nodded "Well have a whole lot of money in our missionary boxes when we carry them back," said Ruth.

"We'll see," said mother.

For two or three mornings Ruth and David rose early, and after breakfast hurried to the cutting-sheds to work. But, after a while, Ruth and David grew tired. It was more fun to run over the fields, and mother never forced Ruth and David to cut fruit, although she did look a little sad.

"The heathen children won't know," said Ruth to herself. "What if the heathen children were me, I wonder if they would cut apricots every day to send me Bibles and missionaries? I don't think they would."

The first month went quickly. When it was over, Ruth had two coins in her missionary box and David had three. "The heathen children won't know," said Ruth.

But one Friday afternoon Ruth and David were walking by the tent where Louie Ming lived. Inside the tent sat Louie Ming, with her week's pay in her lap. In the Chinese girl's hand was her blue missionary box. Louie Ming was putting her money into her box and did not notice Ruth and David.

"Wow," whispered Ruth, "Did you see that? Why David, I do believe that Louie Ming is putting every bit of her pay into her missionary box. Do you suppose she knows what she is doing?"

Ruth and David stood watching.

"Do you suppose Louie Ming understands?" whispered Ruth again. "Why she's giving it all. David she's been working in the cutting-sheds every time I've been there. She didn't cut fruit until she got her missionary box. There, she has put in every coin."

When Louie Ming looked up, and suddenly discovered Ruth and David, she looked half scared. Ruth stepped toward the tent, and said, "What made you give all your money? Why did you not save some? You have worked hard for it. The heathen children would not know if you kept some money for candy and things."

Louie Ming looked shy. "You are asking me why I gave all my money?" she asked softly.

"Yes," said Ruth. "Why do you give so much?"

Louie Ming looked down at her blue missionary box. Somehow it seemed hard for her to answer at first. Then she spoke softly, "One time I had a baby brother, but he died. My mother cried and cried. I also cried a lot. I thought I would never see my poor little baby brother again, never again. Then I went to mission school and the teacher told me that if I loved Jesus that I could see my brother again when Jesus comes again. O that teacher made me so happy. Just to think I could see my brother again. I went home to tell my mother. She did not believe me, but I told the teacher to come to our house to tell her. The missionary came and told my mother and father all about Jesus and they learned to love him. Some day we all will go to heaven and our brother will be resurrected to come with us. Now I save my money to put into the missionary box. Way over there in China many little girls don't know about Jesus. Their loved ones die. They cry and cry the same way that I did. Maybe some of my money will send a teacher to tell those poor Chinese girls how to go to heaven and see their loved ones again. So I work very hard to put money in my box, because Jesus has come into my heart."



Children at the Canadian Field Conference