

THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God*

IN CHRIST JESUS.

(Philippians 3.13-14 NASB)

#02-0892

JULY 22, 2008

A GREAT STORM ON THE SEA #2

This leads to the most recent word that came to me. On July 15 at 1.00 am, I was suddenly awakened with this word: **“A great storm is coming.”** You could say that this word jolted me awake. When I hear such things, I always go to Scripture to see if there is any precedent and, if so, in what context. In this case, the passage that I discovered is the account of the Lord Jesus in the boat with His disciples when a great storm of wind came upon them and the disciples feared for their lives.

When He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him. And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being covered with the waves; but Jesus Himself was asleep. And they came to Him and woke Him, saying, “Save us, Lord; we are perishing!” He said to them, “Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?” Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it became perfectly calm. The men were amazed, and said, “What kind of a man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?” (Matthew 8.23-27 NASB)

No doubt, innumerable sermons have been preached about this story, exhorting people to have faith in trials. After all, Jesus was in the boat with them; what was there to fear? The point that I want to stress is that Jesus purposely did not prevent His disciples from being buffeted by the great storm. Yes; He was with them and He did calm the winds and the sea, but the fact of the matter is that He led them into it. After all, He got in the boat first and they followed. I have no doubt that the One who silenced the winds and the sea also stirred them up in the first place. In other words, the Lord Jesus orchestrated both sides of this story, surely as His heavenly Father had shown Him to do.

Dear beloved in Christ, if I am hearing correctly, the nations (the Lord's people included) are about to be inundated with a great storm as tumult comes upon the nations. It is the Lord's doing! By the way, if it does not come this year, don't write me and others off too soon. It is always a matter of God's timing, not man's. The word “to watch” is just as relevant today as when our Lord spoke it over 2,000 years ago. But as all things that can be shaken are shaken to their very foundation and lie in an ash heap, it might appear at first that we will perish. How will we survive? What will we do? I have heard of some believers stockpiling food and buying gold. But is this the answer? I don't think so. It is so obvious that it seems like kindergarten to state it, but let us remember that the Lord was in the boat with His disciples. Do we not think that He alone can and will preserve His own? Our God must judge the nations until the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, so that He might reign for the eons of the eons (see Revelation 11.15). So, our Lord will orchestrate the fall of Babylon, just as He will orchestrate the bringing of many sons unto glory. Do not fear what is coming. Fear God. Repent. Look off unto Jesus, the Author and Perfector of faith. Conquer in and through His life today so that you might reign with Him in His coming kingdom.

In the months leading up to September 11, 2001, I had a sense of urgency that something was coming. Others had the same sense, and they saw it in certain ways based on how they view end-time, prophetic events. As for me, I had hoped it was the coming of the Lord and the manifestation of His kingdom on this earth. Nevertheless, I was urging that we must watch, for we know not when the Master comes. **And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch** (Mark 13.37 KJV).

Now, in the months leading up to September 2008, seven years after what is commonly called 9/11, I have a similar sense of urgency. However, this time, if what I have been hearing since January 2007 is of the Lord, then we are approaching the end of our present wicked eon and the coming of *the kingdom of the heavens* to this earth is near. Whether what is coming is yet another birth pain in the process and

there are more to come, only God knows. But it will come! Scripture is clear on that. Scripture is also clear that there will be a first resurrection in which Christ's conquerors will be transfigured and glorified. Both must occur. But first the feet mixed with iron and clay must be crushed by the Stone Kingdom until the entire statue of iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold is crushed all at the same time until there is no more trace of the kingdoms of this world (Daniel 2.31-35). As the storm grows, the leaders of the nations will cry out in desperation for solutions to the overwhelming problems they face. The only solution will be the kingdom of Christ.

Along with the crises of the nations, there are some other things happening today that are quite intriguing. First, there are reports of miraculous healings and even resurrections, which I would prefer to call *resuscitations*, leaving the word *resurrection* for the day when God raises the faithful dead for the grand purpose of immortality. Others are proclaiming that signs, wonders, miracles, and deliverances are happening. It does appear that lives are being changed, physically and spiritually, in some gatherings of the Lord's people. In addition, there are reports of many unbelievers turning to Jesus. Second, there are some who truly believe that a great revival is about to break out in America and through this a great army of young missionaries will go forth to the nations. If there were any time in our history that we needed a true spiritual revival, it is in our day.

So what is going on? On the one hand, it appears that the Babylonian system that the world has been yoked to is being judged until it finally falls in one hour, just like the two World Trade Center towers fell nearly seven years ago. This is what I see in Scripture and what the Lord seems to be speaking to me. It also seems to be what we see happening in our day as fear begins to grip the financial markets of the US as things seemingly go from bad to worse, in spite of spins to the contrary. However, let us keep in mind that this roller coaster ride could go on a bit longer, perhaps even for years. Based on a dream that I had some years ago, the year 2010 could be a significant year.

On the other hand, it appears that there are events taking place that would indicate that *the reign of the heavens* is near, much like in the days of John the baptist, followed by the earthly ministry of our Lord Jesus. There is one exception to this; I am not hearing much call to repent. I am sure that some are calling for repentance, but I am not hearing it. In some ways, it seems that just the opposite is occurring in some places, as having fun and being entertained are emphasized. I am not so sure that, as the end of our age comes, the Laodicean church of Revelation 3 will have gotten its act together by heeding the Lord's exhortation of love. However, I am sure that, individually, there will be many who will respond to His love, repent, and conquer as they press on toward the goal for the prize. They will love His appearing, for it is the desire of their heart. Strangely, when I listen to some of the Lord's people, even ones who love the Lord and one another, I do not hear much expectation or desire for Him to come personally to set up His kingdom on earth. Some even stress that the kingdom must come in His people before it comes to this earth. Surely, He is preparing a company of believers that I call the conquerors in Christ, the ones who will be found worthy to attain to the age or eon to come. These are the ones who have tasted the kingdom in some measure. But I am continually reminded of Paul's word to Timothy as Paul was about to fall asleep in Jesus, waiting the day of the *out-resurrection* from among the dead, the prize which he sought to attain.

Finally, [there] is laid up for me the victor's wreath [or, crown] of righteousness which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, will give to me in that Day, but not only to me, but also to all the ones having loved His appearing. (2 Timothy 4.8 ALT)

There is a reward, the crown of righteousness, for all who have loved His appearing. If we love someone and we have not seen the person for a long time, don't we long to see that person? Likewise, our Lord has been gone a long time to receive a kingdom and we have not seen Him face to face. Is He the love of your life? If so, then isn't it your greatest desire to see Him? After all, when we see Him, we will be like Him. The tumult and great storm will come, be sure of that; but it will soon be but a lost memory when we see Him in glory, and He is glorified in His saints.

Let us long to see the love of our life! And, let us not fear the great storm that is coming upon the nations (sea). Remember, Jesus led His disciples into the boat!