

Poacher in the Church

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." "As we said before, so say I now again. If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:8-9)

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." (I Timothy 4:1)

But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring damnable heresies even denying the Lord that brought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

And many shall follow pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. (II Peter 2:1-2) Peter, the Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, said to his followers, "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as the Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me." (Verse 14) Peter knew that he was approaching death. He has a beautiful name for death--"put off this my tabernacle." The folding up of my tent. He knew he was about to leave them so he wanted to stir them up by putting them in remembrance of what he knew was coming. Peter foretold the appearance of false teachers. He wanted them to beware of emotions, of feelings, instead of knowledge which was based on facts. Peter knew people have a tendency to rest on feelings instead of the word of God.

Peter tells his followers that false prophets and false teachers will bring in damnable heresies and that the way of truth shall be evil spoken of, and that with fabled words make merchandise of you. When false prophets and teachers enter a congregation many will walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, false teachers that will despise government, persons will be presumptuous and self-willed. They will speak evil of dignities, become as natural brute beasts and speak evil of the things that they understand not. They pleasure to riot in the day, false teachers and false prophets having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin and they have hearts filled with covetous practices. These are wells without water, clouds that are carried with a tempest who speak great swelling words of vanity who are allured through the lust of the flesh, servant of corruption. False teachers will secretly bring in damnable heresies. They will do it subtly. Peter warned that false teachers would not believe in the deity of Christ. They would not confess to a virgin born Savior and that they would deny the atonement in the blood of Jesus Christ. There is a cry among religious leaders singing, "Can't we get along?" Not without the redemption of the Blood of Christ. Not without the virgin born Christ. Peter said "Many will follow their own pernicious ways." Christ declared that people would say, Lord, Lord, but he would say depart from me. I never knew you.

America was once the nation that held the banner for Christ. This land that was once like a forest filled with fresh grass, birds singing, rivers filled with fish jumping in its lake, but it has become like a forest seen burned. The trees are black. The rivers are muddy. Does this not sound like churches? Peter warned us that false teachers and poachers would enter the forest of the church that was once beautiful, happy homes, marriage was honorable, the bed was undefiled, the forest of the church had a conversation without covetousness and it was a forest that the people of God were content with what they had. It was a forest that the people of God could boldly say "the Lord is my helper." It was a forest without whoremongers and adulterers. It was a forest with a promise, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." It was a forest when the people would say, "I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

It was a forest that the people feared the servants of God who had the rule over them. It was a forest that was aware of the nature of God. The inhabitants knew that their God was Perfect. They spoke of God as eternal and unchangeable. In this forest their God was omnipotent and omniscient and omnipresent. They knew that He was all this, and that He needs must be because He is the absolute, self-existent Being for whom time does not exist, who alone is unchanging in a universe of change, whose power and knowledge know no bounds, whom space cannot contain. We had said in this forest when it was green and without sin, the people were aware of the Omnipotent, the Omniscient, the Omnipresent. In the forest the people of God knew that He was a God who could not be untrue to His own moral nature, false to Himself, for He is a God that cannot do unrighteousness. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" He is bound too by His own purposes. He will not alter them.

In this forest that was fresh and green, clean water, fresh air, the inhabitants would sing out, "Of old thou hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed. But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." (Psalms 102:25-27; Hebrews 1:11-12) "O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my downitting and mine uprising. Thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou searchest out my path and my lying down and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue, but thou knowest it altogether...Such knowledge is too wonderful for me. It is high, I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy Presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shalt thy hand lead me and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light about me shall be night; even the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day." (Psalms 139:1-15)

Brother Paul declared "Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:8)

But Peter said there shall be false prophets and teachers among you. My friend, when false prophets enter the forest of God, that which was once beautiful, clean, fresh, that which was anointed by God is no longer fresh, clean and holy. People will follow their own pernicious ways, their bed which was once undefiled now is defiled, marriage which was once honorable now is no longer honorable, conversation is no longer without covetousness.

When false prophets enter the forest of God, those who were once great and valuable and gifted now sit alone in shame. They follow their own pernicious way. Folks who once sang the praises of God now sleep in a bed that is defiled. Once they could say "I will never leave thee," yet they are now alone in sin.

When the false prophets enter the forest of God, he is not afraid of the strong nor the weak. A false prophet will show no sympathy for the sick. A false prophet will hunt for those who have a gift, like the poacher in the forest, he will hunt till they are on the endangered list. There are always some who want a mink coat, a car-abou, a whale, the elephant. They want it to wear or to hang on their wall. Satan and his false prophet wants that gifted preacher, that choir leader, that faithful teacher. A false prophet wants a defiled bed. A false prophet cannot stand to see a marriage that is honorable, a conversation without covetousness and he or she will dig holes, set traps, muddy the water, he or she will do whatever, like the poacher, he will do whatever for the tusk of the elephant. He will kill just for the ivory. Peter said, "In the last days scoffers will come, natural brute beasts."

False prophets have been in this forest which is called the church. There are not many Christian left. In fact, they are on the endangered species list. You see, they get careless in the forest of God, giving heed to seducing spirits, doctrines of devils.

I heard a preacher say once that he saw nothing wrong with a person marrying the second time or how ever many times.

You see, a false prophet cares nothing about a defiled bed. You see, marriage the second is permitted, but it is how you go about it, the second time. Let me say again, before a false prophet enters the forest of God, he is like the poacher, he first must plan. He knows in every forest there are those who are swift and quick. In other words when a false preacher comes to your church, he knows the marriage of those who are solid. It may take him some time, but he will dig a hole and set his net and that marriage which was once solid has now fallen to his trap. Peter said to the people who were scattered, "Yea I think it meet as long as I am in this tabernacle to stir you up by putting you in remembrance of those things which the Lord hath shown me." (II Peter 1:13-14) "Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle... putting you in remembrance, for we have not followed cunningly devised fables. First, I want you to know after my departure as there were then false prophets among the people, even as they shall be among you and bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that brought them and bring upon themselves swift destruction."

My friend, you can tell a false prophet. He is like the poacher in the forest. He will get careless and drop his matches and cigar butt. In other words, that person whom he sits and visits daily is not the sick. That place where he sits for hours is not a conversation that is without covetousness.

Like the poacher, he is there to set a trap, dig a hole, a brute beast with an appetite of a horse. Paul preached if he preach anything other, "Let him be accursed." Peter and Paul preached, they preached salvation, to rebuke, to reprove. Peter knew that the church would need to be called back to repentance. He knew false preachers would be afraid, afraid of someone being hurt, knowing that hell needed to be preached again and again but they would be afraid. Nevertheless, said Peter, we need to meet face to face to settle some things and as long as I am alive I will stir you up to tell you that Satan does not care about you or your family. He will hunt on the property of God. He will destroy marriages that were once solid and now that bed is defiled. What was once honorable now is in ruins. My friend, joining the PTL Club, 700 Club, telling you that a mink coat is yours for the asking, new house, new car, TV in both ends of the house. I know of homes and you do too which have all these things, but their marriage is not honorable and their bed which they seek rest in is not undefiled. It is stained with sin.

You see, it was not a PTL Club they needed, but a new heart. Membership in an organization is not our salvation. We need a faith more precious than of

gold that perisheth (I Peter 1:7) You and I will always need for our protection that salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you. (Verse 10)

My friend, a called preacher of God will deal with sin regardless of those who love it or not. It may seem hard, but to preach only love is not true love. When we preach and never rebuke, it is hypocrisy, ear tickling, smooth saying.

Today a false preacher will never disagree, love everybody, accept everything, make you wonder what it was that Cain killed Abel over. You wonder why it was that Jeremiah was in mud up to his arm pits.

History has it that Isaiah was saved in half. I wonder how we lost our conviction and if the blind lead the blind both shall fall. (Matthew 15:14) Peter said there shall be false teachers among you who shall bring in damnable heresies. (II Peter 2:1)

Let me close with this thought. Soon you will witness all religions saying can't we get along. Who is to say who is saved and who is not? Peter said "I call this meeting to warn you of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." (II Peter 2:2)

Jesus Himself said, "And many false prophets shall rise and shall deceive many..." (Matthew 24:11)

How much do you know about the nature of God? It is said of God that he hates sin and all those who hate him love death. (Proverbs 8:36)

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spoke unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire." (Deuteronomy 4:15)

This is the same God that Solomon declared "But God indeed dwells on the earth. Behold, the heavens and heavens of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house that I have built." (I Kings 8:27)

God, my friend, is infinitely great, so great that Job despaired of finding him out. "The mystery of God is far beyond human conception. He who takes not of the infinitely little. He humbly himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth." (Psalm 113:1-9)

The Omnipotent interesting Himself in the affairs of the lower world. Someone said, "Who shall remember me from on high. I shall not be known among so many people. For what is my soul in a boundless creation." (Psalms 139:1)

Next week: the Conclusion of False Prophets in the Church

TWO MINUTES WITH THE BIBLE

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THE RACE SET BEFORE US

BY RUSSELL S. MILLER

As another New Year dawns its always wise to give the Scriptures our careful attention so as to please the One paid the ultimate sacrifice on account of our sins at Calvary, our wonderful Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

It is not that we merely wish to please Him, but our gratitude should manifest itself in the lives we live for Him. It was indeed for this reason that the Apostle Paul has so much to say about "the race set before us".

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1).

As I opened my Bible in the study of this subject I discovered that the word "race" [agon], here, is only found in the following verses, having to do with the athlete in the race, rather than the course itself:

Philippians 1:30: "Having the same conflict which ye saw in me..."

Colossians 2:1: "...what great conflict I have for you..."

I Thessalonians 2:2: "...we were bold in our God to speak unto you the Gospel of God with much contention".

I Timothy 6:12: "Fight the good fight of faith..."

II Timothy 4:7: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith".

Hebrews 12:1: "...the race that is set before us".

On the other hand, the Greek word *stadion*, "they which run in a race", is translated "furlongs" (the 220 yard dash), five times in our Bibles (Luke 24:13; John 6:19; 11:18; Rev. 14:20; 21:16) and, surprisingly only once in Paul's epistles where it is rendered "race" (I Cor. 9:24).

The Apostle does not refer to the course, here, which the contestants ran in their Greek games, but to the Christian life.

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain" (I Cor. 9:24).

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Reflections by Alta Nye Oxendine

RUSSIAN AND CHINA ("TERRORISM" continued)

AND, as we reach out our arms (in our coalition-building efforts) to leaders from China and Russia, let's keep some important "info" in mind. Although our country has (in the past) tried to pit China and Russia against each other, many students of the methods used by the international Communist "Party" to carry out its activities for over 80 years, believe that Communist leaders of both those countries have many times used the mere PERCEPTION of a split to further their JOINT cause.

Remember that Gorbachev was visiting Chinese leaders in the spring of 1989 when students there were involved in that wonderful new "democratic" movement, with their quiet, peaceful demonstrations for "liberty"! President Bush said he is looking forward to seeing his friend Putin, at the meeting in China.

I wonder: How MANY times SINCE 1989 have the leaders of Russia and China met to encourage one another? And, perhaps, to plan JOINT activities that could have a profound impact on the rest of the world?

According to "Clinton, China break ice," (a New York Times article by David E. Sanger with a New Zealand dateline, reprinted in the September 12, 1999, Charlotte Observer) Bill Clinton and Ziang Zemin "declared an end to months off frozen relations following the bombing of the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, Yugoslavia" during a meeting "on the fringes of the annual Asian economic summit conference." One thing they did was to order "their trade ministers to meet--- in hope of closing a broad deal that would get China into the World Trade Organization," wrote Sanger. He also reported that "Chinese officials appeared--- pleases that Clinton had been openly critical of Taiwan's Lee Teng-hui---for his statements" describing "the island as a separate state."

Later, when Bill Clinton was visiting China, Ziang reportedly corrected Clinton for referring to him as a "former" communist, by replying: "I AM a Communist!"

Ziang and Putin have each made a NUMBER of recent visits to various countries around the world. Cuba is one of the nations recently visited by Ziang. I believe it was Putin who recently visited Canada.

I understand that, immediately before becoming Russia's Prime Minister in August of 1999, Vladimir Putin was serving as head of the FSB, the domestic successor to the KGB in Russia. Earlier, Putin had (for years) served as head of East Germany's Stasi Secret police organization, the equivalent of the KGB.

Ever since becoming Russia's President, Putin has been reaching out to form friendships (PERHAPS in some cases PARTNERSHIPS) with leaders all around the world.

In fact during 2001, both Putin and Ziang have reportedly been reaching out to leaders of many OTHER nations around the world.

According to the May 2001 World Press Review reprint of a March 2, 2001 Korea's President, Kim Dae Jung and visiting Vladimir Putin issued a "joint communique" declaring "support for a detente between North and South Korea, as well as agreeing to preserve the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty as a "cornerstone of strategic stability." They also expressed hope "that a third Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty" would soon come about. "Some foreign media dubbed the Kim-Putin agreement a diplomatic victory for Russia," according to this report. "Putin--- anxious to play a role in the Korean peace process, is wary of Washington's status as the single post-Cold War super-power," says the article.

AS A FOLLOWER OF JESUS CHRIST, I care about both Putin and Ziang, as well as (of course) EVERY person who lives in each of those countries. But, I believe that ANYONE who has learned about the various METHODS of INDOCTRINATION both these current Communist leaders would have received (likely since EARLY childhood) DEMANDING that they each use both PEOPLE and SITUATIONS to further the great Communist "party" agenda, would advise our leaders to be as "wise as serpents" instead of MERELY concentrating on being as "harmless as doves" (Matthew 16:6b) in order to win them over to our side of the coalition against terrorism.

Before becoming TOO cozy, let's first RULE OUT the possibility that Communist leaders, members of their secret police, and perhaps other faithful communists as well, could have played SOME part in preparing for the recent 9-11 attacks.

If nothing else, both the soviet Union and Communist China have done their share of training terrorists in the past. (For example, I've read that Middle Eastern Ba'athist socialist fighters like Saddam Hussing were trained by the soviet Union. The Maoist "Shining Path" in south America (and I BELIEVE the Cuban guerrilla fighters who took control in 1959) apparently had some kind of support from China. Also the (Maoist) Kosovo Liberation Army now fighting in Macedonia.

For all I know, without REALIZING who their trainers really were, Muslim terrorists could have been RECRUITED decades ago for training by either the former Soviet Union or by communist China. If so, the trainers would likely have "played the part" of caring "liberators."

According to one of the Arab and/or Muslim guests on Charlie Rose's show for Friday, October 5, terrorist tactics began with the secular Arab National Movement. PERHAPS this group had been secretly organized, recruited and/or trained by the KGB or GRU, which MIGHT have also taught them how to infiltrate and recruit others, devout Muslims who had already dedicated their lives to the service of Allah, or (on the other hand) Muslims who may not have been very familiar with their Holy book, the Koran, and might, therefore, EASILY believe that Allah expected them to fight in a Holy War, and that they would receive a rich reward for OFFERING their LIVES UP to ALLAH in such a war.

International Communism expects to benefit whenever a nation is destroyed, or even disabled, in the ongoing effort of Communism to replace existing systems with the Marxism-Leninism form of social ism. There seems to have been an ongoing assault on the United States (for over 80 years) in an effort to gain control, using propaganda and/or infiltration. In fact, nation after nation around the world, has been taken over by Marxist-Leninists using a variety of methods such as these!

During the Great Depression the Communist "Party" really HOPED to be able to DESTABILIZE and take control of the United States. 2001 has been another period of vulnerability for our nation. BOTH times, our country has EXHIBITED a RESILIENCE that IT'S ENEMIES did NOT COUNT ON!!!

Let's remember to pray EVERY day for our country's LEADERS, including President George Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Colin Powell, Attorney General John Ashcroft, and Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, the National Security Advisor, Condoleeza Rice, and the extremely busy FBI and CIA personnel.

SURELY THIS IS A TIME WHEN OUR LEADERS, AND THE REST OF US, NEED TO PUT INTO PRACTICE PROVERBS 3:5-6:

"TRUST IN THE LORD WITH ALL YOUR HEARTAND LEAN NOT ON YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING.

.....ACKNOWLEDGE HIM, AND HE WILL DIRECT YOUR PATHS." HAPPY BIRTHDAY, SOPHIA!

It is my sincere hope and prayer that Sophia Dial and the other passengers who were injured in the accident that took place around midnight on Oct. 19-20, 2000, will have a much BETTER year this time. Last year, Sophia spent her 18th birthday in the Chapel Hill hospital where she and Don Locklear had both been airlifted soon after being taken to Southeastern Medical Center in Lumberton. Two other passengers were sent to Cape Fear Medical Center in Fayetteville.

ALSO, LET'S REMEMBER THE FAMILY WHOSE DAUGHTER DIED in that collision. HER MOTHER was later INJURED in ANOTHER ACCIDENT!

AND, OF COURSE, ALL OTHER INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES WHO ARE ENDURING THE LOSS OF A LOVER ONE BY DEATH, OR SOME OTHER KIND OF CRISIS OR TRAGEDY.

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