



SAFE HARBOR

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Are you aware that in Israel it does snow?

Many would have the impression that Israel is hot and almost desert like but even in modern times snow does occur in Israel. I bring this up because of the Scripture verses which equate holiness with being "*whiter than snow*". The analogy here is as appropriate for the Christian today as it has been for the centuries. And so in this time when snow falls and covers the ground perhaps we would do well to understand the phrase for our lives.

Snow is a gift given from heaven. It can be attributed not to the actions of man but is solely the act of God upon his creation. As a heavenly gift it brings a purity in its falling.

Snow has cleansing properties in the atmosphere as does the summer rain. It removed impurities, bringing a freshness to the earth.

Snow is necessary for abundant harvests. For snow slowly melts and moistens the earth providing the ground with nutrients that promote growth. As the melting takes place there are the underground streams which flow down to the seas.

It is with the plan of God to bring a new creation filled with persons cleansed by faith. Though it seems that evil prevails, purity comes out of darkened skies and hope is realized in the light of day.

WOULD YOU TRAVEL...

Would you travel down a road not knowing where it leads?

Would you set your eyes ahead, ne'er to look behind?

Would you go if comforts fail? And yet comfort find

Would you travel outside the veil? Looking upward to the sky

Would you take the time to stop and extend the hand of love?

Would you take the time to share a tear and hug?

And if the path grows hard and steep, rocky, and unpaved
Can you keep upon your way?
Taking time to stop and see the path of ages trod by those
Who walked this path before.
And when you come into darkest night that blots the glow
Of purest light in a valley of despair
Can your eyes perceive ahead the light that is ahead?

Remember words spoken once of the Leader of the trek.
For He is with you as you go on towards the morning time.
Where chains have fallen off and bars asunder torn.
As grave was fled and hope became alive
A new world with the morn.
Realized by the presence of the One who went before.
Now travel in road that leads away from the old and
Tarnished city to go to Calvary and beyond
To the joy of God's holy presence.

There to reside around His Throne praising the One who made the way
Of fulfilled faith and love
And calls for all today to leave the city gates behind and travel the road
of the Cross, the grave, the sky.

WEL
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The Freedom that Comes by Transformation

We live in a world that has been defiled and destroyed by sin. Eden was a place where there was no pain, no killing, no want, no lies and no hatred. That all changed by an act of disobedience to the commandment of God. Eden was no more. Its sanctuary broached by evil. The gates guarded by angels with fiery swords who forbid entrance into the holy place, removing access to our fellowship with God.

Humans have tried to regain entry into the perfect estate, failing at feeble attempts of religion, wealth gathering, power and enslavement of others. Yes, even the sacrifice of lives deemed necessary to show piety. So instead of Eden we find ourselves entombed in a world of hatred, violence, wars, corruption, etc. We hear people proclaiming that love is the answer but the love they offer is distorted and perverted. Can it be that the apocalypse is near? Has the human race

become so bound that the chains of sin may not be broken? Are we doomed because of the passions of selfishness and greed?

It does not need to be that way. There is a way to freedom that is given through grace. But this freedom is costly. History tells that any freedom comes with a price even the freedom that God gives to those who come to Him seeking his face and glory. The price first off being the incarnation, life and death of the son of God, Jesus Christ. Following in his footsteps the price lies in death and transformation with transformation coming only by the movement of the Holy Spirit upon the life of the believer who has presented his body a living sacrifice.

Unfortunately, the Church has been the biggest offender in veiling the face of God to the people. While the offices (rituals and sacraments) of the Church have deep meaning in providing the path to transformation, these offices have become mechanical processes which remove the personal transformation to just being something with no substance or power. It seems that in every era of the Church, it violates the teaching which reads, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Ro.12:2).

Such a transformation is costly. In the preceding verse, Paul urgently urges believers in Christ to, “Present your body a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable which is your reasonable service”. This means not being molded by the passing fancies of a world that has forsaken God and His commandments. It means being unacceptable to a sin filled world. Western Christianity has too often taken the easy path that leads to destruction. The Church has largely forgotten that, “the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually perverted, sorcerers, idolaters and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death”. Yet it reaches out with a distorted message and acceptance of all manner of sinful behavior.

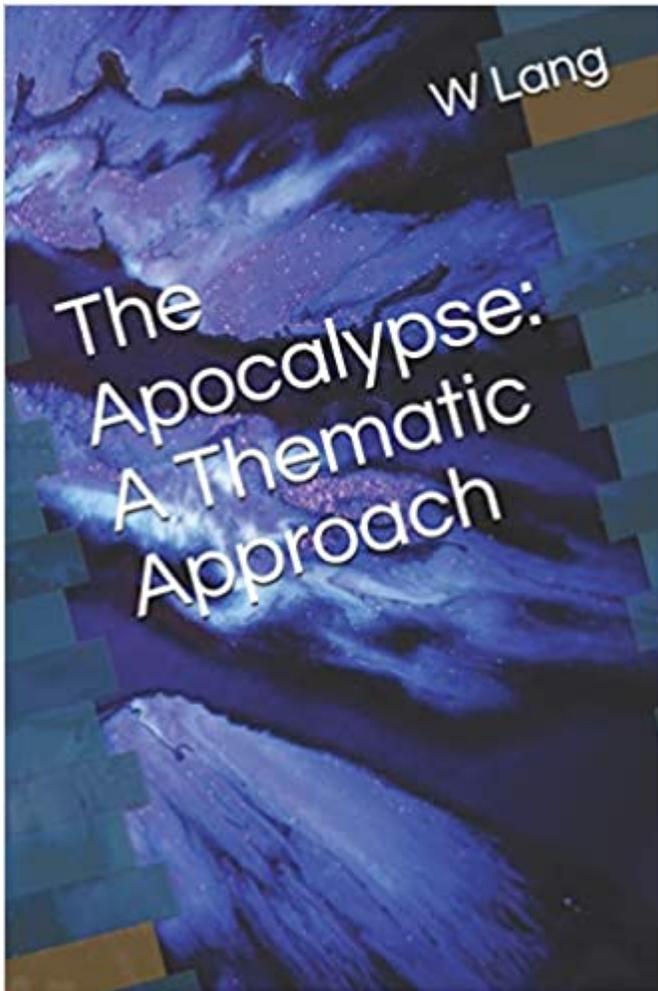
True Christianity comes “when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed, revealing the glory of God. The Lord is Spirit and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit”. (2Cor 3: 16-17) If the veil is removed, why would we wrap it around our faces?

It is the transforming power of the Holy Spirit that brings about the glory of God. That power enables the ones persecuted to stand tall in their faith even as the face death. It is that power which allows us to say, “Neither do I condemn you, go your way and sin no more”. This vastly untapped resource enables the Christian to speak the truth in love in a world of hate. Of greatest importance is that the power of the Spirit breaks the chains of bondage to sin. By this power we can reveal the glory of God into a world that is seeking Him. It is high time for the western church to rise above the lies of a world bent on hatred and stand for that which God tells us is good and acceptable and holy.

Such transformation is costly. The freedom it brings is precious. Sadly, many will hear but few will follow in the path of the Risen Christ.

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My book of poetry, **Midnight Musings: Thoughts from a Restless Mind**, is also available on Amazon and also Amazon Kindle. Your patronage and thoughts would be appreciated.