

# “Watchman, what of the night ?”



*“ The hour has come, the hour is striking, and striking at you, the hour and the end!” Ezekiel 7:6 (Moffatt)*

## ▶ THIS ISSUE'S READING

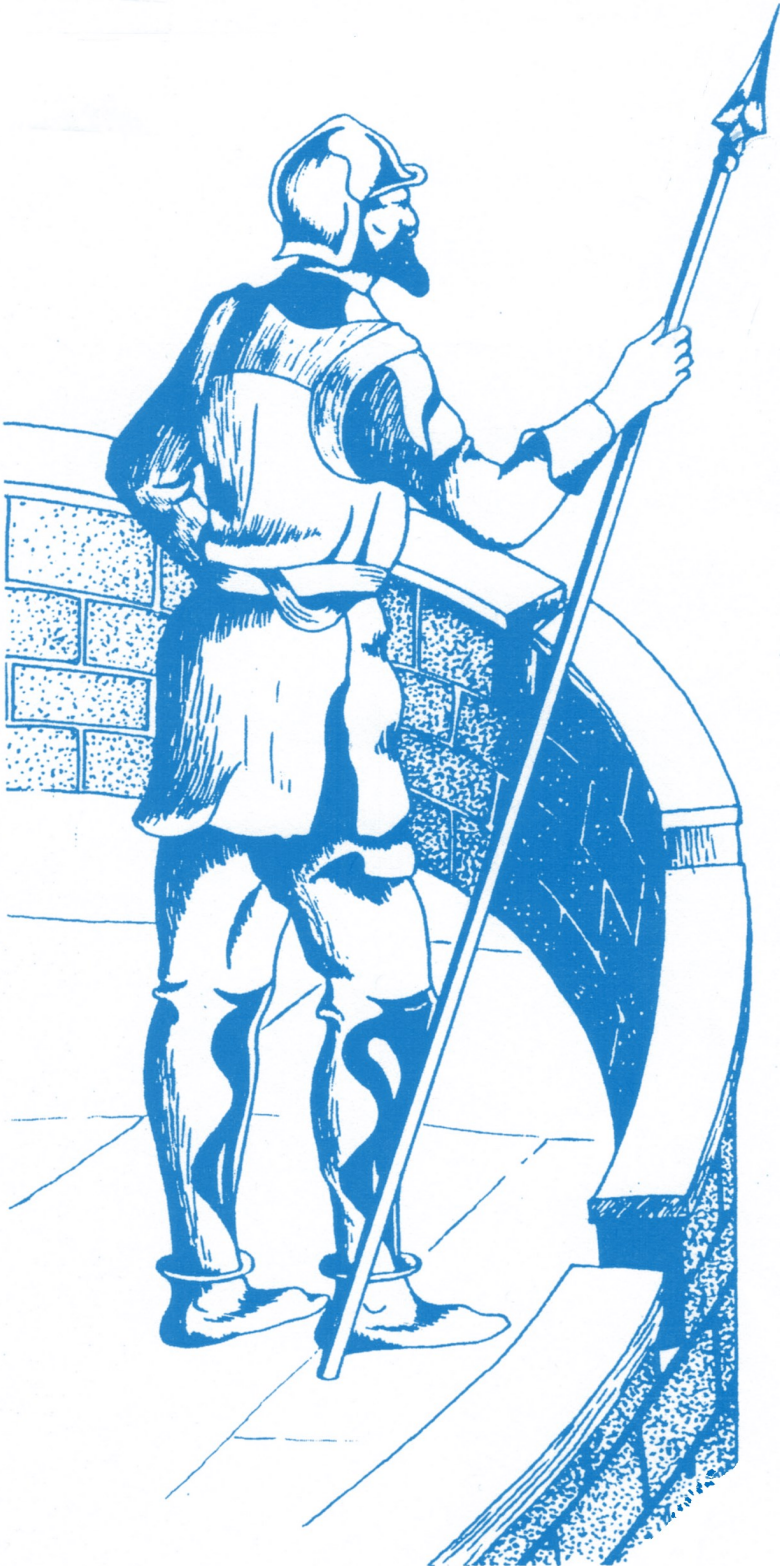
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### *Editor's Preface*

Shortly after the release of last bimonthly's Issue of the thought paper (WWN # 28), this editor was informed of a Facebook social media posting concerning Pope Francis. Upon access, it stated that the pope "has responded to claims that many of his teachings 'contradict Bible teachings' by saying that his words 'overrule' anything written in the Bible." The post listed as its source an internet site in which the article, dated March 18, 2018, appeared. <sup>1</sup> The fact that the Roman Pontiffs contradict Bible teachings is a well known truth. What got my attention was the statement that Francis said: "his words 'overrule' anything written in the Bible." Since 'overrule' was in quotation marks, I assumed that this was a direct quote made by the pope and proceeded to look for the original source that this internet site was quoting from. After some careful investigation, my search turn up nothing. This internet site itself appears to be where the quote originated. The various "fact checker" web sites all noted that the statement was false and any other sources that I accessed which reported this statement, listed no other reference beyond the site under question.

Based on this incident, I was inclined to write an article for this Issue of WWN on the widespread phenomenon of false news. However, since the topic of "fake news" is so frequently discussed at



this time, coupled with the conviction that there are more pertinent issues that need to be presented, the write-up on this subject was "shelved." Instead, the main article, which was inspired by a very recent editorial in Time magazine, examines certain basic events happening in America (and the world) in these latter days which mirror similar events that took place anciently in the final years of the northern kingdom of Israel.

The second article is our ongoing continuation of *The Sanctuary Truth*, drawn from previous WWN publications written by Elder William Grotheer, with minor corrections, embellishments, and extensions to the text added by the present editor.

## **THE "AMERICAN DREAM" - A GLOBAL ASPIRATION:**

### **Parallels in This End Time to the Last Days of Northern Israel - From the Reign of Jeroboam II to the Assyrian Captivity**

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." (Romans 15: 4).

Over the last 18 months, our small congregation in Nora Springs, Iowa, has been carefully studying the biblical books of 1 and 2 Kings, supplemented with the corresponding passages from 2 Chronicles. We are at the point in 2 Kings, chapter 17, which details and summarizes the downfall, destruction, and captivity of the northern kingdom of Israel. Throughout this study, particular attention has been devoted to the events leading to the division of the united kingdom after the reign of King Solomon. Briefly, and as a result of slow but steady continuous departure from strict adherence to the law given by God through Moses to govern the actions

of a Hebrew king (Deuteronomy 17: 14-20), Solomon's marriages to numerous, multiple, heathen wives led him into the worship of false gods. Subsequently, in order to stem the rising tide of idolatry and oppression brought about by Solomon's apostasy from corrupting the whole nation, the Lord allowed a series of predictions and incidents to take place which eventually led to the dividing of the Hebrew monarchy into two separate kingdoms - southern Judah and northern Israel (1 Kings, chapters 11 and 12). Ten of the northernmost tribes who seceded from Judah and Benjamin (the two southernmost tribes), rejected Solomon's son Rehoboam as their king and made Jeroboam I, son of Nebat, king over the northern territories.

Shortly after becoming king, Jeroboam I tragically succumbed to unbelief, fear, political expediency, and selfishness. Contrary to the expressed will of God, he established an insidious form of idolatry (calf worship) along with corrupt social, political, and religious institutions which set a precedent that plagued the northern kingdom throughout its entire existence. The downward spiral reached an alarming low during the reign of King Ahab who, under the influence of his heathen wife Jezebel, added Baal worship to the nation's idolatrous practices. (1 Kings 16: 29-33). Around this time, the Lord raised up the prophet Elijah and, along with his successor, the prophet Elisha, mercifully curbed this further tide of rebellion. This ushered in the reign of King Jehu who, as prophesied, eradicated Baal worship (at least for a considerable time) from northern Israel by destroying "the house (dynasty) of Ahab." Regrettably, however, the reform was only partial as Jehu "took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam (I), which

made Israel to sin." (2 Kings, chapters 9 and 10). The continuing descent into wickedness, with all its accompanying evils, progressed onward up to the ascension of Jeroboam II, son of Joash, as King.

As one reads through the history of the northern kingdom of Israel up to this point, the long-suffering of God with His professed people is truly astonishing! At every step of the way, with both leaders and non-leaders alike, God's love, compassion, forbearance, and mercy are amply displayed and testified to throughout the biblical text. For the infrequent and usually half-hearted times that the people do reach out to God, the Lord generously responds. And yet for all of God's willingness to heal, save, restore, and bless His wayward people, nearly all His reproofs and warnings given through His servants, the prophets, were going mostly unheeded. The dire consequences that followed, as chronicled in the books of the Kings and enumerated in the Law as judgments ultimately allowed by God as corrective measures (compare Deuteronomy 28: 15-68 with 30: 1-10), appear to have come to fruition during the reign of Jeroboam II. The correction through *adversity* that the nation had brought upon itself repeatedly was intensifying and only hardening its rebellion and hastening its destruction. Accordingly, the biblical account records a seeming shift in the Lord's strategy concerning His people: correction through *prosperity*.

The rule of Jeroboam II is characterized in much the same way as the kingship of practically all his predecessors: "And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam (I) the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin." (2 Kings 14: 24). Yet, in the providential mercy of God at this time, the Lord uses prosperity

as the corrective means of bringing His people of northern Israel into a right relationship with Himself: "He (Jeroboam II) restored the coast of Israel ... according to the word of the Lord God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Gath-hepher. For the Lord saw the affliction of Israel, that it was very bitter: for there was not any shut up, nor any left, nor any helper for Israel. And the Lord said not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven: but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam (II) the son of Joash." (Ibid. 14: 25-27; compare with Deuteronomy 32: 36).

Sadly, the decades long national prosperity, which did cause a large measure of social, political, and economic affluence, greatly failed to produce the necessary ethical, moral, and spiritual reform so desperately needed. The messages contained in the books of Amos and Hosea, prophets of chiefly the northern kingdom during Jeroboam II's reign, detail the awful declension that gripped the nation. Rather than attributing their wealth and prosperity to the goodness and mercy of God, they thanklessly appropriated it to their own proficiency (Amos 6: 13; Hosea 12: 8) and to the benefits bestowed by worshiping false gods (Hosea 2: 12). Therefore they "did not know" (forgot) that it came from God (Hosea 2: 8; 13: 6; compare with Deuteronomy 8: 18). Accordingly, idolatry along with self sufficient pride and arrogance served to foster selfishness, lust, covetousness, greed and avarice (Amos 2: 6-8; 4: 1; 5: 10-13; 8: 4-10; Hosea 12: 7-8). This, in turn, multiplied oppression, persecution, violence, murder, and general wickedness of all kinds (Hosea 4: 1-2; compare with Amos 3: 9-11). Thus this period of near unparalleled opulence in the kingdom of northern Israel,

graciously and undeservedly bestowed upon its inhabitants by their loving God to bring them back into their covenant relationship with Himself, simply became another vehicle to increase their sins, deepen their guilt, and hasten their condemnation and destruction.

This failure of the nation to repent and return to the Lord became the determinate factor in their final downfall. Through Hosea came the declaration: "Ephraim (northern Israel) is joined to idols: let him alone." (Hosea 4: 17), and Amos prophesied to Amaziah the idolatrous priest of Bethel, who relayed the message to King Jeroboam II, that "Israel shall surely go into captivity forth of his land." (Amos 7: 17b). God's judgment was clearly stated at this time: "Behold, the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth." (Ibid. 9: 8a). Though, mercifully, the prediction was stayed for another 31 years, these remaining decades were marked by rapid political instability, constant dynastic change, and a swift reversal of social and economic security largely through the looming threat of foreign invasion. At last, the Assyrians invaded northern Israel, captured the capital city of Samaria, and deported a substantial part of the nation's population away from their land into other regions of Assyria's empire. (see 2 Kings, chapter 17).

Recently, the parallels between the closing decades of the northern kingdom of Israel and the end time before the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ was brought into focus by an article which appeared first in the internet version of Time magazine dated May 17, 2018.<sup>2</sup> And while the author certainly does not relate any of the contents of this write-up to the account recorded in the Bible regarding ancient northern Israel, the similarities between the recent modern history of

the United States (and by extension most of our world today) and the latter years of the long defunct northern nation is nonetheless quite remarkable. The article is based on a forthcoming book by the same author entitled, Tailspin: The People and Forces Behind America's Fifty-Year Fall - and Those Fighting to Reverse It. The publisher's introduction, which also appears to capture the basic essence of the Time article, sums up this soon to be released book in part as follows:

"In this revelatory narrative covering the years 1967 to 2017, Steven Brill gives us a stunningly cogent picture of the broken system at the heart of our society. He shows us how, over the last half-century, America's core values - meritocracy, innovation, due process, free speech, and even democracy itself - have somehow managed to power its decline into dysfunction. They have isolated our best and brightest, whose positions at the top have never been more secure or more remote. The result has been an erosion of responsibility and accountability, an epidemic of shortsightedness, an increasingly hollow economic and political center, and millions of Americans gripped by apathy and hopelessness. By examining the people and forces behind the rise of big-money lobbying, legal and financial engineering, the demise of private-sector unions, and a hamstrung bureaucracy, Brill answers the question on everyone's mind: How did we end up this way? ... At once a diagnosis of our national ills ... *Tailspin* is a work of riveting journalism ..."

As one reads through Brill's Time editorial, which has five sub-headings titled "One" - "Five," it seems apparent that the catalyst that provided the enticement to "rig the playing field," no matter who, where, or how, was material wealth (money) and the worldly power that accompanies it. The "love of

money" (1 Timothy 6: 10) is clearly the common denominator in all the machinations that are in play to further enrich and benefit the one class (1% to 2%) that the author labels as the "protected" at the detriment and expense of the vastly larger class (98% to 99%) which he labels as the "unprotected." Concerning the forces that have created this condition, he comments:

"But there is a theme that threads through and ties together all the strands: many of the most talented, driven Americans used what makes America great ... to chase the American Dream. And they won it, for themselves. Then, in a way unprecedented in history, they were able to consolidate their winnings, out-smart and co-opt the forces that might have reined them in, and pull up the ladder so more could not share in their success or challenge their primacy."

What Brill outlines in regard to America, this chasing "the American Dream," is fast becoming the general norm for the rest of the world. The biblical story of the fall of the northern kingdom of Israel pinpoints that the thing above all others that corrupted it and led to its eventual dissolution was the worship of false gods, i.e., idolatry. The people coveted the material benefits that they supposed their prowess had appropriated to themselves by adopting the practices, policies, and false religion of the heathen. Covetousness fuels idolatry because it is itself idolatry! As the Scriptures *twice* declare:

"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, *nor covetous man, who is an idolater*, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." (Ephesians 5: 5, emphasis added).

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, *and*

*covetousness, which is idolatry*: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience." (Colossians 3: 5-6, *emph. added*).

The ever growing massive income, wealth, and worldly power control concentrated and centralized with the relative few in our modern world today, with all its consequent evils, is an idolatry that is even more deceitful and destructive in this end time than it was in last days of eighth-century B.C. northern Israel! Like them, the benefits that God has blessed America with, and much of our modern world, has been perverted to serve sin and harden the heart. We too - and this is a warning especially for God's remnant people - are fast approaching the end of the age. Bible prophecy reveals that economic issues will play a major role in luring the idolatrous, wicked world into a deceptive sense of peace, safety, and prosperity for all. (see Revelation 13: 11-18; 18: 1-24). Are *we* "learning" the lessons which "were written aforetime" in God's Word to prepare *us* for the fast approaching crisis just ahead? ❖ GLP

### **THE DAILY HEBREW TABERNACLE SERVICE: The Courtyard Ministrations - Sacrificial Offerings [continued]**

#### **The Law Of The Sin Offering (resumed) --**

In the sin offerings over which the High Priest ministered, the blood was brought into the sanctuary. In this differentiation between the individual and corporate sins as to whom ministered, and what each category of ministering priests did, we see the dual role of Christ both as common priest, and as High Priest. Every high priest was taken from among men (Hebrews 5: 1), so Christ to become the great High Priest had to become man. In becoming man, Jesus "took part of the same" flesh and blood as is common to

humanity. (Hebrews 2: 14). "Himself emptied, the form of a slave taking, in likeness of men becoming." (Philippians 2: 7, Gr.), <sup>3</sup> He came in "the likeness of sinful flesh" (Romans 8: 3), being made "to be sin for us." (2 Corinthians 5: 21). In His earthly ministry, Jesus was both "that prophet" (John 1: 21), and "common priest." As that "Prophet" (Deuteronomy 18: 15, 18), He would "build the temple of the Lord" even as Moses built the earthly type. As the Common Priest, He "offered sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the victim." (see AA, pg. 33). <sup>4</sup> Ministering in the "court" of this earth, He bestowed "forgiveness" even as the common priests of Israel did upon the individual offerer. To the scribes and Pharisees who became incensed because He said to a palsy stricken man - "Thy sins *are* forgiven thee" - Jesus demonstrated "that the Son of man hath power up-

on earth to forgive sins" by telling the man, "Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house." And he did! (Luke 5: 18-24, emphasis added). Here in the court of earth, the shadowy type was meeting "the very image" of the good things which it prefigured. In ministering the law of the sin offering, the priest would "make atonement" for the sin which the individual "committed, and it [would] be forgiven him." (Leviticus 4: 35). So Jesus the "anointed One" declared forgiveness to the sin-burdened souls who came to Him. Not only did He forgive sins, but He provided a "forgiveness of sins" which "justified from all things" beyond the scope of the shadowy "law of Moses." (Acts 13:38-39). Having provided the sacrifice, He ministers, at "the throne of grace," mercy and grace to all who come boldly "in full assurance of faith." (Hebrews 4: 16; 10: 22).

### SUMMARY OF LEVITICUS 4

SINNER	OFFERING	OFFICIANT	DISPOSITION OF THE BLOOD*	DISPOSITION OF THE VICTIM	RESULT TO THE SINNER
High Priest (Causing the Nation to Sin) (4: 3)	Bullock (4: 3-4)	High Priest (4: 5)	Sprinkled before the Second Veil; Marked on the horns of the Altar of Incense (4: 6-7)	Fat and Kidneys burned on the Altar of the Court; rest burned without the camp (4: 8-12)	[Not stated]
Congregation (4: 13)	Bullock (4: 14)	High Priest (4: 16)	Same as Above (4: 17-18)	Same as Above (4: 19-21)	Forgiveness (4: 20)
Ruler (4: 22) Included the Priests (Num. 3: 32)	Kid of the Goats (Male) (4: 23)	Common Priest (4: 25)	Blood marked on the horns of the Altar of the Court (4: 25)	Fat and Kidneys burned on the Altar (4: 26) +	Forgiveness (4: 26)
Common Person (4:27)	Kid of the Goats (Female) (4: 28)	Common Priest (4: 30)	Same as Above (4: 30)	Same as Above (4: 31) +	Forgiveness (4: 31)

\* In all the sin offerings, the residue of the blood was poured at the base of the Altar in the Court.

+ The priest ate a small portion of the victim (Lev. 6: 25-26), and designated parts of the remainder were to be the possession of the officiating priest (Lev. 7: 7-8).

The earthly high priest ministered only corporate sin offerings wherein the blood was brought into the sanctuary, and thus did not eat of the offering partaking of its symbolic sin. Christ preserving the purity of His divine character, was "Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec." (Hebrews 5: 10). In this mediatorial work, He is not only "able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him," but He is also "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." (Hebrews 7: 25-26). In Christ, the law of the sin offering finds its reality, both in His work as a Common Priest while on earth, and in His work as High Priest in the Heavenly Sanctuary.

#### **The Fat Of The Sin Offerings --**

Four times during the instruction of how the sin offerings were to be ministered, the Lord told Moses the fat was to be removed and burned "as the fat of the sacrifice of the peace offerings." (Leviticus 4: 10, 26, 31, 35). The peace offerings had been detailed just prior to the instruction concerning the sin offerings. (Leviticus 3). All "the fat that covereth the inwards, ... And the two kidneys, and

the fat that is upon them, which is by the flanks, and the caul (fold) above the liver, with the kidneys, it shall [the priest] take away." (Ibid. 3: 9-10). These were to be burned upon the altar. The fat and the kidneys are declared to be "the food [Heb. - bread] of the offering made by fire for a sweet savour" unto the Lord. (Leviticus 3: 11, 16; 4: 31)

» *To be Continued.*

1. Baxter Dmitry, *Pope Francis Says His Words 'Overrule The Bible'* (Los Angeles, CA: The People's Voice, Inc., March 18, 2018), <http://yournewswire.com/pope-francis-overrule-bible/>
2. Steven Brill, *My Generation Was Supposed To Level America's Playing Field. Instead, We Rigged It For Ourselves* (New York, NY: Time, Inc., May 28, 2018), 32. <http://time.com/5280446/baby-boomer-generation-america-steve-brill/>
3. Jay P. Green, Sr., *The Interlinear Bible / Greek-English New Testament, vol. 4* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1985), 534-535.
4. Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1911), 33.

\* All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version unless otherwise indicated.

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