

"Watchman, what of the night?"

"The hour has come, the hour is striking and striking at you,
the hour and the end!" Eze. 7:6 (Moffatt)



"The Wall of Eternity"

Have You Been "Peeping" Behind?

In the last issue of "Watchman, What of the Night?" we called attention to a publication written by an Australian in response to a request from Elder Robert J. Wieland. An ex-Roman Catholic, he chose to write under the pen name, "Swift Messenger." In "Appendix C" of his publication, *The Masterpiece of Deception*, he directs a message to Stump, Carter, and Clayton. He suggests to them, "I believe you have tried to peep behind 'the wall of Eternity,' when silence is golden in coming to conclusions on the origins of the Godhead." Since quoting this paragraph in the last WWN I have been mulling over in my mind the concepts of "peeping" and the "wall of eternity" and find them intriguing.

In Genesis 1:1 it reads in the Hebrew — "In beginning, created Gods the heavens and the earth" — no article, just "in beginning." Likewise in the Gospel of John, it reads (in the Greek text) "In beginning was the Word." If "the" had been used in either verse there would have been no eternity. With the second eternity, there is a beginning prefaced by the cross and the resurrection. Jesus attested to this when He told John on the Isle of Patmos that He "was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen" (Rev. 1:18). Further, if Genesis 2:1 should include the whole universe, then how much had gone before? The mind is staggered. We creatures of time cannot perceive "eternity." It was Zophar who asked, "Canst thou by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? (Job 11:7).

We do not need to speculate at this point, although it could be done. It might be best to note what information God in the Scriptures has permitted to come from behind the "wall of eternity." First, God does have a Son. Jesus Christ is the Son of God. We need to distinguish between Christ, the Son of God of the Spirit ["God is Spirit" John 4:24] and who became that Son by decree (Ps. 2:7); and Jesus, the Son of God of the flesh who became that Son by the incarnation (Luke 1:35). Could it be that that decree was a factor in the enmity Lucifer had for Christ even as the incarnation is a factor in the salvation of man? (Rom. 3:25-26).

The Bible reveals that at some point in ages past, God created Lucifer. The record reads: "Thou wast perfect in all thy ways from the day that thou wast created till iniquity was found in thee" (Ezc. 28:15). But that Creator was God's Son for "without Him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3). Further, the concept of the sanctuary, a Most Holy place with the attendant Cherubim was introduced by his creation for the record reads, "Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth, and I have set thee so" (Ezc. 28:14). Then, taking it one step farther: this truth involving God and His Son by decree and by the incarnation was committed in sacred trust as a part of the Everlasting (Gr. "age-long") Gospel. And that Sanctuary message does include Daniel 8:14.

The Scripture does state the fact that there are myriads of the heavenly host even "thousand thousands ... and ten thousand times ten thousand (Dan. 7:10; Rev. 5:11). Were they created at one time, or were they created as the universe expanded? We are not told. But we do know that with the entrance of sin, they received a new assignment: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Note they are "spirit" beings, not beings of the "flesh." The Author of eternal salvation even had at His call, "more than twelve legions of angels" (Mat. 26:53).

Only a few of these "ministering spirits do we know by name - Gabriel, Lucifer, and Michael, as Christ was known to the heavenly host prior to Bethlehem.

The book of Daniel reveals an interesting working relationship between Gabriel and Michael. That relationship intensifies as the prophetic revelations given to Daniel expand. By the river Ulai Daniel received a vision which climaxed in the daily, the transgression of desolation and the 2300 days, the time for the beginning of the cleansing of the sanctuary. He hears a man's voice coming from over the waters of the Ulai - "Gabriel make this man to understand the vision" (8:16). In the process, Daniel faints and "was sick certain days" (8:27). Upon recovery he studied the prophecies given to Jeremiah, and realizing how close he stood to the completion of the fulfillment of the end times allotted for the "desolations of Jerusalem" he set his face in prayer and supplication to God (9:2-20). Gabriel returned and detailed some of the parts of the vision not previously explained.

Other things were happening. Daniel fasted for three full weeks. Gabriel sought to move the Persian ruler toward the fulfilling of the prophecy given to Jeremiah. He resisted Gabriel. Michael was called to come to his assistance (10:12-13). He came, and in the conversation between Gabriel and Daniel are revealed details as to how heaven functions. Read Daniel 10: 12-21. The close association between these Two and the knowledge shared by them is revealed by Gabriel - "There is *none* that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince."

Footnote: If you wish your faith strengthened, read carefully Daniel 9:4-20 - Daniel's prayer. Time yourself. Read it at a pace as you would pray. Once you have finished, check your time. Then read what Gabriel told Daniel: "At the *beginning* of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved" (verse 23). Heaven is but a prayer away!