

## The Lord's Little Turtledove



David Wilkerson June 1, 1984

Please forgive my references to personal struggles, but I must tell you of some recent troubles we've endured to share with you the lessons learned from it all. My family and I have just gone through the most severe testing of our lives.

Sickness came at us from all sides. Our oldest son had to come home from Detroit to recuperate from a debilitating illness that left him with a very low white blood count. His baby son Ashley, our grandson, became ill also and was bleeding slightly from the bowels. Brandon, another grandson, cried violently for hours until the doctor discovered an inner ear infection. It was heart-rending to see him suffer and not be able to tell us where he hurt. Our two daughters also were afflicted. My brother, who works with me, discovered he had a spot on his lung and was taken to surgery. Gwen was rushed to the hospital in severe pain and was diagnosed as having Lupus disease.

In the midst of all the pain and suffering, a maniac con-artist attempted to swindle our ministry. In our continuing efforts to cut back, we offered a house for sale. Boasting he was a multimillionaire, this swindler gave us a down payment check on the house. He told us he was a former CIA agent from the narcotics division and needed to move his family in immediately to "safe house" them. Out of compassion we permitted them to move in. His check bounced. A replacement check bounced also. Meanwhile, he filled the house with expensive furniture, and all those checks bounced.

We discovered the man was swindling people out of homes and savings accounts — and was possibly dangerous. We learned that the FBI knew of his devious activities. It was very traumatic the next week as we attempted to evict him and recover the furniture for dealers who were furious. Fearing for my family's security, I secluded them in a motel while we moved the swindler out. It was a frightening experience. The man was never with the CIA; he was a pathological liar, cheat, and big time swindler. Also, he was penniless. We had befriended him, prayed for him, and had shown him great kindness — and he was mocking us all the while. He is now facing federal charges and will most likely spend a lot of time in prison. God delivered us from his schemes.

In the midst of all the sickness, the suffering and mental anguish, I shut myself in my prayer closet, fell on my face before God and wept. I found myself crying out — "Oh God, I'm in a mess! What's happening? What's going on?"

I was confused. I thought to myself, "I take a year off to pray and seek the Lord with all my heart, and end up in the biggest mess in all my lifetime."

So Many Are Suffering Today

I know my family and I are not the only ones suffering and enduring great afflictions. From all across the country I receive heart-rending letters from godly Christians who are right now going through the greatest testing and trying they've ever known.

Never have so many come down with cancer. Never have there been so many hurt by divorce, with mates abandoning homes and giving up on marriages. Never have so many been burdened down with financial problems. Never has there been such a time of trial, confusion, pain, and deep hurt. God's most beloved children are going through refining fires. How true it is that "many are the afflictions of the righteous." Also true is the fact that "the

Lord delivereth them out of them all."  
"Oh, God, We Need Mercy — And Grace"

I began to pray that very prayer — "God, You told us to come boldly to Your throne of grace to obtain mercy and grace to help in our time of need. We need mercy." Is there any hope for any of us in these trying times without mercy from the Lord?

It was my own carelessness that brought on the difficulties with the swindler. I should have been more prudent and cautious. Much of the suffering could have been avoided. Still I knew God was somehow using the experience to teach me more of His loving mercy and grace.

For a fleeting moment I questioned the Lord about the trouble and turmoil. Why did He allow a swindler to put me through such a trial, when I had prayed so fervently for divine direction? Why so much sickness and pain in my family? Why the physical pain in my own body?

What do we do as believers when the enemy comes in like a flood — when we find ourselves in a terrible mess? Why do those who are so deeply devoted to Christ have to endure such unusual testing?

I don't have all the answers. I do know that the righteous do suffer. I do know that many godly people who are reading this message are hurting and maybe wondering why they must endure so much pain and suffering. It is when you take your place in the holy of holies that you discover testings unknown to those in the outer court. Turtledoves!

God kept me through all these sufferings by showing me David's secret hope. He was lamenting and complaining, wondering why God's anger was smoking against him. He called on God to "pluck out thy hand from thy bosom." It appeared to him that the enemies of God were taking control. In his despair David prayed, "O deliver not the soul of the TURTLEDOVE unto the multitude of the wicked..." (Ps. 74:19).

Like David, I began to see myself as a little turtledove — surrounded by the snares and traps of the wicked. I prayed, "O Lord, I'm just your little turtledove, a frail, tiny bird — Don't turn me over to he schemes of the wicked. Deliver me from all these traps Satan has surrounded my path with!"

How it did encourage me, in my most trying, hurting times, to see myself as His little love bird — his devoted turtledove, resting on His promise to keep me out of the hands of the wicked. Like turtledoves do, I mourned for the presence of my Beloved.

I pictured Christ coming to me in the form of a dove — a turtledove — His Holy Spirit — revealing to me His constant love and continual care. How unspeakable that such a great and majestic God should condescend to relate to my needs as a turtledove. Did He not descend on Christ at the baptismal waters as a dove? A turtledove.

Turtledoves have been noticed by poets in all ages as emblems of love and faithfulness. Shakespeare wrote:

"When arm in arm they both came swiftly running, Like a pair of loving turtledoves" (Henry VI. Part I).

Also, "So turtledoves pair that never mean to part..." (Troilus and Cressida, Act III).

Turtledoves have but one mate, and they are faithful to each other. They mourn the absence of one another. So it is most comforting to discover David likening us to these devoted turtledoves.

Child of God — are you going through difficult times? Is there suffering in your home? Do you hurt? Are you confused at times because of the severity of it all? Remember — you are the Lord's little turtledove — and He will never turn you over to the wicked one. He will deliver you from every snare of the enemy. He will show you how devoted He is to you in your hour of need. He is there beside you, at all times, as a dove — whispering, sharing His love with you.

Christ and you! Christ and me! Turtledoves! Let the floods roll in! Let the pangs of death and pain prick me! Let the snares and traps surround me! I am the Lord's little turtledove and I have His loving promise to keep me — deliver me — and forever love me.

Solomon, speaking of Christ, said, "His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, beautifully set" (Song of Solomon 5:12). And of the church, the Lord's beloved, it is written, "My dove, my undefiled one is but one..." (Song of Solomon 6:9). We are but one in Christ — His Dove — a turtledove.

The sparrow falls to the ground, but not the turtledove. His little turtledove is the apple of His eye, kept in the hollow of His hand — safe and secure in His love. Best of all, the Lord has delivered us out of our troubles and proved His everlasting faithfulness to us. We have come through it all rejoicing and in full rest and trust in His power and love. The enemy could not hurt us.

Violence — Key to Judgment (A dream about the security of God's people when violence erupts)

I wish to relate to you a vivid and frightening dream I had recently. Although I do not put much stock in dreams, and certainly do not see any theological meaning in them, nevertheless the Bible does speak of old men dreaming dreams. This dream so affected me I awoke dazed and shaken. It remains with me and has caused me to search God's Word about its meaning.

Before I share my dream I must warn the reader that no vision or dream can have any meaning whatsoever if it is contrary to the Word of God. If there is any meaning at all to a dream, it could only be in conjunction with what is already revealed in God's Word. Most of my dreams, most of all dreams, are meaningless. This particular one, for me at least is an exception.

The Dream

I was walking the streets of a large city during twilight hours. All who passed by seemed to be dressed in punk rock clothes and appeared to be swishing about as homosexuals and lesbians.

Suddenly, violence erupted everywhere. The entire city went berserk. Everyone was armed with clubs, knives, chains, baseball bats, guns and every other conceivable kind of weapon. People went wild, swinging at each other, knocking each other down with bats and clubs. Motorcycle gangs were speeding about, swinging heavy chains, knocking passersby to the ground.

Not a person stood by. All were enraged, all were cursing, fighting, kicking, swinging. Their eyes were on fire with hatred and fear.

The animals were caught up in the spirit of violence. Dogs barked and began to bite one another — cats were screaming and scratching. A dozen or so police horses began to prance about, kicking and neighing, and ran pell-mell toward me. I jumped over a fence narrowly escaping their oncoming charge.

I stood behind the fence, hidden, watching in horror at the unbelievable scenes of violence, blood and killing before me. No one was gambling or drinking. No one was committing adultery or fornication. There were no drugs, no homosexual cruising. It was all violence — everybody was swept away by a spirit of wild abandonment.

I remember crying out to God — "Oh, Lord — this is Sodom! Everyone has gone berserk! You destroyed the earth for this once! Judgment must come now — soon!" The sense of impending judgment was overwhelming. The demonic spirit of violence was so oppressive I could hardly breathe.

I began to run out of the city, as fast as my feet could carry me. I was thinking, "I've got to get off Satan's territory. This is his final hour of triumph among his slaves. Satan is in full control of his people. The devil has finally exposed himself and his spirit has erupted in the hearts of his children. I must get out!"

Once out of the city I felt like Lot escaping from Sodom. The city was being burned down, sacked by violence, murder, and bloodshed. The screaming, the shrieks of hate and pain became dimmer as I got farther away.

I came to a ledge and realized I was on a high plateau. Looking down, I saw a great valley with a river running through it. To my amazement I saw the valley and surrounding hillsides covered with an army of robed people — all in perfect rank — marching toward and into the river to be baptized.

My first impression was, "Lord these must be Moonies or some other cult because they are not dressed in white." But then I heard the sweet refrain of a multitude humming the tune — "Hallelujah." Then I knew they were God's people — not yet glorified, but preparing themselves.

What a contrast it was. Behind me was chaos, confusion, fear, violence, hopelessness, satanic havoc. Before me, a confident quiet, assured army in perfect order — going into the waters of praise and worship. This quiet, restful army was so at peace — so unmoved by the violence and hell nearby. Not one soldier broke rank. Not one moved from his place. It was all perfect order — total peace — and heavenly quiet. It was an awesome sight.

I looked back at the burning, seething city and felt a hand pushing me. A small voice said, "Go down to the river and cry aloud, "Violence is the key to judgment. Violence is the key to His coming. The hour has come. This is it!"

I awakened with that cry on my lips — "Violence is the key to judgment! Violence is the final sign of His coming. It's all about to come to a head. Violence in full fury is about to erupt."

I sat up in bed and could not get my bearings. Was I still dreaming? Where was I? How real it was. Unlike any other dream in my lifetime. I staggered out of bed, still not fully conscious. I shook myself — awakened — but could not shake off this dream as I had so many others. After two weeks, I still cannot shake it off. The sights and sounds of satanic violence will always be with me. The sight of an army secure and at a peace in the midst of an outbreak of violence and confusion will never be forgotten.

What Does It Mean?

A lady heard me share this dream and came up to me later with what she called "an interpretation." I stopped her. It needs no interpretation. It was simply God's way of waking my heart to the reality of what is happening right before our eyes.

Violence is the key — the final sign — just before divine judgment. So it was in the days of Noah, just prior to the flood.

"The earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me, for the earth is filled with violence through them: and behold, I will destroy them with the earth" (Genesis 6:11–13).

With the exception of Noah and his family, the entire human race had corrupted itself and was given over to licentiousness and lawlessness. Mankind had become cruel, uncaring, and covetous. Wicked men became exhibitionists, flaunting their degeneracy and corruption before the very face of God. The more God by His Spirit warned them, the more they intensified their violent appetites. The end of all flesh came the moment lust and passion broke out into the full flame of violence.

Violence Is Lust in Full Flame

Every work of the flesh, when it is in full flame, breaks out into violence. Consider the seventeen works of the flesh mentioned by Paul in Galatians 5:19–21. What is adultery and fornication in full flame — but sado-masochism, a horrible form of violence. Witchcraft in full flame is murderous sacrifice and bloodletting such as witnessed around the idolatrous altars of Baal on Mt. Carmel. Wrath, strife, seditions, hatred, drunkenness, and such like, are all forms of violence — all of which are uncontrollable when in full flame.

What about abortion? Is that not violence in its most hideous form? What about the 55 wars in progress worldwide? What is it in Ireland, Iran, Lebanon — but violence? It is religious hatred in full flame.

Consider Sodom. God did not send judgment when sodomy was rampant. Nor did judgment fall when the wicked crowds lusted after the visiting angels. Judgment came when the lust of those Sodomites broke out into the full flame of violence. They went wild, trying to tear the house of Lot apart — preparing to violently rape and kill. It was at that moment God moved in to destroy.

Where would you say America is right now? Would you say that our lusts and passions have burst out into full flame? More than one million children were murdered last year in this country.

The day is not far off when those who truly love the Lord Jesus Christ will have to rid their homes of television because of the unspeakable violence and bloodshed. Most Hollywood movies being produced today no longer feature sex and infidelity — they've gone far beyond that, to senseless violence. A movie starlet told an audience that she was "turned on not by sex, but by blood and violence." The audience wildly applauded.

Right now, in major cities, porno theaters feature violence almost exclusively. Jaded men and women sit in these filthy theaters getting thrills watching animals being mutilated. The big underground sensation throughout the nation is human sacrifices and mutilations filmed in Africa and Asia. One who knew told me that well to do people pay high prices for private showings of these murderous films. They are sexually excited by blood and death.

Beloved, what has happened to this society, that multitudes now flock to movies that glorify bloodshed and violence? What happened to decency, to old-fashioned values, to tender love scenes, hand holding, walking in the moonlight? The crowds now hiss and hoot at such things — they now thirst for the demonic, the ugly, the macabre. It has to be demon possession, or else how could so many be turned over to such hellish, bizarre activities? Do You Turn Off the Violence?

Do you sit before your TV set and drink in the shootings, the knifings, the bloodshed and murder? Are you growing accustomed to it all — is it slowly wearing you down? Or do you put your foot down and say — "Enough! My eyes will no longer be polluted with such demonic filth. No more viewing of violence in this House!"

Sadly, most Christians are no longer turning it off. They are growing hard to it. That is why so many of God's people are becoming insensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit — they no longer feel the Spirit's grief over violence and cruelty.

Could it be that the spirit of Sodom is already upon us, blinding us — putting us to sleep so we will not discern that last hour before judgment? Are we getting calloused, hard to it?

We are becoming more and more like Belshazzar and his crowd, who partied and drank through their last night on earth. While the Medes and Persians crept in unawares to violently plunder and kill, the king and his court drugged themselves insensitive with alcohol. Judgment was right at the door and they knew it not. Are we also unaware?

Have you seen any of the video tapes now being produced by rock groups? It appears mostly on cable stations and it is unbelievable. It is a montage of sick violence, senseless bloodiness, demonic costumes, weird and bizarre actions — incubated in hell itself.

John Denver, the singer, warned in so many words, "Don't people realize what is happening? Don't they realize it is all violence and injurious rage? Why aren't the Americans people doing something about it? It's getting out of hand."

I dread to think what it will be like a few years from now, when all the children who have flooded their minds with all these violent sights and sounds become adults. Violence is becoming a way of life. There is a loss of any sense of right or wrong — and there is less respect for life. Think of what our children now have to live with — a constant barrage of killing, rape, child abuse, mass murders, suicide, and vicious hate. Without God's mercy and grace, the future is hopeless.

A Prophecy

Soon the violence that is seething just below the surface will erupt into riots and much bloodshed. A horrible confrontation is inevitable between unconverted blacks and Jews. The black Muslim leader from Chicago has been enraging black people, calling on them to rise up and kill Jews and whites. He threatened to kill a Chicago reporter. The press seems afraid to stand up to all the threats.

Mid-day soap operas will begin featuring violence, punk values, incest, rape, and murder. They will no longer be about broken marriages, infidelity and adultery. Instead there will be scenes of bloodshed, vicious killings, violent rapes, and knifings. It has already begun.

Teenagers will rampage and give vent to their pent-up frustrations. Have you not been reading all the reports of children killing parents? And, in cities and towns across the nation, our teenagers are committing suicide in alarming numbers.

I have been warning of this soon-to-come outbreak of violence, rioting and plundering for a long time. My warnings seem to fall on deaf ears. But mark my words — we are about to witness an eruption of horrible violence such as never before seen in this nation. Multitudes of godless Americans will be given over to a spirit of violence and will be driven to wild abandonment.

The cup of iniquity is full. The full flame of violence will cause it to overflow — forcing God to send judgment, lest Satan destroy society. God will not permit Satan to bring total anarchy to the world until the judgment is set. Praise God for Peaceful Saints

In my dream I saw an army that refused to break rank — for in the midst of all the wickedness and cruel violence, they were unperturbed. They were going down into the living waters of praise and worship, coming out on the other side of the river with perfect peace and rest. They are the redeemed of the Lord who have been given a peace that passeth all understanding.

"The meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of grace" (Ps. 37:11).

Joel saw an army of mighty men. He said, "And they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks" (Joel 2:7).

God's people will not break rank, nor run in fear, because they know they are secure under the precious blood of the Lamb. They know that in spite of all the violence and wrath of men the body of Christ on earth is in excellent health and is growing stronger every day.

While all that is earthly is being shaken and world governments are spinning out of control, the true church of Christ is solid and unmovable.

The specter of devastating violence and potential destruction has robbed mankind of its peace and security — while at the same time God is bringing His people into their greatest hour of rest and safety. While the ungodly cry for peace and safety and never find it — God's chosen are now possessing great peace and perfect security.

God's people who rest in Him can say with David the Psalmist —

"If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now many Israel say; If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us:

Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: Then the proud waters had gone over our soul.

Blessed be the Lord who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of fowlers: the snare is a broken, and we are escaped.

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth" (Ps. 124).  
Beware!

While hearing and seeing the daily news filled with horror and violence, do not for a moment let that mar your vision of a glorious church rising up in the midst of the ruin and confusion — to take dominance and authority.

A holy, forgiven, rested body, holding to Christ the head, day by day is being revealed in clearer measure. It is coming into clear view, this victorious body, flexing its spiritual muscle, threatening the very powers of Satan.

The prognosis for the body of Christ is unbelievably glorious! Nothing this ungodly world does can adversely affect it or change its purpose. The body of Christ is growing stronger in spite of all the violence and corruption. His body has a history all its own, apart from outside of all that is in and out of the world.

You need not put much stock in my dream, but you do need to hear God's word concerning the coming judgment. We are called to watch and pray, lest we fall into modern temptations. Be aware, alert, and shut off all viewing of violence. But still rejoice — be glad in the Lord that He has a people growing in holiness and love — unmoved and unaffected by the violent spirit of this age. The violent gates of hell shall never prevail against the body of Jesus Christ — His resurrected church.

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