

NIGHT TERRORS... (Pentecostal Minister)

1-28-74

Then little Jim was overtaken with night terrors, heavy sweating, frightening dreams... It troubled me greatly. I sought the aid of a local doctor. I also set out to trace the reason for this development, and learned that Mrs. M., who together with her sons, ministered the Pentecostal church, was taking him to her church regularly even when they held meetings in other towns, and that Jim was ministering during all or part of the service, and attracting a gratifying attendance at the meetings because of his tender years and excellent familiarity with the written word as well as his remarkable insight into unwritten matters.

Little Jim was not usually afraid of anything whatsoever or anybody, either, and when he complained of the horrible snake that invaded his dreams, my suspicions of the churchmen grew by leaps and bounds. Remembering that the devil was first said to have despoiled the Garden of Eden whilst traveling in the garb of a serpent and putting this "wild tale" for humankind almost brought the species (snakes) to extinction, in their ignorant animosity and nameless fears. I was not exactly in a mood to cultivate religionists but did accept an invitation from the ministers of the Pentecostal church to attend one of their meetings.

Midway of the service, when the musicians and the followers had reached the pinnacle of hysteria and the noise was getting at me to the point where I feared I'd never live through it, the lady minister grabbed me in an iron grip and yelled in my ear: "Praise God! This is how it's going to be in Heaven!"

...And I yelled back, "May God forbid that Heaven ever be my destiny if that is true!"

She fell away from me as if she'd been knee deep in a load of corruption.

I decided to question my good neighbor, Mrs. Kennedy and made tracks to her house to do so. It seemed that despite her disappointment at little Jim's preference for the pentecost over the Nazarenes (her church) she had not felt within her rights to question it, since she thought it had been arranged with my knowledge and consent.

Meantime, the finger of suspicion continued to point to the biblical narratives wherein Satan was endowed with stupefying powers, etc., and credited with inconceivable antics, all of which I defied and refused to let him go with Mrs. M. when she called to pick him up for services.

The closest encounter with Satan was when I looked into her eyes as she raved about my being devil-possessed, and that mine was a "dangerous" position. I explained to her that

Beelzabub would use more judgment than "earthlings" and not be so foolish as to mess with me when I was that mad.

Young James went into a caper and promptly became an agnostic, refusing to maintain his sunday service in his little church in the upper story of the garage, neglecting to place fresh flowers on his altar, and my spirits struck a new low -- but the night terrors let go of him and likewise the night sweats.

I felt vastly relieved when little Jim's agnosticism passed, and when I thanked the doctor for faithfully standing by, he said, "I have been tempted to tell you before now that the bible makes no sense, and neither does this stomping and jumping in the churches. In fact, it is very harmful to a sensitive child such as Jim."

I said, "but HE makes plenty of sense... and he will resolve 'the mess' so that it makes sense, also!"

The following sunday Jim held services and all of the village boys attended in a group. The girls came later, and I eavesdropped on the service.

Jim kept warning little George Fudge to stop disturbing the meeting with silly giggles for he would not permit him to disrespect God's house. On the third warning, he whaled little George! I fully expected little George's big brother to in turn whale young Jim... It was his custom to uphold his brother, right or wrong, but when little George sobbed out his story to his brother, he received no sympathy. The brother said, "He is right, and he warned you three times! Maybe sometime you will get some sense."

Addendum to NIGHT TERRORS.....

Lynetta said that the pentecostal woman was having little Jim preach the services and he was largely responsible for their getting large offerings -- it was because of this ability of his to get the large offerings, and do the healings that she was upset when Lynetta pulled little Jim from the services.

BB-18-2-14