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"VIA DOLOROSA'S 'VILLAINOUS' RETURN"



Dear ***Friends & Family,***

[2/17] I wrote extensively in a recent newsletter re: the end of *Immanuel Church's* 16-year production of **VIA DOLOROSA**. I transparently shared the struggles this "end" produced in me. I related how very much I wanted it to continue & yet the last thing I wanted to do was to try to perpetuate something our Lord wanted to die. For months I kept laying it at His feet, clinging to Phil.2:13 that He would work in me to will & to do of His good pleasure-not mine. When I prayed I would tell Him how much I loved doing it-almost as much as camps-& yet, that I wanted His will done in the matter-again, not mine. Well, I had the idea of maybe doing a much-scaled-down version of Via, which would only include 3 of the 11 rooms/epi-sodes that comprised Via Dolorosa. I chose ***The Sanhedrin, Herod's Palace, & The Fortress Antonia***. These 3 rooms showcased the 3 "**Villains of Via**" as I have called them for years, vis, ***Caiaphas, Herod Antipas, & Pontius Pilate***-the 3 evil men the Sovereign Lord used to orchestrate the death of His Son for the sins of His people. I shared my idea with a few churches in the area. All 3 had interest. Two were so interested that I feared I might have a "Via D" bidding war on my hands!

😬 Actually, I strove to make it happen at both churches. However, one had to back out. Hence, "Villains of Via" will be performed at **ParkView AG Church** in Newark, DE: Here is the promo video. I hope you & yours can make it to one of the performances. <https://youtu.be/BhAkOwzV7C8> Also, there is an attached email info flyer below.

"THE 1ST (CENTURY) GREAT AWAKENING"



Last month the elders of **Elim Fellowship**, the organization with which I have been ordained since 2003 & associated with since 1976 had a Zoom meeting open to all of its credential holders. Of the many elders who shared, I was personally delighted to see & hear **Paul Johansson**, whom I have written about many times in my newsletters through the years. I've often referred to him as the most influential man in my life in the Lord. I'm sure this is the testimony of many other Elim family members. I had not heard "Bro Jo", as I have affectionately called him since 1976, share re: the things of the Lord in a long time. It was particularly interesting to hear him share his burden for the need of another "Awakening". He referred to the **1st & 2nd Great Awakenings** in America-the 1st under Jonathan Edwards & the 2nd under Charles Finney. **"AWAKENING VERSUS REVIVAL"** One unique aspect of Bro Jo's word was the differentiation he made between an "awakening" & a "revival". He said the latter occurs within the walls of the Church. The former happens in society as a whole. Few would disagree there has been a literal onslaught of wickedness un-leashed in America in these times. Deep & widespread political corruption, insurrectionists in the name of "virtue" burning down & pillaging entire cities, rampant "banging down the door" militantly aggressive, sexual perversion, many Christian conservative establishments either caving to & compromising with the secular worldview, & how can the **Covid-19** debacle not be mentioned? Yes, I can see why Bro Jo said an "awakening" is needed. "There is no fear of God before their eyes" [Rom.3:18]. I couldn't help but immediately think about recent biblical study I had done while listening to Bro Jo. Particularly, it was study I had done during the Christmas season, where I witnessed a "1st Century" Great Awakening.

“MORE THAN A PROPHET-MORE THAN A SON”



All of you are familiar with the events surrounding the conception & birth of **John the Baptist**. We hear about them every Christmas season & rightly so. However, this year my heart was deeply struck re: this portion of Scripture & a longing was ignited within me like I hadn't had in a long time. It was a longing for what Bro Jo called & defined a "Great Awakening". Things in Judea & Jerusalem were going along as they always had for many years-regular, routine & ritual service at the Temple for the priest Zechariah. He did what he always did. Though such religious ritual is very hazardous & dangerous to the practitioner as it is always the tendency of human nature to treat the holy things lightly when exposed to them for any considerable length of time. Yet, the Scripture is clear-Zechariah & his wife Elizabeth were **blameless & righteous in the eyes of the Lord** [Lk.1:6]. We know from the text that they had been praying for a child-& not only a child-but a *male* child. They wanted a son. And they had been praying for one for a very long time. They were *both* old & advanced in years & Elizabeth was *barren* [vs.7]. Yet, while on a routine priestly duty [notice *Zechariah* was chosen "by lot"-the Lord truly does determine its every decision even though the lot is cast by men [Pr.16:33]. This was the beginning of events that would usher in this 1st century Great Awakening. God was on the move.



Next, an angel is sent from Heaven—from standing right in front of the throne of God—to Jerusalem—to Zechariah—in the Temple. And this wasn't any angel—it was **Gabriel**. Although many call him an archangel, the Scriptures do not. He may be, but the Scriptures only label one angel of the countless myriads of them an archangel [technically, they are not “countless”, as all of the angels were created at the same time & do not propagate. Hence, although there are at least 100 million of them [Dan. 7:10], they are a finite number]. And that would be “**Michael**”, the Prince of Israel. Back to Gabriel. He tells Zechariah that “his petition has been heard”. Remember, he & Elizabeth were surely praying for a son *for decades*! When God moves He always does so in His time. And when God moves it is always more than we expect. All Zechariah & Elizabeth prayed for was a “son”. But the God Who does exceedingly abundantly above all we could ask or think [Eph.3:20] not only gave them a son, but gave them the forerunner of **the Messiah**! And, He gave them the greatest man ever born of a woman in the dispensation of the Law & The Prophets! I highly doubt that possibility ever entered their minds! I love it that despite Zechariah's unbelief at the announcement, the Lord did not take back His gift & go find someone else, but **STILL** gave Zechariah the child! Yes—the priest was struck down [& dumb!]-but not destroyed!

"IT'S A BEAUTIFUL DAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD"



When the promised child came-you know the story. They asked what he was to be named. The elderly priest, now a new papa, asked for a tablet. When he wrote, "His name is John", his dumbness ended. He declared the praises of God. This is what I have been leading up to, Beloved. Out of nowhere, after a very long period of time, God hears the petition of His people-& He *appears*-via an angel, via a miraculous birth, via a miracle of an articulate old man being struck dumb for nine months & then immediately being given back his speech. For what it's worth-with all that has happened in our country in the past year & the huge travesty of justice along with the floodgates of wickedness being flown wide open in recent months, I really don't believe God has spoken yet-nor moved [Though, of course, He's *always* moving!]. I really don't. Oh, I know-countless folks have all kinds of words, dreams, prophecies, "revelations", & insights from God-but I just don't believe the Lord has given a clear word yet what He is up to. The wicked are prospering. Any attempts legally to check their schemes are all thwarted. It's almost as if the Lord is behind this. He has to be. BUT, I DO believe He is definitely judging America right now, AND cleaning up & sifting His Church!. Be sure of this Beloved, when God really moves, His people know it! And in this scriptural case, so does *the world*! That's why we desperately need an awakening the kind Bro Jo spoke of!. And what is the immediate end-result when God finally DOES move in such a clear & dramatic way?? "...**fear** came on **ALL** those [do you notice "ALL"?] who *lived around them* [Lk.1:65]. [Beloved? If there is one thing I know about the American populace in general-they don't fear God. They live their comfortable American-dream daily lives. They go about their business & pleasure. Every day is a day of ignoring God. Yet-when God moves-**FEAR** comes upon EVERYONE!]; and **ALL** these matters were being talked about in the **entire** hill country of Judah. **ALL** who heard them **KEPT THEM IN MIND** [Lk.1:66]-as an evangelist few things grieve & terrify me more than how little we remember of God's Word preached the Sunday before! Few things grieve me more than when right after church I hear God's people talking about that day's "game" being played, etc. or other worldly things. Yet-you can be sure when GOD moves, people cannot but help keep talking about it! Again, notice it says **ALL KEPT THEM IN MIND**. That is an awakening. Yes, as Bro Jo said in his Zoom share, this is what we need.

“GOD PASSES BY THE POTENTATE-& PICKS THE PRIEST”



One last thought along these lines, Beloved, & I will finish. I absolutely love what our Lord does in His infinite wisdom & plan. As He is about to inaugurate His long-awaited “invasion” of His redemptive plan into human history via the conception of His Son & His Son’s forerunner, He only mentions in passing the most famous, influential, & powerful man in the land: King Herod the Great. “In the days of Herod, king of Judea” is all He by His Spirit had Luke write concerning this very powerful, tyrannical, & fearsome potentate. Herod was the constant talk of everyone’s lips. He was easily the most popular man in Judea. He ruled with an iron hand. He was guilty of murder on several counts: his father-in-law, several of his ten wives, & two of his own sons. He was also infamous for his ambitious building projects, which of course meant heavy taxes for his citizens. And yet-& yet, isn’t it just like God to mention this mighty, menacing, monarch only in passing & instead give His focus & attention to a lowly Jewish priest who faithfully serves in the Temple? Yes. That is just like God. [“In the days of Herod the king”] (yes-I deliberately put his name in brackets, as that’s what God did too!)...”THERE WAS A PRIEST NAMED ZECHARIAH... RIGHTEOUS IN THE EYES OF THE LORD...WALKING BLAMELESSLY IN ALL OF THE REQUIREMENTS & COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD...PERFORMING HIS PRIESTLY SERVICE BEFORE GOD...” [Lk.1:5-8] [Emphasis mine?? I should say not! Emphasis GOD’S!] I love how God does that. In these terrible & tumultuous times, it is so easy to trust in politicians, power, & politics. But look at what God does-He goes to, He appears to-*The Church*-to His servants-to instigate &

implement His plan. May it be so. May He grant us yet another Great Awakening. I concur with Bro Jo. Amen.



***Caboose! Commentary Corner:** [Our daughter Laura once said she'd love to have my old Bibles when I passed for all of the notes I have written in them over the decades. This was quite humbling to say the least, especially coming from one of your own children. Hence, I've decided to post each month random notes/comments from Bibles I have studied from: "Because God is slow to punish, men are quick to sin." [Ecc.8:11] [M.R.G. 2/5/2021]



Caboose! On the Loose!

Looking Out for the Little Ones

Ministry/Events for [MARCH](#) & those not listed in last month's newsletter:

**Feb. 12: New Covenant Community Church, Audubon, NJ: monthly Elim Fellowship mtg.
[Zoom]**

Feb. 14: Ogletown Baptist Church, Newark, DE: baby dedications-prayer for parents

Feb. 15: Parkview AG Church, Newark, DE: "Villains of Via" dramatic production leaders' mtg.

Feb. 28: Immanuel Church, Wilmington, DE: worship team drummer

March 1: Parkview AG Church, Newark, DE: "Villains of Via" Coordinators' mtg.

March 2: Petra Church, New Holland, PA: hsc board mtg./Network pastors' mtg.

March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31: CAB!Talk video production & posting

March 7, 14, 21, 28: Chip Sunday Show production & posting

March 31: Parkview Assembly of God Church, Newark, DE: "Villains of Via" opening night



*Michael is an ordained [Elim Fellowship](#) itinerant Stateside missionary & is also licensed to preach the gospel by [Immanuel Church](#), Wilmington, DE. [Caboose!](#) is also an affiliate ministry of [The Hopewell Network of Churches](#). For 14 years he served on various local church staffs as their children's pastor. Since 2000 Kim & he have lived by faith, having no set salary, retirement, etc. to speak of. Yet-this is their calling at this season of their lives. Michael preaches God's Word & systematic theology, using both drama & visual aids, to all age groups, from children to senior citizens, either separately or combined. To help support this work [any amount no matter how small is greatly appreciated!], please make all tax-deductible gifts payable to: Elim Fellowship, c/o 1703 Dalton Rd., Lima, NY 14485, marking it "Preferred-Michael Robert Guertin" or you may click on the link below to give directly. Any gift no matter how small would be greatly appreciated! Thank you! [click here](#)

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