

When Hell Rejoices - But Heaven Triumphs

by Stella Paterson

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."
(Ephesians 6:11-13)

This is a satirical look into the spirit realm but could it possibly be accurate?

Hell - the place for the devil and his "ministers". But what are they really up to as they rule the darkness and carry out their demonic activities, traveling back and forth between their place in the air and their job on earth? Let's take a look.

The crowds are gathering. The air is "electric" with excitement. Manny Grim, the great televangelist has come to town. The lineups are long, as the signs-and-wonders-seekers wait to finally take their seat in the large coliseum.

At the same time, a call has echoed through the air for all ministers of darkness to come to the long-awaited event. The devil beckons them to a meeting where he gives out his orders as to what they must do among the crowd of humans gathered. He reminds them that it is harvest time and they are about to confine many souls in the kingdom of darkness. They are so excited. Past events such as this one have produced great results for their kingdom. Their desire is to please their master and this is their opportunity to strut their stuff.

Back at the coliseum, the throngs of seekers are singing songs, watching for the great evangelist to step on stage and wow them. Many among the crowd have never been to an event such as this. They came at the invitation of a friend or relative who has been a long-time "christian" and who promised them good things if they came. The meeting goes on as the special musicians display their great talent, making every effort to impress as any as possible. They also want to do their part in "preparing" the people for the "message" that will be preached by Manny the main man.

The air may be "electric" but there is more in the air than meets the eye. Satan's hordes have gathered to do their own work. They move among the crowd, listening to the words from the voices of the seekers as they sing along. "Oh, how I hate that sound," says the devil to his demons. "Those people sound like they are dead serious about what they are singing. Ha, ha, ha! Yuk, yuk, yuk - don't you just love that word 'dead'? Yep, yep, yep! Dead they are and dead we will keep them. Ah, if they only knew we are here. It would make this so much more fun. Imagine the look on their faces if they could see us! But, my dear servants,

we can get so much more done when they can neither hear us nor see us. It's best that way. Dum-de-dum-de-dum; soon we get to the good part. Mm-hmmm!"

The music dies down, Manny steps to the podium and in his best preacher voice expounds on a verse from the Bible. He wants to make the most of his time here and he wants to make a good showing, with many "converts", so he can continue enlarging his support base. The cost of living ^(high) is increasing. It takes so much more to fuel his private jet to take him around the world preaching the "gospel". His sermon, as usual, is a "salvation" message and at the conclusion he makes the altar call. Thousands have been moved, first by the music and then by the powerful preaching. They move to the front. (Some are thinking they might get close enough to actually touch Manny. Then they can tell their friends at "church" that they met him in person). Emotions are running high; people all around are weeping; some are looking around; some are even serious about the condition of their soul - God has touched them.

Manny, in his best "convicting" voice, tells them that they all have sinned and that Jesus loves them and wants to forgive them. Then he leads them in a simple little prayer. "Amen! Now you are born again," he tells them.

"Hurrah!" says the devil. "Now is our chance." He turns to the demons awaiting his orders, "Guys, this Manny person has paved the way for us again. If all these people could only know they have been mine all along and when this Manny is done they are still mine. Well, most of them. Just listen to him tell them they are born again and will soon be with that Jesus fellow. Oh, goodie! Now he is making sure they will all go 'to church' and find a place to 'worship'. That's wonderful. They are playing right into our hands. Ha, ha, ha! We go to church every Sunday, and sometimes during the week. That's when we get to do our best work. This has been worth waiting for! Don't you just love how we can deceive so many?! Deceiving is what I do best. And these 'christians' are so clueless; they continually play into my hand! I love it, I love it, I love it!! Mine, mine, mine - most of them are still mine."

The crusade is over; weeks pass by; some people find churches; some people can't find one they like; some don't even bother - they "felt" nothing, so "it can't be real" they think.

Satan faithfully goes to church, mixing with the "christians" and taunting them with accusations over what they did during the week. Many of them hear his voice, believing it must be the voice of the Lord and they cry out for forgiveness - again - and again - and again. They go to the altar for prayer; they go to the pastor for "counseling" but the pastor tells them it's okay, they are a "Christian." "Not to worry. Just keep coming to church. Oh! And remember to pay your tithes. That way you can be assured of God's blessing."

"Right on!" says the devil. "This is getting even better! Not only can I taunt them with fear of sinning, but I can keep them poor as well."

"Okay demons, my faithful team, now we have a little harder job to do. Remember those serious ones at the altar in Manny's crusade? They are a little more difficult to reach. If we are going to win them over to our side, we need to come up with a few good schemes. Okay, how's this? We can arrange for some of our allies at the local bar to drink a little deeper some nights then get in their cars and hit the highway. The next part of our plan is to whisper in the ear of those serious ones to go for a drive somewhere - preferably on the same highway as our buddies. We can pretty much count on a wreck somewhere along the way. Now, when that happens; unless the Christians are killed and we lose them forever, we need to be at the hospital and whisper doubt into their ears. Of course, the doubt will be about their great and wonderful God. We need to get them blaming Him for their problems. If we persist, we can win some of them back to our side."

"Another good plan is to follow those others who fell for the prosperity talk. We can be assured of even more deception there if we just whisper the right things. The preachers do a pretty good job for us but we need to make ourselves sound like the Big Man who lives above our domain - you know - Him! He has taken far too many from us already and we need to step up our efforts. Some of those real Christians, whom we have had no success with, have been talking about our demise. Can you imagine such a thing?! Well, just in case there is something going on that we don't know about, we need to be on our guard. We have been getting excellent results in the churches the past few years and that seems to be the area where we should focus. I can't believe how gullible those people are! But it's all good. We are winning! Did you guys hear me? I said we are WINNING! What a beautiful sound to my ears. Aw, it is such a great thing to be me. I love myself so much!"

"Just look at what we have accomplished! Look at all these dead souls we have deceived into remaining in our wonderful, slimy, hot, suffocating, smoky kingdom of darkness. They think they saw the light but we fooled them, didn't we! What great pretenders we are! HA, HA, HA, HA! SUCKERS! What beautiful angels we make! - right, my obedient servants? Don't you just love the smell of success?!"

Is that the whole story? No! Let's take a closer look.

Amid the crowds of signs-and-wonders-seekers there are earnest souls, searching for something. They are not sure what it is - they just know they have this void inside and a sense of longing for something that satisfies. Partying didn't satisfy. A higher education didn't satisfy. More money didn't satisfy. One young man thinks, "There has to be more to life...what is it? And why do I feel so compelled to come to this Manny Grim crusade? There was something about that TV commercial that caught my eye. Oh, well, I'm here; maybe I will find

some answers." And he does! Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, has claimed him for His own.

There are more such people, young and old - searching, seeking, hungry for "something" to satisfy. The music is beautiful, compelling. "What is it that touches me so deeply?" thinks one lady. "Those words - I can't forget those words. Who is this Jesus, and why do I feel so drawn to Someone I can't see? All I know is that I want Him." She begins to weep softly, suddenly feeling 'cleaner' than ever before in her life. She becomes lost in this new sense of indescribable 'freshness' and suddenly drops to her knees. From her lips flow torrents of thanksgiving for now she realizes this Jesus has transformed her - how does she know? She just knows. For some reason she just knows! "Oh, thank you God! I have found what I have been looking for. How beautiful it is! I can 'see' the Kingdom of God." (John 3:3)

The devil, in his limited vision, believes he has won out over the Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent One but he is in for a big surprise. While the mindless, idiotic creatures from the dark side are celebrating their supposed success, the angels of Almighty God, greater in number than the demonic crowd, have been fulfilling the purposes of Eternity.

Jesus the crucified and risen Christ, the Advocate of every believer, is at the right hand of the Almighty. He knows His own - they are His sheep and He has always been the great Shepherd. His sheep know His voice and all the clatter and noise from the devil and his cohorts have no effect on these Spirit-renewed, believers in Jesus. They hear only the voice of the Master. The Son says, "Father, that one is Mine; this other one over here is Mine; and that one also - they are My true witnesses, even amid the teeming crowds of apostate ones."

"Oh, how My heart grieves at the indifference of those who have been deceived. If only they had heeded Paul's warning which was first written to those at Thessalonica, yet stands for all time. We gave them every opportunity to receive the love of the Truth but they have kept their eyes on the life of the flesh, and now Your promised 'strong delusion' has gone into effect. (2 Thess. 2:11-12) I gave My Life for them so they could live but they are blind to the Truth. They think they are born again but they are still dead in their state of self and flesh. Once again, Father, as in other such 'crusades' I have found my true ones - more of my Remnant. I long for the day when I will see my whole Remnant - together as one."

"Father, even though man does not know the exact day when I will receive My Bride, it has to be obvious that time is short. I am thrilled as I look across the vastness of Earth and see the expectant ones who also anxiously anticipate that Day. They are not sitting idle but are spreading the Good News - especially those in the oppressing nations where many are suffering persecution. The evil, Godless ones cannot prevail because my true ones pass from death to life the

moment the enemy thinks he has killed them. They overcame by My Blood and the word of their testimony, and loved not their lives even unto death. (Rev. 12:11) They chose real Life - never fearful of leaving this life."

"Oh, thank you, my Father, for your Power which you gave into my hands. (Matt. 28:18) The true born-again believers are Mine - all Mine, my soon-to-be Bride. The evil one may think as he wishes, but no one can snatch them from My hands." (John 10:28)

So, you see, just when hell is busily rejoicing over its "success" - as always, Heaven triumphs!