

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA # 472

Dearest grandchild,

Today's letter will be about 1 Peter 5:8-10 - **“Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.”**

In 1898 British soldier, hunter, and author Lieutenant-Colonel John Henry Patterson was sent to oversee the construction of a railway bridge over the Tsavo River in Kenya's large and wild Tsavo region. A few days after his arrival, news of some missing workers appeared on Patterson's desk. There were a pair of male lions stalking the railway construction workers campsite at night and dragging people from their tents as they slept. Despite the worker's attempts to ward off the lions with campfires and thorn fences, the attacks continued to the point where they were happening every night. In his book, *The Man-eaters of Tsavo* (1907), Patterson noted that at the start of the attacks only one lion at a time would enter the camp to take a victim. As the weeks and months went on, however, the lions became more brazen and both came together into camp to seize a victim. Before Patterson was able to kill the lions they had killed and eaten 135 people. Being of “sober spirit and alert” is also important for us as the devil prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour.

How vividly I recall an incident that happened over 30 years ago. Eric Wolf was a student at the Ozark Christian College and attended our church. One cold day he drove his girl friend to the chapel to pick up some sheet music. Since the heater in his VW didn't work too well, he left the motor running. When they came back with the music a few minutes later the car was gone. Two young boys were running away from home and were waiting for just such an opportunity to pounce. Since the girl had left her purse and credit cards in the car the thieves had an easy time getting to California. Since that day I lock my car every time I leave it. It is better to be safe and alert than sorry!

During the Trojan War (around 1,900 B.C.) a master carpenter named Epeius built a wooden horse and persuaded the Trojans that this horse was an offering to Athena, the goddess of war. The citizens of Troy were promised that by receiving the horse, the city of Troy would be impregnable. As you know, Greek soldiers were hidden in the horse. They came out that night, opened the city gates, and thus the city of Troy was defeated. Obviously, the citizens of Troy should have been more alert!

In 1942 a German submarine surfaced off the coast of Long Island and sent 8 saboteurs to the shore with a goal of infiltrating the United States and destroying industrial plants, bridges, railroads, waterworks, and even Jewish-owned department stores. Fortunately, John C. Cullen, a young U.S. Coast Guardsman, discovered them. They fled into New York, however, before they could be arrested. As the man hunt intensified the German team leader, George Dasch, and one of his men, Ernest Berger, turned themselves in and betrayed their companions. All eight saboteurs were therefore captured. Americans were “sober and alert” during W.W. II.

By 2001, however, our guard was down and we were no longer “sober and alert”. On September 11, 2001, as you know, nineteen men who hated America brought down the twin towers in N.Y. killing 2,750 people. They also attacked the Pentagon killing 184 people. 40 more people died

when a hijacked airliner crashed in Pennsylvania. All nineteen terrorists entered the U.S. legally! America was asleep!

Today, we seem to be more asleep than ever. Since January 2021 more than 8 million people from all over the world have entered the U.S. illegally. Against all reason most of them have been allowed to stay. Many come from countries that are enemies of America. Now, instead of 8 German saboteurs, or 19 Islamic terrorists, we now may have thousands of saboteurs welcomed into America. In April, New York became the first state in the nation to give undocumented immigrants aid that approaches what others got in unemployment insurance, benefiting an estimated 92,000 people. And New York will give undocumented workers who don't qualify for the higher level of compensation what others got in stimulus payments, benefitting an additional 199,000 people. Yet, like the ill fated Titanic, we are full speed ahead oblivious to any danger. Now is the time to be more sober and alert than ever.

There was a time when the city of Babylon was the best fortified city in the world. According to Herodotus the walls were 56 miles long, 320 feet high, 80 feet thick. Wicked King Belshazzar knew the enemy had surrounded the city, but he was so confident of his security that, instead of preparing for war, he invited a thousand of his nobles to a party and praised the gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron and stone (See Daniel chapter 5). It was then that a sleeveless hand wrote his doom in unforgettable letters across the wall. The wicked king had been weighed in the balance and found wanting. The Scriptures record: **“That very night Belshazzar, king of the Babylonians, was slain, and Darius the Mede took over the kingdom at the age of sixty -two.” (Daniel 5:30)** The reason for Babylon's quick defeat was that the gates facing the Euphrates River were carelessly left open! There was no need to scale or tear down the massive walls for enemy soldiers merely walked through the open gates. The cynic said it like this: “One thing we learn from history is that people do not learn from history.”

This “letter from grandpa” is not being sent to the government, it is being sent to you! The purpose of the letter is not national security, but your personal salvation. Please be of a sober spirit and alert, for our adversary, the devil, is walking around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour!

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce