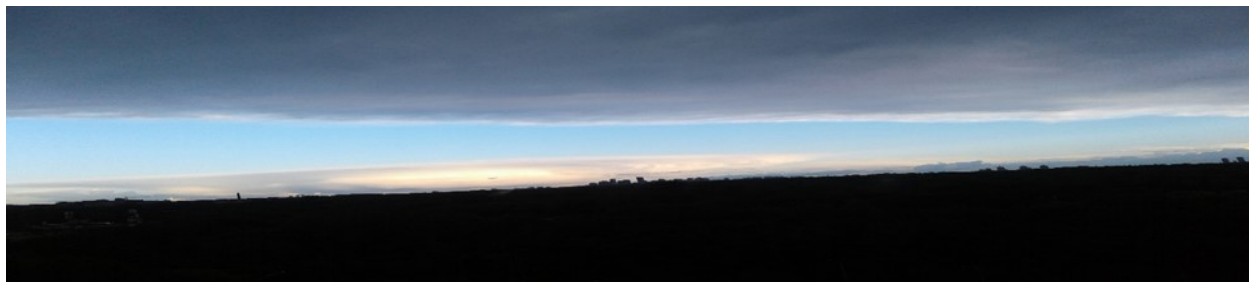




Pastor: Francis Williams

Pastor's Update

“But as for you who fear My name the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip like calves from the stall” (Malachi 4:2).



About 7:00 a.m. on the morning of September 6, 2021, at the rising of the sun, I looked out into the skies from my bedroom window and saw a wonderful token of God's glory in the sky. No, I did not see any UFOs nor aliens! What I did see was a breathtaking picture painted in the western sky by the hand of the Divine artist! A picture, or rather a piece of art consisting of three strata of colors. Along the horizon stretched a layer of golden clouds. The second layer was the dark ominous grey clouds above that seemed as if they were set to send a soaking on the earth. The third layer, the baby blue sky, was couched between the golden clouds along the horizon and the thick dark clouds above.

As I studied the phenomenon in the western sky, I detected a few things. First, I noticed that the bright blue layer of sky was located much further in the distance than the clouds above and beneath. It seemed obvious to me that the entire sky is painted blue. But the presence of the clouds conceals its true color from our view. When the clouds roll away, then the heavenly blue is revealed.

As I contemplated in rapt attention, my eyes caught a piece of the Divine Artist's touch of genius. There it was – along the length of the lower edge of the dark gray ominous clouds – a thin line of silver clouds! Immediately the famous saying was pressed upon my mind, “Every dark cloud has a silver lining.” Not that I have never seen clouds with silver lining before. But this one caught my attention this early morning. Maybe because it was the first object I saw outside when I awoke that morning.

But I probed further asking the question, “What is it that causes the silver lining along the dark ominous clouds?” Why is the silver lining at the lower edge of the clouds? Then it suddenly occurred to me that it is the light of the rising sun that creates the silver lining. And the silver lining is formed at the lower edge of the clouds because it is closer to the rays of the rising sun. Gradually the silver lining became less distinct and by eight o'clock, the entire ominous clouds disappeared. The sky was all blue with a few patches of silver clouds. Daylight arrived!

As I considered this phenomenon, a verse from the prophet Malachi came to my mind: “But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip like calves from the stall” (Malachi 4:2). Clouds of doubt, discouragement, depression, disappointment, sorrow, sadness and even death may be hanging over the world and over lives. Darkness may be looming above us. But all these things that vex us are the strata of the picture which the Master Artist is painting in our lives. As there can be no silver lining without the dark clouds, so too there can be no joy without sorrow. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning! The dark clouds may still be present, but at the same time the sky is still blue. We have this assurance because our Lord Jesus Christ is always present with us. May every sunrise be an aide-mémoire, a reminder, that the Son of God is with us every moment, every day. Amen.

By God's Grace and for His glory,

Pr. Francis