

Suffering and Salvation



Satan Calling Up His Legions by William Blake, 1804

by [Walt Garlington](#) (January 2022)

The world is gripped hard in the devil's claw –
From darkness, lies, insanity, there is no escape.
The Christians pray in caves, at home, in the catacombs.
The vigil lamps are lit and burn before the icons.
The struggler's will is failing,
The red martyr's blood is running,
The torturer's face is smirking.
Where are our deliverers?
St George, with his dragon-slaying spear?
St Nikon, preaching fiery words of repentance?
St Symeon, singing spiritual hymns of boundless beauty?
None of these – alone, together – will lift us from despair.
Only suffering – intense, bone-racking, soul-rending – will
save us.
Our lives have been too insubstantial,
Our repentance too insincere.
Then, after the flames of our anguish
Have purified us seven times;
After the ocean of our woes has drowned us –
Then, perhaps, we will see a glimmer
Of the resurrection begin to shine within us.
Then, perhaps, the Gates of Paradise will be opened to us,
The mighty, flaming sword of the Cherubim turned aside,
As Satan's spell of fear and laziness
Ceases to sway our corrupt and burdened lives.

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Walt Garlington was born and raised in that part of Dixieland called Louisiana. A chemical engineer by training, he has spent the last several years writing full-time. He has written essays and poems for *The Hayride*, *The Tenth Amendment Center*, *The Abbeville Institute*, *Reckonin'*, *Katehon*, *Geopolitica*, and *USA Really*. He writes regularly at his own web site, [Confiteri: A Southern Perspective](#).

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