

A RIVER THAT MAKES GLAD.

"There is a river the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved. God shall help her, and that right early." – Psa. 46:4,5.

The preceding and succeeding words of this Psalm indicate a time of great and wide-spread trouble and distress, which is here very graphically described in symbolic language: the earth is removed, the mountains are carried into the midst of the sea, the waters thereof roar and are troubled, and the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.

These things were not true, either in a symbolic or in a literal sense, in the day in which it was written, nor is it yet fully accomplished. The writer spoke as moved by the Spirit of God, and, like the other Prophets, uttered many things which he did not understand, they being written for our admonition and instruction, in whose day only the application is due.

The great bulk of prophecy was dark and mysterious, alike to Jew and Gentile, until Jesus and the Apostles, under the direct inspiration of the same Spirit that dictated them, gave us the keys to unlock their hidden meaning, never designed to be understood until God's "due time" should come; and then only by the consecrated in Christ Jesus. These will give their consecrated time and labor and patient thought in applying the keys to the various locks, and these alone receive the rich reward – the meat in due season.

We find that earth, in symbol, signifies human society as at present organized; that sea is a symbol of the unrestrained and uncontrolled masses of mankind not submissive to either civil or

religious control; that mountains symbolize the great ruling powers of earth – the kingdoms of this world. We find that this interpretation of these symbols is applicable throughout the Scriptures wherever these terms are used symbolically.

In order to get the idea conveyed here, let us read verses 1 to 3, using the interpretation instead of the symbol: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear, though the present organization of society be dissolved, and though the kingdoms of earth be overthrown and swallowed up by a revolution of the people who will refuse to be longer ruled by them."

If a literal mountain were cast into the midst of the sea, it would quickly be swallowed by the sea; so will it be with the kingdoms of earth when overthrown by the turbulent masses of discontented people who are now mustering their hosts and disseminating their revolutionary principles under names now universally recognized – Communism, Socialism and Nihilism, etc.

This revolutionary spirit has not yet reached its climax; the earth is not yet removed; nor are the mountains yet carried thus into the midst of the sea: but the events of verse 3 have come to pass. The waters of the sea [the discontented peoples] roar and are troubled. We hear the roaring of the troubled waters from every quarter of the globe, and truly the mountains [kingdoms] shake with the swelling thereof. There is not a government on earth that does not realize that these are perilous times, and in consequence of this fact, each is taking special precautions to protect itself against the rising power of its own subjects – the roaring, troubled waves of the sea.

This is the extent to which the events foretold in prophecy have at present ripened, and the rising storm will, from present

indications, require only a few years to reach its terrible climax, overthrowing and swallowing up in anarchy and confusion all the kingdoms of earth. A few more years and the prophecy of verse 2 will find its complete fulfillment, just as surely as we now realize the fulfilling of verse 3.

But who is it that finds a refuge of peace and safety in the very midst of the shaking and dissolving kingdoms? Evidently it is the class spoken of in verse 4 as "the city of God," dwelling in "the holy" of the tabernacle of the Most High. In symbol we find that **[R686 : page 4]** city represents a church, an ecclesiastical kingdom, true or false. The city of God, then, means the kingdom of God – the Church. As referred to here, it is not the kingdom set up and glorified, else it would be represented as in the Most Holy. [See "Tabernacle Teachings," **pages 5 and 11.**] But it is the kingdom of God – the true Church, in its present condition – the wholly-consecrated children, not the mere outward professors. "There is a river," a river of truth, the blessed streams whereof makes glad this city of God.

How many of us have been refreshed, especially of recent years, by these blessed streams of truth! Though we hear the roaring of the troubled sea, the murmuring and threatening of discontented and oppressed people, and feel the shaking of the kingdoms with the swellings thereof; and though we know that the dreadful result will be universal anarchy and the complete overthrow of all governments, yet we fear not, for "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

But our peace and composure, in view of these things, is not a selfish condition which rejoices in its own security regardless of the woes of others. Ah no; for the streams of truth have brought to us the blessed assurance that

"Sweet accord shall grow at length

From out this clash of earthly discords."

Men fear and tremble as the storm approaches, and will be in utter dismay when it bursts, yet the Church [all truly consecrated saints] shall not be moved. "God shall help her, and that right early." Even now she is being strongly fortified with the truth which shall protect her. The Lord of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

In verse 8 the Prophet carries us down to the time, and bids us view the scene, when these things will have been actually accomplished, saying, "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire."

What! is it the Lord that thus makes the earth desolate? Yes, Isaiah also expresses it so, saying, "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof." (Isa. 24:1.)

But have we not just seen that the trouble and destruction is to be accomplished by a general uprising of discontented and ungovernable people? by such a revolution as Communists, Nihilists and Socialists contemplate? Yes, as verse 6 states it, "The heathen [lit., nations] raged," and as a consequence "the kingdoms were moved." "He [God] uttered his voice; the earth melted."

Truth on every subject, however, or by whomsoever uttered, is the voice of God. And it is the dissemination of truth, the voice of God, among the masses of mankind, that is awakening them to a keen sense of the inequalities existing under the present social organization, and this prompts them to assert their equal rights with their fellows and to make desperate efforts to obtain them.

But human effort will not be able to accomplish that which is desired. The dreadful result will only be anarchy and widespread confusion, the earth will melt, organized society will be dissolved. And when human effort has spent itself, and men realize their own inability to rightly adjust affairs among themselves, God speaks through his prophet, saying, "Be still, and know that I am God." And wearied and discouraged at their own efforts, men will hear, for, it is written: "When the judgments of the Lord are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isa. 26:9.) **[R687 : page 4]** Then, too, they will learn that "The Lord of Hosts is with us," and that Christ is present to rule and reign, and he will be exalted among the nations, he will be exalted in the earth. They will realize that the God of Jacob is their only refuge.

"And many people shall say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord [let us seek protection and render obedience to the kingdom of the Lord], and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths." (Isa. 2:3.)

While the message, "Be still, and know that I am God," will have a special application to the world at the time just referred to, it is applicable to the Church now. Amid the clashing creeds of the many great organizations claiming to be the Church, and claiming the support of the Scriptures for their various theories, and yet denying and mystifying their teachings, God's voice comes to his consecrated children, saying, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen; I will be exalted in the earth."

Those who obey, who bid their own wills, their prejudices, etc., be still, are learning now from God's word the blessed truth that the Lord's Anointed is even now present to set up his kingdom under the whole heavens, enforcing the will of God on

earth as in heaven by abolishing evil and restoring the race to fellowship with God. Then all may partake freely of the river of truth, the streams whereof, even now, make glad the city of our God – the saints.

Another thought is suggested by this Psalm, viz., that some at least of the little flock who are to be joint-heirs with Christ will remain in their present condition, in the flesh, until the now threatening and rising storm shall have at least partially accomplished the overthrow of the present kingdoms – until the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. This is also in harmony with what we have learned with reference to the part the same class take in pouring out the seven last plagues of Rev. 16. See, Z.W.T., of June and July, 1883.
