

## VIEW FROM THE TOWER.

Earthquakes of a physical character in Europe and America during the past two weeks have excited almost as much interest as the social earthquakes [the shakings by Anarchists, etc.] did a few months ago.

Since the subject of earthquakes was of sufficient importance for our great Teacher to specially mention, they are worthy of our notice also. Our Master, in referring to them, did not attempt by so doing, to arouse the fears of his holy followers, but on the contrary said, "Take care that ye be not alarmed, for these things must occur." "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be in various places famines and earthquakes. Yet these are only a beginning of sorrows." – Matt. 24:6-8. Diaglott.

Famines and earthquakes have in all ages given evidence that not only man but his home – the earth – is under the curse. And not only does mankind groan and travail in pain together until now, waiting for the new dispensation, but the earth also groans and quakes and travails to be delivered into the full and perfect Edenic condition, in which it will be a fit home for the restored, perfected race.

Our Lord well knew that these quakings of the earth, both physical and social, had been before his first advent, and that they would be frequent during the entire period between the first and second advents, and yet he mentions them among the notable things to be experienced in the transition period from the Gospel to the Millennial age: and so too with famines and pestilences. It seems evident, then, that our Lord's reference is not to the common run of such calamities, but to some special and wonderful events. This is clearly marked by the account of this same discourse given by Luke; he gives some items not mentioned by Matthew and Mark. Luke (21:10-12) records it thus: "Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and great earthquakes shall be in different places, and famines, and pestilences,

and frightful sights, and great signs shall there be from heaven. But *before* all these they shall lay their hands on you and persecute you."

It certainly was not before *a* great earthquake that the Church began to suffer persecution, for a few days after Jesus uttered these words there was an earthquake (the day he died) and there was another when he arose. (Matt. 27:51-54 and 28:2.) We think the proper inference then is, that in connection with the quakings of society, the overturning of kingdoms (mountains in symbol) in this great "Day of Jehovah," into which we have already entered, we may expect wars, pestilences, earthquakes, and famines, not as usual, not as heretofore, but to an extent never before known in earth's history. All these things together combine to make "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time," "no, nor [thank God] ever shall be." (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21.) And as for the earthquakes and famines, severe and wonderful as they will evidently be, the Master tells us, "These are [only] the beginning of sorrows," the *start* of troubles much more intense.

We can readily imagine the effect of these "beginnings of sorrows" upon the people. Should famines no worse than have been known in the past, occur now, the people, used to bountiful harvests and great extravagance, would feel it terribly to die by the tens of thousands for the lack of the simplest food. And with the present mixture of intelligence with ignorance, among the masses, is it not surmisable that the famines would be charged in some way to Capital – to speculation, etc., by those whose store of learning is "a dangerous thing"? The tendency would be toward bread riots, class legislation, anarchy, and other falsely-supposed remedies and preventives, thus producing the social earthquakes and tidal waves.

Were earthquakes to occur in our day no more terrible than in the past, sixty thousand people might perish in six minutes as in the Lisbon earthquake, and the result would be to make Infidels and Atheists by

the thousand among men. More free to think for themselves than in the past, more conversant with facts and less superstitious, and lacking information as to why evil was permitted, or misinformed regarding it, by the creeds and teachers of the nominal Church of to-day, and unable to see that these things are part of the one grand, stupendous plan for human restitution and everlasting happiness, of which the cross of Christ is the centre, many, very many, would doubtless conclude that there is no God and no hereafter, that nature is the only God, and evolution the only process of creation, etc. And being thus freed from the moral restraints and fears which now hold in check so many evil doers, the world will be ripe indeed for a time of worldwide trouble, of anarchy and crime, to which past ages furnish no parallel – slightly illustrated during the "Reign of Terror" in France.

And seeing that God hath appointed this "day of vengeance" in which to permit human effort to work itself out and prove its own inefficiency, and to demonstrate to them the necessity and wisdom of his laws and plans, what wonder if God has reserved many of the great changes of nature, with their attendant sorrows, for that same day of trouble, in which the increasing light of truth, instead of leading men to repentance and a recognition of the Lord, are because of hardness of heart leading to vain philosophies and self-conceit, which only a full course of discipline and an utter failure of those philosophies will make tractable preparing the way for the Kingdom of God.

We may be sure that *great* changes must take place in the climates and soils of the earth, before it will be "prepared," as was the garden of Eden to be a fit home for perfect man. Cyclones, earthquakes, thunderbolts, and alternations of drouth and deluge, and of blizzards of cold and simoons of heat, are indications of the imperfection of earth; for the causes are doubtless natural, and very rarely indeed can we see them to be special dispensations of Providence. That God has the entire scope of his plan in all its details measured exactly, we cannot doubt, after learning the plan of the ages; hence we may know that earth must reach its perfection as the garden home of man by the close of the

Millennial Age – when man's trial being ended, it will be due time for all the willing and obedient to enjoy God's favor to the utmost, when "there shall be no more curse" either upon man or upon the earth for his sake. And if this be true, how appropriate that great physical, as well as moral changes, should occur in this harvest or transition period, "the day of preparation," that evil (catastrophy) may be ended, and that by streams breaking forth in the desert (Isa. 35:1,2,6), etc., the earth, like mankind her lord, may from a new plane go on gradually, progressively, to the fullest perfection in all respects, under the glorious reign of Messiah.

But amid all the troubles of this day, the saints should give ear to the Master's words, "See that ye be not troubled, for all these things *must come to pass.*" The physical convulsions are as needful and as proper as the moral and social upheavals, and in order that our faith might be well founded and unshaken, God has provided us the strong meat of truth in due season. From the advanced standpoint now attainable, we can see the grand outlines of God's plan, in which the "Day of Wrath" and its shaking are needful parts.

Thus advised, and leaning upon the strong arm of her Beloved the King, the little flock, the saints, the espoused Bride of the Lamb, may well be without the alarm and fear which will gradually become more and more general. Speaking for these members of the body of Christ, and concerning this very trouble, the Psalmist says: –

"God is our refuge and strength,  
A very present help in trouble;  
Therefore will not we fear  
Though the earth be removed,  
Though the mountains be carried  
Into the midst of the sea,  
Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled,  
Though the mountains shake with the swellings  
thereof." – Psa. 46:1-3.

This applies equally, whether the literal or symbolic or both, be understood as meant. We need not fear the revolutions and overturnings of governments at hand, for we are waiting for and expecting *thus* to see Messiah's heavenly rule introduced. We need not fear or be troubled at literal earthquakes, or death in any form, since we are only waiting to finish our course, and realize that "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord *from henceforth.*"

Thus armed and prepared, we may be without fear or carefulness as regards *these* things, and give the more earnest heed to our mission as laborers in the harvesting of the church, and to our part in the battle of this great day – the defence of the truth, the defence of the cross.

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