

OUR CHILDREN IN THE TIME OF TROUBLE.

THE following letter doubtless voices the sentiments of many.

DEAR SIR: – I have a baby daughter now two years old. In the year 1910 she will be only sixteen years old. The query is, What is to become of her during the period of anarchy? She probably represents a class. Numbers of God's people must have small children growing up, and the same query must present itself to a great many. Certainly it would show anything but a commendable spirit if any parent could rejoice in the hope of becoming a member of the Bride of Christ and himself being taken away from the trouble "coming upon the whole world," and not think of the fate of his children who would be left behind. Now I find such promises as Psa. 37:25,26; 102:28 and Prov. 11:21; but these do not exclude the use of means. If the children of the righteous are delivered in the "time of trouble," it seems to me it will be by the use of means provided for their deliverance; and who should be considering the means to be used, if not their parents and guardians?

Now my idea is that a state of anarchy will produce a complete destruction **(1)** of commerce – no railroads will be in operation, no post office service, no telegraph lines open; **(2)** of business – no manufactories will be running, no trade carried on, except in a primitive way and confined to narrow limits; **(3)** of government – there will be no protection to individuals except what their own strength affords. The country will be filled with bands of marauders, and the peaceful and moral among the people will be obliged to unite in little bands for defence and protection. For food and clothing they will be obliged to depend on what they can themselves produce and defend from marauders.

Cities and towns will be burned or fall into ruin from neglect, bridges, etc., be destroyed, the machinery, etc., of our manufacturing establishments be destroyed or rendered useless by neglect and decay,

so that after the period of anarchy is over the world will be obliged to begin over again.

I would like you to consider this question of the state of the country; for perhaps it will not be so bad as I have described, at least in the United States and England. These two countries have been especially favored during the Gospel age, and perhaps they may still be favored during the time of trouble. Their higher degree of intelligence, their greater love of order and their greater knowledge of the truth, may enable them to conform sooner to the new order of things and not bring so severe punishment upon them as upon the rest of the world. Furthermore, may it not be that the prophecies more particularly refer to the Roman Empire; and the United States certainly, and England probably, were not parts of the Roman Empire.

When we come to consider who will be the most favorably situated for escaping the perils of that time, it is evident that the towns and cities will suffer most. The ones who will be disturbed the least will be those who live in places remote from towns and cities and the main routes of travel, who live in a primitive manner, supplying their wants principally by their own labor from the land around them, who are not dependent upon commerce for their supplies, and whose remoteness from towns and routes of travel will keep them secluded from bands of marauders. Such places are mostly found in mountainous regions, and mountainous places are most easily guarded and defended from attack. This reminds us that Christ warned the Christians of Judea to "flee to the mountains" when they saw the near approach of the Jewish "time of trouble" – which was typical of the coming trouble. May it not be that he intended us to profit by that warning and provide places of refuge for those of our families and friends who will be here when the anarchy begins?

[IN REPLY: – The above conception of the coming trouble is, we believe, a very moderate one. The account of the trouble upon Jerusalem at its fall is much more thrillingly awful; so also is the record of the reign of terror in France a century ago. Both of these great events are

mentioned in Scripture as illustrations of the coming general trouble; which, however, it is distinctly declared, will be worse than either of these; – "a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation."

While the Roman empire occupies an important place in the prophetic history of the past eighteen centuries, yet we are to remember that the great troubles marking "the day of the Lord" are shifted to symbolic Babylon – confused nominal Christendom – which certainly includes Great Britain and the United States. Indeed, as the severest troubles came at the first advent upon those who had seen the great Light and rejected Him, so we may well fear that the great privileges and blessings enjoyed by the English speaking peoples have brought great responsibilities and will bring severe tribulations.

The tendency of all as the storm approaches will be to seek cover, protection, under the great mountains (kingdoms) and in the rocks of society (beneficial orders) (Rev. 6:15-17); and many will flee from the country to the cities. The "overcomers" who will "escape all these things coming upon the world" (Luke 21:36) will indeed flee to the mountain, the Kingdom of the Lord, and be **[R1963 : page 82]** safe, but none others can attain to it. "Who shall ascend into the mountain of the Lord? who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart," etc. – Psa. 24:3-6.

But, seeing that all the efforts of men to hide themselves "from the wrath of the Lamb" when the great day of his wrath shall have come will be in vain, the saints would best make no such effort to hide their children, knowing that it would be folly. The trouble comes to overthrow sin and every false system and thing; and the lessons it brings will prove beneficial to mankind in general, breaking their idols and purging their hearts. If our children and friends need the purging, we should not wish to have them escape it. If they do not need it, we may rest assured that the Lord will permit the glorified members of his body, his Church, to care for their children and friends during that trouble and to succor them from all that would not be to their benefit. What more

could we ask than that we should be their ministering guardians, far more able to help them than if with them in the flesh?

The best provision which parents can make for their children is to give them, by precept and example, faithful instruction in *righteousness*. Remember that "the fear [reverence] of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Begin therefore to instruct them in the plan of salvation, the plan of the ages. As they come to a true appreciation of God's wisdom, justice and love, it will give them broader and truer views of justice and love, in respect to their own conduct and toward their fellow creatures. Teach them meekness and humility, and the folly of pride and arrogance. Teach them generosity of thought, and how to be happy with little, reminding them frequently that godliness with contentment is true riches. Remind them of the Lord's words, "seek meekness, seek righteousness. It may be that ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." (Zeph. 2:3.) The rich in this world's uncertain riches, and the proud, whether poor or rich, and all that do wickedly, will be special sufferers. – Compare Mal. 4:1; James 5:1-6.

During the time of trouble, for the first time in the world's history, there will be a *premium* on meekness, patience, love, gentleness, goodness. (However, before that stage of the trouble comes, before Babylon falls, there will be a different trouble upon a "great company" of those not overcomers, who will be severely buffeted by Babylon which for a time will have an increase of power. The foregoing remarks do not apply to this class which will come through great tribulation. Since the service of the poor and afflicted in mind and body is a great privilege, we should endeavor so to train our children that, when the trouble comes, they will be both able and willing to counsel others to righteousness and the avoidance of carnal warfare, rather than selfishly think merely of their own safety. Children should be encouraged to such stability of character, in combination with faith in God, that they will, under any stress, act up to a high conception of nobility.)
