

LOOSING THE "FOUR WINDS"

"And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation." – Daniel 12:1.

THERE is something peculiarly forceful about this statement. We have known some to lay stress upon the word such in this verse of Daniel's prophecy and to suggest that this might mean, not that the trouble will be greater, but that it will be of a different character than any previous trouble. We do not share that view. Our thought is that it will be the most intense, as well as the most widely diffused trouble, the most general trouble ever known. We see a great many things which corroborate this thought. We can readily see that anarchy at this time would affect mankind more than at any previous time of the world's history.

In the past the cities were supported by a large farming element; and each farmer was accustomed to keeping his stock on hand, selling more directly to the consumer. Today the cities are large, more massed together than ever before. Food is shipped to these cities in large quantities. Additionally, the people have become extravagant; we probably eat much more food as a people, and of a daintier kind, than ever before. We would feel ourselves starved by what people ate in former times.

Our Lord fed the five thousand with bread and small fishes. Now the people would not be satisfied, as they were then, to sit down on the grass, with a piece of bread in one hand and a piece of fish in the other. Now they would want five dishes, at least – and knives and forks, etc. They would think that they were *starved* if they had only a piece of fish and a piece of dry bread. And now, instead of gathering up the fragments, they would feel like throwing the fragments away.

SYMPTOMS OF THE COMING TROUBLE

We are reminded of the strike of last year in some of the large cities of England. In Liverpool, it was only by having Government troops on guard that food could be distributed to keep the people from starving. So we can see how soon whole cities could be put into confusion and everybody go hungry to bed; and they would soon starve, if supplies were cut off.

We have reason to believe that this trouble in some respects will be accompanied by a ferocity never seen in the past. True, there have been atrocities committed in every age of the world's history. And it is true that we now have a veneer that goes by the name of Christianity; but there is no Christianity about it. We see more and more clearly how easy it would be to scratch off this veneer and get to the savage nature below it. This being so, we can see how the rendering of assistance of one part of the world to another part would be at an end. We also see how the evil spirits will be stirred up. We have every reason for believing our Lord's words to be literally true – that the severity of the coming trouble will be such as never before has been known.

Then again, we understand that the trouble at the end of the Jewish Dispensation was a type, or foreshadowing, a parallel, of the great trouble coming at the end of this Dispensation. The trouble that then came upon the Jewish nation was reckoned as having been the most severe in the world's history. The trouble at the close **[R5469 : page 166]** of this Age will be on a vastly larger scale – world-wide.

CHRIST'S KINGDOM THE ONLY HOPE

As to the Socialistic movement, it is our thought that the Socialists will fail entirely in their attempt to carry out their ideas. Some of the ideas are *good*; some of them are *medium*; and some of them are *bad*. But they can never carry out the best of their ideas,

because those who are controlling capital and managing the world's affairs will never give them the opportunity. Whether it will be the socialistic, the anarchistic or the capitalistic element that will bring about the anarchy, will depend upon which obstacle will be the most difficult to move.

All parties are very earnest, very intense, very obstinate. The capitalists fear that the whole country and every other country would "go to the dogs" if Socialism were in power. Therefore they would be ready to put it into the ditch rather than give it a trial. And so we do not expect that the Socialists will get sufficient power to take the reins of government. We think the attempt would result in anarchy, until Divine Power shall set up the Kingdom which has been promised.

And by this we are not accusing any party in particular. We believe that under stress of failure either side would be ready to see the streets run with blood rather than see the other side win – they would be ready to go to any length to maintain their purpose and ideas. Each party is sure that it knows what it is doing. There can be no possible settlement. All parties are sure that they are right and are sure that they will succeed. When the crisis is reached, which seems nearing, the great whirlwind will come, which will sweep all civilization before it. Thank God, that the Kingdom of God's dear Son will end it when men shall have learned their own impotency!

THE FOUR GREAT WINDS

In Rev. 7:1, St. John mentions this whirlwind: "And after these things I saw four angels, standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the winds should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree." The *winds of the earth* referred to here are, of course, symbolic. The thought is [R5470 : page 166] that the winds from the four quarters – North, East, South and West – are being held back, and that when

the restraint is withdrawn they will rush together, and the result will be a whirlwind. Certain Scriptures tell of a whirlwind that will be raised up from the coasts of the earth. See Jer. 23:19; 25:32,33; 30:23,24. We do not understand that this will be a physical whirlwind, but this symbolic expression is used to convey the thought of a severe strife of the powers of the air.

These "powers of the air," or "winds," are not powers of natural air, but are the powers referred to by St. Paul when he speaks of Satan as "the Prince of the power of the air." (Eph. 2:2.) Those spirits who have been under the control of Satan – the fallen angels – were to be restrained in chains of darkness until the Judgment of the Great Day. (2 Peter 2:4.) The letting loose of these winds, or air powers, would seem to show that God has let go His hand of restraint; that He will have to do with the permission of the terrible trouble that will come upon the world as a great cataclysm, which will result in the complete overthrow of the social order in anarchy.

We find that in spite of the many advantages of our day and the blessings showered upon the world, people are unthankful and ungrateful. Discontent is growing; and the result will be a great strife, and the complete fall of present institutions. Our text seems to imply that this outside influence will exercise a baneful effect upon men, when finally granted the liberty. These fallen spirits have been under *restraint* for these many centuries, but they have exercised their influence to whatever extent they have had permission. If they had had unlimited power they would have wrecked the world long ago; but they have been restrained in chains of darkness.

FALLEN ANGELS SOON TO BE LOOSED

Apparently God will soon cease to restrain the fallen angels, and they will then proceed to vent their fury upon humanity, so that the whole earth will be full of violence, the same as in the days of

Noah. "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man." – Luke 17:26.

It is true that the Savior gave the thought that at His Second Advent He would be present, unknown to the world, doing a work of gathering the Church – of making up His "jewels" – and that the world would not know of His presence until the Time of Trouble was upon them. He said that they would be eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. (Luke 17:27-30.) And this is true. The world is going into large contracts, etc., quite unaware of how near we are to the new arrangement, the incoming Kingdom. But we believe that the very near future will be a time of great crime and angry passions.

We read of the time that God beheld the thoughts of men, that man's heart was evil and only evil continually – a very desperate condition. Our thought is that the loosing of these "four winds" is still future. The power manifested by the demons when loosed, will, we believe, be with a view to the injury of mankind. We do not know but that many of our readers will have a share in that injury. We have every reason to suppose that, if these fallen angels shall get loose, they will vent their first anger upon the Lord's people. We are not to fear this, however, but to take whatever the Lord's providence permits to come, knowing that everything shall work for our good. "Sufficient unto the day is the *evil* thereof," the *difficulty* thereof. Let us leave the whole matter in the Lord's hands and trust in Him.

=====