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## THE COMING STORM AND ITS GLORIOUS OUTCOME

"He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so He bringeth them unto their desired haven....Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord."  
– Psalm 107:29,30,43.

PSALM 107 seems to be prophetic, tracing to a considerable degree the experiences of the Church of Christ throughout this Gospel Age. It may be applied individually and also in a world-wide, international way. The cause of all the trouble in the world is sin. There might be various ways of trying to remove the difficulty, but God in His Wisdom arranged the one Plan. He will permit sin to bring storms and difficulties of life so that humanity shall be tossed about, and thus learn to appreciate our great Savior, whom God has provided to be the Great Deliverer of the Church and of the world. The whole matter has been arranged in a judicial manner, and in due time Christ will have the full right to bid all storms to cease and to bring order out of confusion. Yet this must await the Divine appointment. During the present Age the Church class has been selected, and the storms and difficulties of life have been valuable to them in developing faith, hope, patience and in preparing them for the Kingdom honors, privileges and opportunities.

The world's storms, according to the Scriptures, have been varied and have occurred at different times, according to the conditions of mankind – sin and selfishness always stirring up a storm on every possible occasion. There have been many storms in the past – wars, invasions, tumults, etc. – all started from envious, selfish motives, or because of great injustice on the part of others. [R5696 : page 163] Great nations have envied one another their increase of wealth, and have preyed upon the weak. Anger,

malice, hatred, strife, the works of the flesh and the Devil, have been cultivated. **Now**, having sown thus to selfishness, mankind are experiencing a mighty whirlwind on the social sea. This great storm has not yet reached its height. Our thought is that it will be much greater before the Lord will step in and say, "Peace, be still!" He has permitted this awful storm; for He knows how to make it work out for the good of humanity.

It is ours as God's people to favor peace and righteousness and to live in harmony with these conditions. But it is ours also to know what is coming on the world – more, it is ours to know the outcome, to know something of God's Truth. The Lord has already given us an inward peace which no outward storm can affect. We are trusting in the promises He has given. We realize what the present condition is, and rejoice that the Church will soon be glorified. What a lasting peace and joy will then be ours beyond the veil! This realization brings into our hearts even now great rest of soul, a great calm! We remember that God is able to make *all things* work together for good to us, and He has *promised* so to do; therefore we may have blessed experiences coming out of these stormy times and trials of life.

The Lord has a peculiar way of bringing peace to His people – not usually by interference with people of the world. The storms of life may go on just the same as ever; our way may be just as thorny as ever. But the Lord speaks *peace* to us! We hear His Voice, the Word of God! By the knowledge He gives us, by His precious promises, He assures us of His Wisdom, His Love, His Power, and of His loving purpose for His people. These things give us peace and rest of heart in the midst of outward trials and trouble. He makes known to us also His great Plan for the world in general. He informs us now of the significance of the present conditions and of the glorious outcome of the great trouble about to break upon the whole world.

## THE LAST GREAT DAY

We are in the "last days" mentioned by the Apostle Paul. He says, "In the last days perilous times shall come. Men shall be...covetous, boasters, proud,...traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God....From such turn away." (2 Timothy 3:1-5.) Our Lord Jesus repeatedly mentioned "the last day," and declared that certain things would occur in the last day. We understand Him thus to be referring to the great Seventh Day, the thousand-year Day of His Kingdom. For instance, He said, in speaking of His disciples individually, "And I will raise him up at the last day."

The Scriptures speak of the last Day as being the end of this present Dispensation, the end of the present reign of evil. Our Lord referred to the closing days of this Age when He said, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man." All the Scriptures referring to this Day seem to point to the great commotion to come at this time. The Prophet Daniel seems to speak of the present Dispensation as a "time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation." This was to be, he declared, "in the time of the end." Our Lord speaks of it: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days be **[R5696 : page 164]** shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the Elect's sake those days shall be shortened." (Matthew 24:21-25.) St. Paul tells us that the fire of that Day shall try every man's work of what sort it is. The Apostle Peter describes it vividly in his second Epistle. That Day of trouble and the glory to follow are the theme of all the holy Prophets.

The troubles of this Day are not all of the same nature. Jesus tells us that some of His followers will be accounted worthy to escape the troubles coming upon the world, which St. Peter says will involve the whole earth. In the fire of that Day, some who are

children of God will be found to have built their house of wood, hay and stubble, even though building upon the true Foundation, Christ. All their superstructure will be burned, and themselves "saved as by fire," as the Apostle Paul tells us. Others of the Lord's children will be found to have built upon the true Foundation "gold, silver, and precious stones"; and thus their works will stand. They will have a superstructure of truth and loyalty to the Lord built upon the Foundation, and this will not be burned. Their building will stand the "fire" of this great Day.

As the Apostle Paul in all his Epistles addresses himself to the saints in Christ Jesus, we understand these words (1 Corinthians 3:11-15) to refer only to those professing full consecration to the Lord, the Church of Christ. The true saints must all suffer; for as St. Paul forewarned, we must "through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God." (Acts 14:22.) "Hereunto were we called," St. Peter assures us. (1 Peter 2:21.) But all these things only work out for us an exceeding and eternal weight of glory, if we are properly exercised thereby.

## **THE NOMINAL SYSTEMS OF TODAY**

But, as already intimated, we find a very large class today professing to be of the Church of Christ, and millions of money are being spent by these for the worship of God according to the ideas of the nominal church systems. Fine church edifices are built and dedicated to the Lord. Grand organs and trained choirs are furnished. Gymnasia, "smokers," culinary departments with dining-rooms, etc., are provided. These churches are supported by people a large number of whom are very noble in many respects.

From one viewpoint it would seem that people who are spending so much money every year for church purposes must be quite religious and very anxious to do God's will. We read of how many millions of dollars New York City spends annually for its ministers, churches, etc., etc. But we find, in fact, that in all these

churches there is a great deal of formalism. Those who sing their hymns are hired to do so, and they say that they have no particular interest in religion, but are merely doing it for so many dollars. Not many of the ministers will acknowledge that *their* service is of much the same nature, but there are those who think that the majority of them are serving in a similar manner. Does the Lord recognize and accept such service? (See Amos 5:20-23; Isaiah 1:13-15.) It is not for us to judge the heart; but on every side we find headiness, boastfulness, pride.

We do not know how the Apostle Paul could better have described present conditions if he had been living here today. If anything is said to these zealous workers in the Churchianity of our day about the worldliness, pride and errors of the churches, there is a toss of the head, even though some of them acknowledge that there is much that they do not approve of. It is found necessary to have concerts, teas, frolics, etc., in the churches to raise money; for, it is claimed, if they did not have these things, nobody would come to church except the preachers and some who hold office, and who attend to perform the duties for which they are held responsible. One such church official said to the Editor of THE WATCH TOWER, "I am in duty bound to go to church so often, but I will get out of the office as soon as I can." Having had the duty of Elder thrust upon him, he intended to escape from it as soon as possible.

## **THE PRESENT IDOL OF CHRISTENDOM**

Money-love, acquisitiveness, seems to be the controlling factor today. True, many who have a great deal of money are giving it out by the millions of dollars; but ours is a money-loving day. And it is not merely the rich who have this love of money. We find it everywhere. The chief desire is to get money – not to lay it up in banks, but to spend it; people like the pleasures which money will buy. It is a money-spending time as well as a money-loving time. Pleasure holds riot today, and money is honored and everywhere

sought. Our former superstitious ideas of the better blood of some than of others – "blue blood" – we in America have been largely relieved of. We have therefore not that love of aristocracy and so-called "noble birth" which prevails in the old world. People formerly believed that the kings and the nobility were of a different race altogether from the common people. But now love of money and of that which money will purchase – pleasure, power, influence – have driven the world mad. Money is worshiped as an idol. If one has money, he can get nearly anything he wants. Many such people have a form of godliness, without its power. The Apostle says, "From such turn away." – 2 Timothy 3:4,5.

This condition of things has grown by degrees. How shall we turn away from those who worship these false gods? We turn away in the sense that we do not follow in the same course. We keep our hearts from the love of pleasure and worldliness and from the greed of gain. We turn away from all these things, and go in a different direction. This seems to correspond with what the Lord says in Revelation 18:2,4. When revealing to the Apostle John the condition of Nominal Zion, in our day, and speaking prophetically as though in our day, He says, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen....Come out of her! The Lord's true people are to follow the Lord's direction here. They are to stand free from this bondage to error and worldliness, and set a good example to others also; and then they are to wait for the Lord's further instructions and for the accomplishment of His glorious purposes. We need not hope at all to turn the tide – one man or a thousand men or a million men would be powerless to turn the tide of Babylon today. She is fallen; therefore forsake her! – Jeremiah 51:6-9. [R5697 : page 164]

## **OUR QUIET, CONFIDENT STRENGTH**

God entered into His rest when His creative works were finished in the earth, so we, the true Church, shall soon enter into our rest, the perfect rest beyond the veil. God has placed the whole

matter in the hands of Christ to accomplish in the appointed time. We have confidence in the Lord and in His times and seasons; therefore we are very restful, and in coming out of Babylon we are not worried nor anxious and distressed about others. God will bring order out of all the prevailing confusion. All who will prove worthy of everlasting life will ultimately be glad to work in the way the Lord shall direct.

The world today is drunk with certain false doctrines, and do not know what they are doing. If we were with people who were hilarious, intoxicated, we would better **[R5697 : page 165]** not try to sober them up, but stop association with them. Yet there may be *some* in that company who would love to be as we – free to serve the Lord. It is our duty to help everybody who is feeling after the Lord and amenable in any degree to the Word of Truth. We are to do good to all men as we have opportunity, "especially unto them who are of the Household of Faith." (Galatians 6:10.) It is to this end that we have been circulating the STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, THE BIBLE STUDENTS MONTHLY, and holding meetings and showing THE PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION, so that other earnest souls may, like ourselves, stand free from the general trend of our day and may live a life of sacrifice, and thus be prepared for the high exaltation coming to those who are faithful to God – a reward that we believe is now near at hand. Those who are thus prepared and panoplied with the whole armor of God will be kept in a condition of quietness and confidence known to no others in this great Day of stress, turmoil and shaking.

### **PRESENT "SIGNS OF THE SON OF MAN"**

The way by which the Lord informs His faithful, watching ones of the import of present conditions in the world and of the nearness of Christ's glorious Reign, is through outward signs corroborating what we now see Bible chronology to indicate. A

sign is an indication. The putting up of a baker's sign indicates that bread is to be bought there; a butcher's sign, that meat is for sale at that place, etc. Then we have the sign, or indication of coming storms, or of fair weather. We are not to expect to see shining letters across the sky or anything of that kind to indicate the Lord's presence; but there has been a sign in the Church for some time now – about forty years – *the reaping of the ripe wheat*. This has been a sign of the Parousia of the Son of Man. It has not been possible for the world to discern this sign. We also have the sign of the barren fig tree, the Jewish nation, putting forth its leaves. We see the foretold worldliness of the church systems. We see the beginning of the smiting of the nations.

When the great Time of Trouble shall break, the *world* will begin to see that a new order of things is somehow coming about; that a great change is impending. Conditions have not been so previously. As men see that the Son of Man is about to take His great power and that the Messianic Kingdom is coming in, they will be apprehensive, not appreciating the fact that this Kingdom is designed for the blessing of all. For a time they will not grasp the full situation. They will see the trouble, the paralysis of business, the distress of nations, socialism, anarchism, and their hearts will fail them for fear of the things approaching.

But all these things are now *signs to us* that the Lord is making ready to establish His Kingdom and is preparing for the fall of the Gentile kingdoms. This, however, will not at first be distinguishable to the world in general under the flaming fire of trouble. They will not know what to make of these things. We think that the majority of people are somewhat perplexed today. Men who are very prominent in social matters, financial matters, religious matters, are in *great* perplexity. Many of them are beginning to discuss the idea that the Kingdom of God is really approaching.



We are told by some of our friends who attended the great Peace Meeting held here in New York City last fall that the prominent speakers participating, among them the Vice President of the United States, made numerous references to the Prince of Peace as being just at the door. The Millennium was referred to in like manner. We do not know what this means, except that they think that the Son of Man is now coming in His Kingdom. We think that their perplexity will increase as they see still greater stress – financial stress, social stress – and as we enter the great Time of Trouble, "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." A Hebrew gentleman was telling the Editor that the Jews in Jerusalem are starving to death. To the four millions of Jews living in Galicia and Austria it seems to make no difference whether one army or the other passes through the country; for the Jews always suffer. Wherever the armies have marched, the homes have been devastated and the land laid waste. Recently the Jews have held a Mass Meeting in New York to collect money for their brethren in Galicia and in Palestine.

If any of you should meet a banker, should you engage in conversation with him, you will see his face grow very sober. In some instances the tears will come into his eyes when speaking of the alarming conditions in finance today. Many wealthy people will say that when this war broke out they were worth a hundred thousand dollars, but that they do not now know what they are worth. Their stocks and bonds are not salable. So there is today a trouble that reaches increasingly throughout the earth, affecting not only all Christendom, but heathendom as well.

### **VIEW FROM CLEFT IN THE ROCK**

As our own eyes of understanding have opened, we have sought to show to the Church, and to the world as far as possible, the great Divine Plan of the Ages – wonderful, beautiful, far superior to anything human! Bible students the world over are

reading the Bible and the signs of the times in a new light; for God's own time has come for lifting the veil of ignorance and darkness which for so long He has permitted Satan to put before our eyes. To our understanding the present war is pictured in the Bible, as due to begin in 1914. It is a great "wind."

Following the great war, the Bible teaches, a great earthquake – social revolution – will take place. In connection with that earthquake will come an exaltation of religious sects, Catholic and Protestant, on the side of the kings and princes – political, social, financial, religious. Next will come the downfall of all present religious systems. Speedily the symbolic "fire" of the Bible will consume the earth – anarchy. Following the anarchy quickly will come the long-promised Kingdom of God, for which Christians have prayed, saying, "Thy Kingdom come," most of them with but little conception of the true meaning of their words. During the Reign of that Kingdom, "a still small voice," the Message of Truth and Grace, will come to all mankind. The world's uplift will progress; and the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall gradually fill the whole earth. The longed-for haven of rest will then be attained, "the desire of all nations."

### **"MY SHEEP HEAR" – AND FOLLOW**

All the true disciples of Jesus will see and hear in this present "due time." "My sheep hear My voice," said the Master. If any, therefore, are in Babylon and do not hear the voice of the Lord now calling them out of this great apostate System, *our plain inference is that they are not His true sheep*. This does not mean that all will hear at the same moment. Some are dull of hearing; they may not be living very near to the Lord. But so surely as they are His sheep they will hear; and so surely as they are following in His steps they will hear clearly, and obey promptly. They will be eager to come out of Babylon before her plagues come like a deluge, as they will soon come. We who now have the light should

hold up the Lord's Message and point other Christians to the **[R5697 : page 166]** present condition of things, and let them hear the Lord and then make their decision.

## **"PLAGUES" UPON BABYLON**

The "seven last plagues" to be visited especially upon Christendom do not mean a particular disease, as the black plague or cholera; but the word stands for trouble. The Scriptures indicate what these are – death, famine, revolution, distress, overthrow. These distresses will be both physical and mental. It will be a great trouble and distress to Babylon when she realizes that her walls are fallen. She has realized for some time that there was danger of a collapse, and has been seeking to repel anything that might come near to injure her walls. Many good people have been fighting for these denominations, thinking that they represent the Lord's people – being themselves bound more or less by the institutions of the present time.

We do not think that the Gospel Age fully ended in September 1914, but merely the Times of the Gentiles. The Gospel Age will not fully end, we believe, until the Gospel Message ends; and that will be when the door is shut, when the last member of the Very Elect shall have passed beyond the veil. It is our understanding that the elect Church of Christ, the Bride, will not remain in the flesh to do much of the teaching of the world, but will be glorified in the Kingdom either before or during the great Time of Trouble, and be ready to supervise the world's instruction from the spirit plane. The great conflict is before us. The Prophet Isaiah (63:1-6) depicts in very strong language the work of our Lord Jesus among the nations at this time and in the days just ahead. **[R5698 : page 166]** "He hath trodden the wine-press alone, and all His garments are stained with blood," the wrath of God. See STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, Vol. 4, pp. 18,19, and p. 51, par. 1. We believe that this work has

already begun in the present European war, which is growing in severity and awfulness day by day.

After the Church shall have been glorified beyond the veil, the Ancient Worthies are to be her representatives in the world, taking oversight of the instruction of the peoples and ruling in human affairs; after the Messiah has commanded "Peace" to the angry nations and bidden the raging billows be calm. But there may be yet for a little while – just how long we cannot surely know – some work for the Church to do for the world this side the veil, before the Time of Trouble fully sets in, or at the time of its beginning. If so, we believe that this instruction to the world is now in progress.

"Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord," even though for a brief space His righteous sword shall be unsheathed for the punishment of iniquity and the overthrow of Satan's great Empire.

