

The Little Time of Trouble

For thus saith the Lord; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas, for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." Jeremiah 30:5–7.

God has not left us to wonder about the meaning of this Scripture, for the Spirit of Prophecy opens up the magnitude of this crisis. "The 'time of trouble such as never was,' is soon to open upon us; and we shall need an experience which we do not now possess and which many are too indolent to obtain. It is often the case that trouble is greater in anticipation than in reality; but this is not true of the crisis before us. The most vivid presentation cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal." The Great Controversy, 622.

The little time of trouble occurs prior to the close of probation and will be experienced by all the living saints. When they receive the latter rain, they give the loud cry with divine power, warning all the inhabitants of the earth that they must make a final decision for or against God. Then probation will close and immediately the great time of trouble will commence. "And at the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully." Early Writings, 33.

There is no question. When the little time of trouble begins, the latter rain falls, the saints are sealed and the loud cry is given. This is made positively clear in the following quotation. "'The commencement of that time of trouble,' here mentioned, [on page 33] does not refer to the time when the plagues shall begin to be poured out, but to a short period just before they are poured out, while Christ is in the sanctuary. At that time, while the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, and the nations will be angry, yet held in check so as not to prevent the work of the third angel." Early Writings, 85.

When the national Sunday law is adopted by the United States of America, the papal power will be so in control of the New World Order that it will force all nations to immediately follow the Sunday law in America, making it a universal law. It will be accepted by all nations and falsely believed to be the beginning of the great millenium of peace that will lead the entire world to be converted to God.

"Papists, Protestants, and the worldlings will alike accept the form of godliness without the power, and they will see in this union a great movement for the conversion of the world and the ushering in of the long-expected millenium." The Great Controversy, 588.

We know what the true results will be. "When the reasoning of philosophy has banished the fears of God's judgments; when religious teachers are pointing forward to long ages of peace and prosperity, and the world are absorbed in their rounds of business and pleasure, planting and building, feasting and merrymaking, rejecting God's warnings and mocking His messengers —then it is that sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape. 1 Thessalonians 5:3." Patriarchs and Prophets, 104.

The people of the world believe that the New World Order program will bring a millenium of peace in which everyone will be saved, but God will permit calamities to awaken the honest in heart to see the need to obey God or perish. "Calamities will come—calamities most awful, most unexpected; and these destructions will follow one after another. If there

will be a heeding of the warning that God has given, and if churches will repent, returning to their allegiance, then other cities may be spared for a time. But if men who have been deceived continue in the same way in which they have been walking, disregarding the law of God and presenting falsehoods before the people, God allows them to suffer calamity, that their senses may be awakened." Evangelism, 27.

Here again we see a picture of a loving God, who, as a loving Father, is not willing that any of His children should perish. This is why these disasters gradually get worse, giving time for the Third Angel's Message to do its work.

"Angels are now restraining the winds of strife, until the world shall be warned of its coming doom; but a storm is gathering, ready to burst upon the earth, and when God shall bid His angels loose the winds, there will be such a scene of strife as no pen can picture . . ."A moment of respite has been graciously given us of God. Every power lent us of heaven is to be used in doing the work assigned us by the Lord for those who are perishing in ignorance." Evangelism, 704.

It is during this little time of trouble that God gives a last chance to the world to accept His law. "Soon strife among the nations will break out with an intensity that we do not now anticipate. The present is a time of overwhelming interest to all living. Rulers and statesmen, men who occupy positions of trust and authority, thinking men and women of all classes, have their attention fixed upon the events taking place about us. They are watching the strained, restless relations that exist among the nations. They observe the intensity that is taking possession of every earthly element. And they realize that something great and decisive is about to take place, that the world is on the verge of a stupendous crisis." Maranatha, 174.

This is why we will finish the work under the most dire circumstances during this little time of trouble. "While the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, and the nations will be angry, yet held in check so as not to prevent the work of the third angel. At that time the 'latter rain,' or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues will be poured out." Early Writings, 85.

God has foreseen what is coming and has made the necessary preparations for us to be refreshed by the latter rain and with the power of the mighty angel to give the loud cry. Oh, it will not be long until the climax is reached and Jesus will come!

"Satan works through the elements also to garner his harvest of unprepared souls. He has studied the secrets of the laboratories of nature and he uses all his power to control the elements as far as God allows. While appearing to the children of men as a great physician who can heal all their maladies, he will bring disease and disaster until populous cities are reduced to ruin and desolation. Even now he is at work. In accidents and calamities by sea and by land; in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the pestilence. These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous. Destruction will be upon both man and beast." The Great Controversy (1888 edition), 589.

Satan's purpose in such destruction will be to blame God's faithful for these terrible judgments. "As men depart further and further from God, Satan is permitted to have power over the children of disobedience. He hurls destruction among men. There is calamity by land and sea. Property and life are destroyed by fire and flood. Satan resolves to charge this upon those who refuse to bow to the idol which he has set up. His agents point to Seventh-day Adventists as the cause of the trouble. 'These people stand out in defiance of law,' they say. 'They desecrate Sunday. Were they compelled to obey the law for Sunday observance, there would be a cessation of these terrible judgments.'" Maranatha, 176.

Finally the Sunday violators will be declared to be the cause of all that is taking place in this little time of trouble. "Satan puts his interpretation upon events, and they [leading men] think, as he would have them, that the calamities which fill the land are a result of Sunday-breaking. Thinking to appease the wrath of God, these influential men make laws enforcing Sunday observance. They think that by exalting this false rest-day higher, and still higher, compelling obedience to the Sunday law, the spurious sabbath, they are doing God service. Those who honor God by observing the true Sabbath are looked upon as disloyal to God, when it is really those who thus regard them who are themselves disloyal, because they are trampling under foot the Sabbath originated in Eden." Maranatha, 176.

Thus the entire world under the papal power will turn against God's people. Sabbath-keepers will be hated and plans will be made to utterly destroy them. "The whole world is to be stirred with enmity against Seventh-day Adventists, because they will not yield homage to the papacy, by honoring Sunday, the institution of this antichristian power. It is the purpose of Satan to cause them to be blotted from the earth, in order that his supremacy of the world may not be disputed." Testimonies to Ministers, 37.

Such wicked plans will draw the attention of the honest in heart, to the belief and teaching of God's remnant church in such a way as is now thought impossible. In fact, the attention of the entire world will be riveted on our beliefs. "Every position of truth taken by our people will bear the criticism of the greatest minds; the highest of the world's great men will be brought in contact with truth and therefore every position we take should be critically examined and tested by the Scriptures." Evangelism, 69.

Study and Prepare

Now we seem to be unnoticed, but this will not always be. Movements are at work to bring us to the front, and if our theories of truth can be picked to pieces by historians or the world's greatest men, it will be done. We must know for ourselves what the truth is and be prepared to give a reason for the hope that we have with meekness and fear. (See 1 Peter 3:15.)

We are nearing the time when we shall stand alone to answer for our beliefs. But the strength of God's remnant will be found in their obedience and knowledge of His word. "The powers of darkness will open their batteries upon us; and all who are indifferent and careless, who have set their affections on their earthly treasure, and who have not cared to understand God's dealings with His people, will be ready victims. No power but a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, will ever make us steadfast; but with this, one may chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight." Maranatha, 217.

This is why we have been urged to study and prepare for what is sure to come. We will have to bear our testimony before courts and councils. "You know not where you may be called upon to give your witness of truth. Many will have to stand in the legislative courts;

some will have to stand before kings and before the learned of the earth, to answer for their faith. Those who have only a superficial understanding of truth will not be able clearly to expound the Scriptures, and give definite reasons for their faith. They will become confused, and will not be workmen that need not be ashamed. Let no one imagine that he has no need to study, because he is not to preach in the sacred desk. You know not what God may require of you." Fundamentals of Christian Education, 217.

"The time is not far off when the people of God will be called upon to give their testimony before the rulers of the earth. Not one in twenty has a realization of what rapid strides we are making toward the great crisis in our history. There is no time for vanity, for trifling, for engaging the mind in unimportant matters." Maranatha, 253.

"The Lord Jesus will give the disciples a tongue and wisdom that their adversaries can neither gainsay nor resist. Those who could not by reasoning overcome satanic delusions, will bear an affirmative testimony that will baffle supposedly learned men. Words will come from the lips of the unlearned with such convincing power and wisdom that conversions will be made to the truth. Thousands will be converted under their testimony.

"Why should the illiterate man have this power, which the learned man has not? The illiterate one, through faith in Christ, has come into the atmosphere of pure, clear truth, while the learned man has turned away from the truth. The poor man is Christ's witness. He cannot appeal to the histories or so-called high science, but he gathers from the Word of God powerful evidence. The truth that he speaks under the inspiration of the Spirit, is so pure and remarkable and carries with it a power so indisputable, that his testimony cannot be gainsaid." Maranatha, 252.

Persecution

God's people will be persecuted during this time of trouble. This will take place during the loud cry before probation closes. But thank God such persecutions will be limited.

"Persecution in its varied forms is the development of the principle which will exist as long as Satan exists and Christianity has vital power . . . But so long as Jesus remains man's intercessor in the sanctuary above, the restraining influence of the Holy Spirit is felt by rulers and people. It still controls to some extent the laws of the land. Were it not for these laws, the conditions of the world would be much worse than it now is. While many of our rulers are active agents of Satan, God also has His agents among the leading men of the nations. The enemy moves upon his servants to propose measures that would greatly impede the work of God; but statesmen who fear the Lord are influenced by holy angels to oppose such propositions with unanswerable arguments. Thus a few men will hold in check a powerful current of evil. The opposition of the enemies of truth will be restrained that the Third Angel's Message may do its work. When the final warning shall be given, it will arrest the attention of these leading men through whom the Lord is now working, and some of them will accept it, and will stand with the people of God through the time of trouble." The Great Controversy, 610, 611.

"As Christ was hated without cause, so will His people be hated because they are obedient to the commandments of God. If He who was pure, holy, and undefiled, who did good and only good in our world, was treated as a base criminal and condemned to death, His disciples must expect but similar treatment, however faultless may be their life and blameless their character.

“Human enactments, laws manufactured by satanic agencies under a plea of goodness and restriction of evil, will be exalted, while God’s holy commandments are despised and trampled under foot. And all who prove their loyalty by obedience to the law of Jehovah must be prepared to be arrested, to be brought before councils that have not for their standard the high and holy law of God.” Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Volume 7, 977.

This is not a very pretty picture. In the end time, corrupt judges will pledge themselves to uphold and honor the New World Order. “Those who live during the last days of this earth’s history will know what it means to be persecuted for the truth’s sake. In the courts injustice will prevail. The judges will refuse to listen to the reasons of those who are loyal to the commandments of God, because they know that arguments in favor of the fourth commandment are unanswerable. They will say, ‘We have a law, and by our law he ought to die.’ God’s law is nothing to them. ‘Our law’ with them is supreme. Those who respect this human law will be favored, But those who will not bow to the idol sabbath will have no favors shown them.” Maranatha, 195.

“Before the warfare shall be ended and the victory won, we as a people are to experience trials similar to those of Paul. We shall encounter the same hardness of heart, the same cruel determination, the same unyielding hatred . . . Persecutions will again be kindled against those who are true to God; their motives will be impugned, their best efforts misinterpreted, their names cast out as evil . . . God would have His people prepared for the soon-coming crisis. Prepared or unprepared, we must all meet it.” Sketches from the Life of Paul, 251, 252.

“There will come a time when, because of our advocacy of Bible truth, we shall be treated as traitors.” Testimonies, vol. 6, 394.

“Wealth, genius, education, will combine to cover them with contempt. Persecuting rulers, ministers, and church members will conspire against them. With voice and pen, by boasts, threats, and ridicule, they will seek to overthrow their faith.” Testimonies, vol. 5, 450.

“As the defenders of truth refuse to honor the Sunday-sabbath, some of them will be thrust into prison, some will be exiled, some will be treated as slaves. To human wisdom all this now seems impossible; but as the restraining Spirit of God shall be withdrawn from men, and they shall be under the control of Satan, who hates the divine precepts, there will be strange developments. The heart can be very cruel when God’s fear and love are removed.” The Great Controversy, 608.

“Throughout the land the papacy is piling up her lofty and massive structures, in the secret recesses of which her former persecutions are to be repeated.” Testimonies for the Church, volume 5, 449, 450.

“The papal church will never relinquish her claim to infallibility. All that she has done in her persecution of those who reject her dogmas she holds to be right; and would she not repeat the same acts, should the opportunity be presented? Let the restraints now imposed by secular governments be removed and Rome be reinstated in her former power, and there would speedily be a revival of her tyranny and persecution.” The Great Controversy, 564.

Furthermore, Protestants will also persecute the faithful. "The church appeals to the strong arm of civil power, and in this work, papists and Protestants unite." *The Great Controversy*, 607.

Satan has planned every detail. Listen in as God tells us of Satan's devices as he instructs his angels and his evil men. "We [Satan and his angels] led the Romish church to inflict imprisonment, torture, and death upon those who refused to yield to her decrees; and now that we are bringing the Protestant churches and the world into harmony with this right arm of our strength, we will finally have a law to exterminate all who will not submit to our authority." *Testimonies to Ministers*, 473.

Former Seventh-day Adventists will join in the persecution of God's saints. "Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbath-keepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them." *The Great Controversy*, 608.

Finally, this New World Order will determine to utterly destroy God's faithful, just as Satan attempted in earlier centuries. "The decree which is to go forth against the people of God will be very similar to that issued by Ahasuerus against the Jews in the time of Esther . . . Satan instigated the scheme in order to rid the earth of those who preserve the knowledge of the true God. But his plots were defeated by a counterpower that reigns among the children of men . . . The Protestant world today see in the little company keeping the Sabbath a Mordecai in the gate. His character and conduct, expressing reverence for the law of God, are a constant rebuke to those who have cast off the fear of the Lord and are trampling upon His Sabbath; the unwelcome intruder must by some means be put out of the way.

"The same masterful mind that plotted against the faithful in ages past is still seeking to rid the earth of those who fear God and obey His law. Satan will excite indignation against the humble minority who conscientiously refuse to accept popular customs and traditions. Men of position and reputation will join with the lawless and the vile to take counsel against the people of God . . . By false representations and angry appeals they will stir up the passions of the people. Not having a 'Thus saith the Scriptures' to bring against the advocates of the Bible Sabbath, they will resort to oppressive enactments to supply the lack. To secure popularity and patronage, legislators will yield to the demand for a Sunday law. Those who fear God cannot accept an institution that violates a precept of the Decalogue. On this battlefield comes the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error. And we are not left in doubt as to the issue. Now, as in the days of Mordecai, the Lord will vindicate His truth and His people." *Testimonies*, vol.5, 450, 451.

"When this grand work is to take place in the battle, prior to the last closing conflict, many will be imprisoned, many will flee for their lives from cities and towns, and many will be martyrs for Christ's sake in standing in defense of the truth." *Maranatha*, 199.

"As he [Satan] influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of the earth to destroy the people of God. Men will be required to render obedience to human edicts in violation of the divine law. "Those who are true to God will be menaced, denounced, and proscribed. They will be 'betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolk, and friends,' even unto death." *Prophets and Kings*, 587.

Such persecutions, during this little time of trouble, will bring the close of probation upon the earth. I praise God for the encouragement He has given for this soon-coming little time of trouble. "And if we are called to suffer for Christ's sake, we shall be able to go to prison trusting in Him as a little child trusts in his parents. Now is the time to cultivate faith in God." Our High Calling, 357.

We do not need the courage and fortitude of the martyrs of old until brought into the position that they were in. "Should there be a return of persecution there would be grace given to arouse every energy of the soul to show a true heroism." Our High Calling, 125.

"The disciples were not endowed with the courage and fortitude of the martyrs until such grace was needed." The Desire of Ages, 354. "When for the truth's sake the believer stands at the bar of the unrighteous tribunals, Christ stands by his side . . . When one is incarcerated in prison walls, Christ ravishes the heart with His love. When one suffers death for His sake, Christ says, 'I am He that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore . . . and have the keys of hell and of death.' Revelation 1:18. The life that is sacrificed for Me is preserved unto eternal glory." The Desire of Ages, 669.