

**Note: This same article is used for both the Oct. 9<sup>th</sup> and Oct. 16<sup>th</sup> Manna Texts. Only one mailing will be sent.**

**October 9**

*Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Matthew 8:26*

EACH experience should be helpful to us. If at first we were fearful and cried aloud, by and by we received the succor,

with perhaps the reprimand, "O thou of little faith!" but as lesson after lesson has come to us, the Master will expect--and we should expect of ourselves--greater faith, greater trust, greater peace, greater joy in the Lord, greater confidence in His presence with us

and His care over us, and in His power to deliver us from the adversary and from every evil thing, and to bring us eventually in safety to the port we seek--the heavenly Kingdom. Z.'04-60R3325:1

**October 16**

*He maketh the storm a calm. Psalm 107:29*

WE of today represent the Lord's cause in the midst of the raging elements of human passions, oppositions, etc.,...and our hearts would be at times dismayed except as faith is able to see the Lord with us in the

ship, and able to grasp the thought of His mighty power in His own time and way to speak peace to the world...It must not surprise us, however, if a dark hour is before us--if the time shall come when the stormy winds will be so fierce that many will cry out in fear and trembling. Let us learn well the precious experiences of the present time,

so that then our faith shall not fail us--so that in the darkest hour we shall be able to sing and to rejoice in Him who loved us and bought us with His own precious blood, and to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. Z.'04-60 R3325:4

R3324 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)

**"HE MAKETH THE STORM A CALM"--PSA. 107:29**

--MARK 4:35-41.--MARCH 6--

OUR Lord's ministry is supposed to have covered two years at the time of the miracle of the calming of the sea, recorded in this lesson. After the selection of the twelve apostles and the Sermon on the Mount, etc., our Lord returned to Capernaum and soon after began his second tour of Galilee. It was during this interim that he awakened from the sleep of death the son of the widow of Nain--the first recorded instance of its kind in our Lord's ministry. Then came teachings by parables, and in the afternoon of a busy day of teaching--after three o'clock, while still sitting in one of the boats as on a former occasion, having concluded his teachings--he directed that the boat be taken to the opposite side of the lake. The multitude, after being informed that the discourses were ended, were dismissed, and without delay the boat was started. From the various accounts we judge that all the twelve disciples were with him, and apparently other "men"--seamen, as Matthew's account implies.

Travelers tell us that the Sea of Galilee is quite subject to wind storms. Dr. Thompson, describing his own experiences on this little sea, says: "The sun had scarcely set when the wind began to rush down toward the lake; and it continued all night long with constantly increasing violence, so that when we reached the shore the next morning the face of the lake was like a huge cauldron. The wind hurled down every wady from the north-east and east with such fury that no efforts of rowers could have brought a boat to shore at any point along that coast. To understand the causes of these sudden tempests, we must remember that the lake lies low, 600 feet lower than the ocean; that the vast and naked plateaus of the Jaulan rise to a great height, spreading backward to the wilds of Hauran, and upward to snowy Mt. Hermon; that the watercourses have cut out profound ravines and wide gorges, converging to the head of the lake, and that these act like gigantic funnels to draw down the cold winds from the mountains."

**"WE ARE NOT IGNORANT OF HIS DEVICES"**

Our own opinion is that "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2) had something to do in the development of this storm--that it had more than natural causes, although the latter might have assisted or even been sufficient. We remember that the Adversary had already endeavored to induce our Lord to leap from the pinnacle of the Temple, but had not succeeded. Apparently now he would drown him in the sea. But the Lord, who declares himself able to make the wrath of man to praise him, caused the wrath of Satan or the wildness of the elements, whichever it was that induced the storm, to praise him--to show forth his mighty power.

During the storm our Lord lay asleep in the hinder part of the vessel on a cushion. Evidently he was thoroughly exhausted from the labors of his journey and ministry. Meantime, as the storm increased, the boat with its precious load began to fill with water more rapidly than it could be bailed out. No wonder the disciples, fishermen and experts at sea though they were, were alarmed. We cannot

avoid the thought that in some manner the Lord's providence had something to do with his prolonged sleep under such circumstances, and that the intention was to put the faith of the disciples to the test. They had seen his mighty works, his healing of the sick, and his awakening of the dead, and they had heard his teachings and had taken a miraculous catch of fish under his direction where they had failed before, and by this time they should have had considerable faith in his power everyway. The fact that they approached him at all indicates that they did have faith to some degree, though not implicit faith.

The slightly different accounts of the event given by Matthew, Mark and Luke, some one has paraphrased as follows,--Matthew: "Save, Lord, we perish;" Mark: "Teacher, carest thou not that we perish?" Luke: "Master, Master, we perish." All three accounts are correct --one disciple cried out in one way and others in different words. Some one puts it thus: "Little Faith prayed, 'Save us;' Much Fear cried, 'We perish;' Distrust urged, 'Carest thou not?' More Faith said, 'Lord;' Discipleship cried out, 'Teacher;' Faint Hope cried, 'Master, thou with authority.'" Jesus arose (awoke) and commanded peace and quiet, which immediately followed. The record mentions the cessation of the wind and additionally the calming of the sea. Some one might claim that a storm which came up suddenly might happen to stop with equal suddenness, but this would not account for the calming of the sea. Waters thus lashed to a fury could not be calmed thus quickly except by superhuman power. This, indeed, we may assume to be a prominent feature of the miracle.

It is rather peculiar that the Greek word used for "Be still" in this text is the same word used by our Lord to the demon. (Mark 1:25.) This rather corroborates the suggestion foregoing respecting the storm being the work of the Adversary. In any event this miracle shows clearly that storms should not be accredited, as they frequently are, to divine malevolence; for if the Father had caused the storm the Son would not have interfered with it. We do not wish to intimate, either, that every storm is of Satanic origin; we do not dispute that many of them arise from natural causes; but we do hold that some of them are supernatural and of the Adversary, and as a Scriptural evidence along this line we cite the whirlwind raised up by Satan, which smote the house in which Job's children were feasting.--Job 1:13,19.

That our Lord intended this experience to be a lesson to the disciples, along the line of faith in him, seems to be borne out by verses 40,41. He said unto them, "Why are ye fearful? Have ye not yet faith?" Has your faith not yet developed to such a degree that you can trust me, and realize the Father's favor and power ever with me for my protection, and that while with me no harm could possibly overtake you--nothing that is not wholly under my control? No wonder the apostles gained additional reverence for the Lord as a result of this miracle. Apparently it came just in the right time and order to be their appropriate lesson. In fact we may conclude that

every item of their experience and every item of our Lord's conduct, teaching and mighty works was especially for the instruction of these twelve, who were to be his witnesses to us and to the nations of the earth respecting that ministry.

#### SPIRITUAL LESSONS FOR THE SPIRITUAL HOUSEHOLD

There is a precious lesson in this miracle for all of the Lord's followers outside of the apostleship, too. We also have need of faith and need of tests to our faith. <sup>(1)</sup>Our daily experiences since we became the Lord's followers have been guided and guarded apparently by the power unseen, to the intent that as pupils in the school of Christ, we may all be taught of him and develop more and more of the graces of the Spirit, and particularly more and more faith. How important this item of faith is we probably cannot fully appreciate now. It seems to be one thing that the Lord specially seeks for in those now called to be followers. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." "With faith all things are possible." Proper faith is understood, of course, not credulity, not reliance upon the words of men, but implicit faith in the Lord for all that he has promised. "According to thy faith be it unto thee."

So important a grace must of necessity require many lessons for its proper development, and it does not surprise us that in our individual experiences as Christians we find those which correspond to the experiences of the apostles noted in this lesson. How suddenly the Adversary may at times bring against us a whirlwind of temptation or of opposition or of persecution. How at such times our sky seems overcast, dark, foreboding; how the waves of adversity or affliction have almost overwhelmed us, and how the Lord seemed asleep and heedless of our distress and indifferent to our necessities! Such experiences are tests of our faith, as this one was a test to the faith of the apostles. If our faith be strong enough under such circumstances, we would keep on with our proper endeavors to adjust matters corresponding to the bailing of the boat and the working of the oars; but meantime, with an implicit faith in the Lord's promise that "all things shall work together for our good," we would be able to sing as did the Apostle Paul and Silas after being beaten while in the stocks for their faithfulness to the Lord. They rejoiced that they were accounted worthy to suffer for the name of Christ. <sup>(2)</sup>So according to our faith will we be able to rejoice even in tribulation. We cannot enjoy the sufferings; we can enjoy the thought which faith attaches to them, namely, that these are but light afflictions working out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

<sup>(3)</sup>Each experience of this kind should be helpful to us. If at first we were fearful and cried aloud, by and by we received the succor, with perhaps the reprimand, "O, thou of little faith;" but as lesson after lesson has come to us, the Master will expect--and we should expect of ourselves--greater faith, greater trust, greater peace,

greater joy in the Lord, greater confidence in his presence with us and his care over us, and in his power to deliver us from the Adversary and from every evil thing, and to bring us eventually in safety to the port we seek--the heavenly Kingdom.

#### THE CHURCH'S EXPERIENCES PREFIGURED

Some one has suggested, apparently on reasonable grounds, that this experience of Jesus and the Apostles in the boat during the night pictured the experiences of the Church during this Gospel age. The Lord assured his people, saying, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the age," and "I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also," and "nothing shall by any means hurt you," etc. The Lord's faithful people all through this age have realized with more or less distinctness the certainty of these precious promises; they have felt that the Lord indeed is with his Church; yet it has seemed at times as though he were asleep, inattentive to the prayers of his faithful, and inattentive to their cries and groans. For eighteen centuries his dear ones have been tempest-tossed by the Adversary, persecuted, afflicted, buffeted--all through this dark night, in which the only light available has been "thy Word a light to my feet." The experiences of others in the past are our experiences in the present.

<sup>(4)</sup>We of today represent the Lord's cause in the midst of the raging elements of human passions, oppositions, etc.; and as the Apostle declares of his day, so it is still true that "we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers and spiritual wickedness in high positions." The storms may seem to come from the world, but really beyond the world is the Adversary. "We are not ignorant of his devices;" <sup>(5)</sup>our hearts would be at times dismayed except as faith is able to see the Lord with us in the ship, and able to grasp the thought of his mighty power in his own time and way to speak peace to the world.

Soon the time will come for him who careth for us to exert his great power on our behalf, to deliver his people, to say to the raging elements, Peace, be still. Then will follow the great calm, the great rest from the evil one for a thousand years, for he shall be bound that he shall deceive the nations no more. Then will come the eternal rest of the heart to all who are now in the boat with the Lord, and then will come the opportunity for all these to be co-laborers with him in the great and glorious work of blessing the world. <sup>(6)</sup>It must not surprise us, however, if a dark hour is before us--if the time will come when the stormy winds will be so fierce that many will cry out in fear and trembling. Let us learn well the precious experiences of the present time, so that then our faith shall not fail us--so that in the darkest hour we shall be able to sing and to rejoice in him who loved us and bought us with his own precious blood, and to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

<sup>(1)</sup> ½ Oct. 15 Manna, Mar. 11:22

<sup>(2)</sup> ½ Oct. 15 Manna

<sup>(3)</sup> Oct. 9 Manna, Mat. 8:26

<sup>(4)</sup> 1/3 Oct. 16 Manna, Psa. 107:29

<sup>(5)</sup> 1/3 Oct. 16 Manna

<sup>(6)</sup> 1/3 Oct. 16 Manna

SM739,743-746 Titled "NEARING THE DESIRED HAVEN OF REST" "*So He bringeth them unto their desired haven.*" -- *Psa 107:30*..

We see, then, that these stormy experiences apply both to the whole Church and to each individual member. It is true that there are certain storms, difficulties and trials common to the whole world of mankind; and, as the Apostle says, "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, ... waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God." But these storms which come to the Church are specially peculiar and different in some respects from all that come to the world. They come to us because we are not of the world, because we are separate from the world and its spirit, its aspirations, and are following the new aspirations and leadings of the Lord. Notice the Master's

words, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 14:18, 19.) So to speak, when we leave the world we start on our voyage to our haven of rest, the glorious Heavenly City, the New Jerusalem.

With some the beginning of the journey is peaceful and conditions are favorable, so there is more or less of a temptation to coast about and to feel at home on the ocean instead of steering straight for the haven of rest. With others the stormy winds blow from the very start, suggesting the impossibility of the journey, in order that we might be affrighted and turn back, having concluded that as the cost of our home going would be too great we must abandon the project. These two

influences are very successful with many; and they turn back after they had once concluded to take the journey in harmony with the Lord's invitation to follow Him, to endure hardness, to separate themselves from earthly interests and to seek His blessing and favor.

Our appeal is to those who have not been turned back by the allurements of peace and calm, who have not been discouraged by the storms and threatening aspects, but who have started with full courage upon the course to the Heavenly port. Of such we confidently assert that they had not been long in the way until storms and billows assailed them and the Adversary threatened to overwhelm them with opposition or with temptation and allurements. This is the experience of the Lord's people in general, and the one which the Scriptures warrant us in expecting for all, "The servant is not greater than his

Lord"; and the experiences of the Master are to be, in a considerable degree at least, the experiences of all those who will walk in His footsteps.

In our context the Prophet describes graphically some of our trials, difficulties and experiences, picturing them as the stormy troubles of the sea, saying of these mariners, "They mount up to heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted because of trouble, they reel to and fro and stagger like a drunken man and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are sill. Then they are glad because they are quiet; so He bringeth them unto their desired haven," through such experiences of storm, trial, difficulty, the seeking of the Lord in prayer, waiting upon Him and trusting Him, experiencing quiet and relief and enjoying His presence and blessing. Then another storm arises -- more trouble, adverse winds, prayer again, drawing near the Lord, having His sustaining strength further manifested, new hopes, new courage, new wisdom from on High. Thus by these various storms of life and the various blessings of sunshine and favor and the various lessons which we are thus learning, our

Heavenly Father and our Lord are gradually bringing us to the desired haven, gradually instructing us in the right way, gradually fitting and preparing us for His presence and glory!

Indeed, we are assured that these lessons are absolutely indispensable to all those who will attain to the glorious things which God hath in reservation for them. The Apostle likens us to human sons and asks, "What son is he whom the Father chasteneth not," and suggests that if the chastening be thus necessary and if we receive none, it would indicate that we are not really sons but bastards, not really in the Father's love and favor. It is a part of the great lesson of faith and trust that we shall be able to recognize the hand of the Lord in all of our difficulties, to see the silver lining in every cloud of trouble, and to realize that all about us are the protecting powers of our God; that He holds us, as it were, in the hollow of His hand and that nothing of evil or trouble can by any means hurt us if we abide in trust, faith and obedience under His protecting care, seeking to learn the lessons which He would teach us. Thus He is bringing us to the desired haven. He is bringing us to the condition of heart and character which He can approve as worthy of life eternal, the glorious reward of the inheritance of the

saints in light. -- Col. 1:12..."

Promise Book Page 26 "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved." Psa. 55:22.

There are works of grace to be wrought out in us which only the hard experiences of life can accomplish. For instance, we would be inclined to lean too much to our own understanding, if we were not at times brought face to face with problems that baffle our skill. It is when we are 'afraid to touch things that involve so much,' that in our perplexity we come to Him who has kindly said, 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He will sustain thee,' and ask Him to undertake for us. Or we might be inclined to trust too much in the arm of flesh, if the arm of flesh had never failed us, and the disappointment driven us to the Lord to seek the shelter of His wing. Or we might learn to trust in uncertain riches, if moth and rust had never corrupted nor thieves stolen the little or much of our earthly possessions. Or we might have been satisfied with earthly friendships and loves had not their loss sometimes left us alone with God to prove the sweetness of His consolation. -- R2130:1:2

R5239 (From Harvest Truth Database V5.0)

## STORMS ON THE SEA OF LIFE

*"He maketh the storm a calm."--Psalm 107:29.*

IF THERE is anything in the world which causes a man to feel his own littleness it is a storm at sea. The voyagers realize that no human arm could calm that storm. The text, then, refers to the Almighty One, our Heavenly Father. Our Heavenly Father, however, always uses instrumentalities. The Scriptures tell us that after He had created one great being, He rested. This One was the Logos, the Only Begotten of the Father, the First-born of all creation. (Colossians 1:15; Revelation 3:14.) All the power the Father has since exercised has been through the Lord Jesus.

The passage of Scripture used as our text may not have been understood fully and completely by the Psalmist, the one who uttered this prophecy. Like many other Scriptures it has a special application to the Church of Christ. The Apostle Paul tells us that these things were written beforehand for our admonition, instruction. (I Corinthians 10:11.) We believe that nearly all the prophecies recognize the Lord and His Body first. There have been many storms permitted by the Lord to come upon the little company of His followers. Sometimes the whole journey of life has been a stormy one. We sometimes sing, "When the storms of life are raging." In his Epistles, the Apostle intimates that those who do not have storms, trials and difficulties lack proof that they are God's children; for God would not be dealing with such as His children.--Hebrews 12:7,8.

If we are children of God, we need to have trials and testings, that these may make us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. (Colossians 1:12.) In all these experiences, the tendency of the trial is to drive us nearer to the Lord, to make us feel that we need the Divine shelter and care. And so a blessing comes out of these storms. We are not to think of God as making these storms, either literal or figurative. Satan is the great Enemy. While literal storms come about by natural laws, apparently, yet there may be a power exercised by spirit beings to produce them. During our Lord's ministry a storm of this kind was raised on the Sea of Galilee. The storm was so sudden and so great that, although the lake is not very large, the boat seemed in danger of going down, and the disciples, although experienced fishermen, were in terror. Jesus was asleep in the end of the boat. They came to Him and said, "Master! carest Thou not that we perish?"

### STORMS A TEST OF FAITH

Satan knew that Jesus and the disciples were in the boat on the

sea. Perhaps he thought that by causing this storm he could destroy Jesus and thwart the Father's Plan. Jesus rebuked the storm. This He would not have done, we suppose, if it had been caused by the Father. Then He applied the lesson to the disciples, saying, "O ye of little faith, why did ye doubt?"

The Lord's evident intention in letting the storm go as far as it did was to test the faith of the disciples, and to give a lesson such as this text is giving us now. It would cause them to remember in future years, in all their difficulties, whether from their own imperfections, or the imperfections of others, or as the result of the work of fallen angels, that all things were under Divine oversight. This also we should remember: We have the assurance that all these things will work for good to us, and that He will with the temptation provide also a way of escape, that we may be able to bear it.--I Cor. 10:13.

This was illustrated in the storm on the sea, and the Lord's act in rebuking the storm. So if we have trials and difficulties, we should cry unto the Lord--we should exercise faith enough to cry unto Him. It should not be that blind faith which would say, "Whatever the fates have ordained, that is my portion; and there is no escape." This latter is the condition of the heathen, but is not the case with us. The Lord allows the storms to press us more and more so that we will cry unto Him. Then He will hear us and give us the necessary deliverance. He may not always make it a very speedy deliverance, but He will make a way for us to escape. We must remember also that it is the New Creature with which He is dealing. These storms may be right *inside*, in our own person--storms of passion, of anger, of resentment. These we are not to allow to go on; but we are to cry for the Lord's help, that we may be overcomers of these storms--trials.

### GREAT STORM OF WRATH COMING

This incident of the Sea of Galilee pictures what the Lord is doing for the Church now, and what He will do in the future for the world. He intends to deliver the whole world from sin and death, which have had a long reign of six thousand years. This period has been one continuous storm, with occasional brief lulls. Meantime the world is receiving certain great lessons as to the desirability of harmony with God. By and by they will come to understand, and will then greatly appreciate the importance of being fully in accord

with God and very obedient to the Divine direction. Thus a foundation stone is being laid in their education for the next Age.

Finally, this storm on Galilee seems to picture very graphically the great time of trouble with which this Age will end. Then the reign of Satan will cease, and the reign of Messiah will begin. We are not to think of Jesus' Kingdom as bringing about the great time of trouble. The Scriptural thought seems rather to be that Christ's work in the present time is with the Church, and that with the completion of the Church, with the glorification of the Church, Christ's Kingdom will be set up. This Day of Trouble will be more particularly the Day of Jehovah. In this, Divine Justice will have a hand.

We do not mean, however, to exclude the Lord Jesus, for He is the chief factor in all that God does. But when the Kingdom of Mes-

siah comes, it will exercise a restraining power--will bring down the lofty, will turn the wrath of man so as to cause it to praise God. This wrath of man will bring "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation." In some of the Scriptural pictures it is represented as a whirlwind, and in others it is represented as a great tidal wave--the sea and the waves will roar. Then in the midst of a great storm, which will be sufficient to wreck the whole human fabric, Messiah's Kingdom will be set up. It will cause wars to cease. Satan will be bound. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God will fill the whole earth. "The desire of all nations shall come," and will be recognized in the making of the storm a calm, by this Kingdom of Messiah.

R5878 "QUIETNESS IN THE MIDST OF STORMS" "When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?"--Job 34:29...

The lesson of the text for those who have put themselves in God's care, is that no one can make them trouble without Divine permission. The Lord tells us that during this Gospel Age He will make all things work together for good to His children, and that He will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear, (1 Corinthians 10:13.) In our Lord's case it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him, to allow suffering and death to come upon Him. (Isaiah 53:10.) It pleased God to adopt this Plan for the recovery of the world, because it best illustrates His Justice, His Wisdom, His Love and His Power. It also resulted in great honor and glory to our Lord Jesus.

As concerns the Lord's people, there might be certain matters relating to dispensational changes that could best be accomplished through severe trials coming upon them. Then, additionally, God wishes certain trials to come upon His people because He desires them to *trust* Him where they cannot *trace* Him. He wishes them to have unwavering faith in Him. The children of God, then, can take these words of our text in a very different way from that originally suggested to Job by Elihu. We may truly say, "When God giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" We recognize that there is a certain quietness and rest of heart that all the Lord's saints may enjoy. We realize this even when He permits severe trouble.

The Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews says, "We who have believed do enter into rest." We enter into rest by coming into the attitude where we can believe, where we can and do exercise entire trust in God. Sometimes outward difficulties are helpful in overcoming a wrong spirit. The Lord's people are not discouraged by the things that would utterly crush out the vitality and the courage of others. They get the wrong spirit pounded out of them; but it is the hand of love that administers the blows, and the Lord knows just how many and how severe ones are needed.

#### KEPT IN PERFECT PEACE

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee." (Isaiah 26:3.) This thought is very precious to us as New Creatures. "The peace of God which passeth all understanding," is to rule and keep our minds and hearts. (Philippians 4:7.) We are to count the things of the present life as not worthy of comparison with the glories of eternity. And so the Apostle says, "For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Corinthians 4:17,18.) When our minds are stayed on the Lord, and we take the proper view of our experiences, we can sing with the poet:

"No storm can shake our inmost calm,  
While to this Refuge clinging."

We have peace, no matter what the outward conditions may be. The trials and the difficulties of life come to the Lord's people commingled with joys--the rain and storm, then the sunshine. They enjoy all righteous pleasures that are in harmony with their consecration. They learn to cultivate patience in trial, knowing that patience works out experience, and experience works out more and more that hope which maketh not ashamed.--Romans 5:3-5.

So, then, it is to the Christian that our text brings the assurance that when God gives quietness, none can make trouble. They "shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My sake," said the Master, but *then* we are to "rejoice and be exceeding glad." "Let not your heart be troubled." (Matthew 5:11; John 14:1.) We think our text very precious when viewed from our standpoint.

#### TROUBLE NECESSARY TO OUR PROVING

Our Heavenly Father designs that various kinds of trouble shall come upon us, that these may develop and prove our char-

acters. It is a part of the Divine Plan to permit us to have experiences of affliction. (Psalm 119:67,71,75; 34:19,20.) So when we see God's people in trouble or trial today we are not to say that God is against them. We are each to demonstrate our willingness to suffer according to His will, and often to suffer unjustly. Our Lord set us an example of cheerful, patient submission to God's will. We are to walk in His footsteps. And we have the example of the Apostles, when trials and difficulties and persecutions came upon them; and the example of other saints all down the Age.

Trouble is not necessarily a sign of the disfavor of God. On the contrary, we know that "many are the afflictions of the righteous," and that "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall* suffer persecution." The *Truth* will cost them something. *Faithfulness to the Lord* will cost them much. As the Apostle says, "If ye be without chastisement [discipline, training], then are ye bastards and not sons." (Hebrews 2:8.) If God gives peace of heart, who can upset the one who is thus in harmony with God, in whom this peace of heart is ruling? This, then, is the greatest blessing of all. And He grants this peace to those who are faithfully striving to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. We have a Refuge which none but His own can know. No harm can reach us within this Shelter; no storm can shake us from our moorings, for we are securely anchored to the Rock of Ages. "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to the called according to His Purpose." (Romans 8:28.) And as Job's *after* blessings far outweighed his brief trials, so it will be with the Lord's saints today.

"What though my joys and comfort die!  
The Lord, my Savior, liveth;  
What though the darkness gather round!  
Songs in the night He giveth.  
No storm can shake my inmost calm,  
While to that Refuge clinging;  
Since Christ is Lord of Heaven and earth,  
How can I keep from singing?"