

A Stop by Quiet Waters
“Facing Difficulties In Faith Not Fear”
Dick Germaine

Hi Friend,

Hebrews 12:26-27 say, " *‘Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.’ The words ‘once more’ indicate the removing of what can be shaken -- -- that is, created things -- -- so that what cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and all.*"

We have certainly experienced a shaking in the financial realm of our nation in the past several days like none of us in our lifetime have ever experienced before, a shaking which has reverberated around the world. Financial analysts tell us that on the day the stock market plummeted further than any other one day in its history our economy lost \$1.3 trillion dollars. As I sit here writing the shaking continues with many looking to Washington for help while others say even with the massive bailout plan Congress rejected but might now pass we have no certainty the shaking will stop.

We may be headed for an unprecedented worldwide depression. We don't know, but these could well be some of the signs of the end times which our Lord Jesus spoke about so forcefully in the Gospel of Matthew, and which the book of Revelation depicts with vivid starkness. What we can say is that such a global economic shaking is unprecedented in the history of our world. How should we who are the Lord's servant-leaders in the body of Christ react to these things?

I have been greatly encouraged by insights given me as I read Acts 21-24. **First**, as Paul was obedient to God in the face of persecution so must we be obedient in the face of hardship. He was told over and over what awaited him if he persisted in going to Jerusalem. He went anyway because he knew that was where he had to be in order to be faithful to the call the Lord Jesus had put on his life. We must not let fear of the future keep us from fulfilling the call the Lord has put on our lives.

Hardship, even suffering are not signs that we are on the wrong path or that we should go back. God forbid! Our trust must never be in savings and investments for, as we have so recently seen, these can disappear in an instant. In this world of spiritual darkness and opposition to God and his truth such things are to be expected. When we became a Christian we enlisted in God's Army, we didn't book a suite on a spiritual cruise ship.

A **second** thing I saw was that as the Lord was with Paul, bringing him through danger, struggles, and pain to where God wanted him, so our Father in heaven will be with us in whatever is before us as we seek to be and do what he has called us to. He will bring you safely through everything so that you do fulfill his will for you. As with Paul there will be suffering and struggles for you along the way. These in no way are indications either that you are out of God's will or that God has abandoned you. As Peter said, "*Though you have not seen him you love him, and though you do not see him now you trust him.*"

Third, "*All who will live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*" Persecution and opposition come to us from people who are driven by demonic forces to do all sorts of evil through greed, hatred, etc. They also come from the influence of demonic beings working in our world through culture, etc., and they come from the direct attack of demonic forces on us through our minds. They do have access to us, but they can never overpower us as long as we keep looking to the Lord Jesus and keep trusting in the promises of the word of God.

Those of us who live in the free world with our democratic forms of government need to understand that where there is little outward persecution there will be great inner struggles and temptations. It's the same enemy as the one working through totalitarian regimes but with differing tactics shaped to fit the culture we live in. But even here our Lord Jesus will bring us safely through. I don't mean we will not suffer, for we will, but if we keep on trusting in and following our Lord no matter what he will bring us safely through all these things into his eternal kingdom. This after all is our destiny and goal. Bless the holy name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Dick

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