

More frequent natural disasters to come before the coming of the Lord JESUS

Especially for us in Indonesia, and even for the whole world in general, the disaster of the Sunday of December 26, 2004, exactly at around 8.00 o'clock in the morning, would never be lost from the mind. It was the greatest natural disaster ever occurred, due to an under seabed earthquake which its epicenter located not far from the tip of an Indonesian island, wherein an overpopulated provincial capital city was located. The earthquake was followed by the big waves of the so-called tsunami, which came so suddenly and very horrible without giving an early warning sign of danger to the people. The horrible tsunami swept everything along its sway, across the towns and villages of the regions wherever it passed by, to cause deaths and calamities among the people here and there. Not only Indonesia was the hardest hit by its sway, but even several neighboring countries like Malaysia, Thailand, India, Bangladesh, Maldives, and even a certain country in Africa.. About 250.000 people lost their lives during the tsunami, not to mention the victims of those who were unaccounted for and those who were missing. And the fact is that this is the second biggest natural disaster happened in Indonesia, ever since the first one, sometime about 1880 when the Krakatau volcano erupted, that killed more than 40.000 lives.

Such horrible of natural tragedy has moved the feelings of sympathy from all around the world, and many nations have come to the aid, not merely rendering their aid in material things, but even in spiritual things as well, even up to now. All people, however, have convinced that in the background of all the calamities, there is a God of Heaven in the nature, who has power to control the universe and all of His will behind those things.

And for us, as His own people, let us for a moment imagine of how this earth ever since the beginning has been created.

The Earth at the beginning of its creation

As a law scientist and historian of creation of the world, Moses who lived twenty five hundred years after the creation, has been inspired of God to write in his first book of the Bible entitled, The Genesis, the following story of the creation :

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void: and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light : and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament : and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called He Seas: and God saw that it was good.

*And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth : and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind : and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day.” – **Genesis 1 : 1 – 13.***

At the beginning God has created the firmament in the midst of the waters, which later He called it heaven. The function is to divide the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament. Therefore, we are obliged to know that at the beginning there were waters above the firmament of the heaven in the outer space, and also waters under the firmament of the heaven in our earth atmosphere. All the waters under the firmament have been gathered together unto one place, and were called the S e a s. And the dry lands which have been left by the waters were called the earth. The earth has then become the habitation of men and the beasts up to this day. But where are the waters which were above the firmament of the heaven in the outer space? Let us follow the story further here below :

*“And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years : And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth : and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night : He made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.”— **Genesis 1 : 14 – 19.***

The Lord made the sun as the greater light to rule the day, and also the moon as the lesser light to rule the night. And He even created also the stars. And He set them all in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth. It is therefore clear to understand, that the waters above the firmament of the heaven might be closer to the earth than the sun, the moon and the stars be.

Never before was there any rain falling up to the time of the Flood

As a servant of the Lord, Mrs. White said :

“The world before the Flood reasoned that for centuries the laws of nature had been fixed. The recurring seasons had come in their order. Heretofore rain had never fallen; the earth had been watered by a mist or dew. The rivers had never yet passed their boundaries, but had borne their waters safely to the sea. Fixed decrees had kept the waters from overflowing their banks. But these reasoners did not recognize the hand of Him who had stayed the waters, saying,

“Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further.”— Job 38 : 11.” – Patriarchs and Prophets, pp. 96, 97.

From the fact that ever since the time Adam and Eve fell dramatically in their sins against God and His law, the sin of transgressions of the people ever since had just continued to increase unabated, that the Lord at last had set in His mind to abolish all the wicked *antediluvians* from the face of the earth. Therefore to Noah, the Lord commanded him to proclaim to the people, that 120 years later from the time, God would let to come upon them the rain, a devastating rain which caused Flood upon the whole earth, to destroy all the wicked and everything of their belongings, and even all the things that were to be found on the face of the earth. However, since up to the time there was never a rain falling upon them, then the proclamation of Noah had been received doubtfully by the people. Many even mocked at him as a fanatic and insane, and accused him of daring to venture in proclaiming an illogical horrifying message to them. In her illustration of the spiritual condition of the people, Mrs. White said :

“As time passed on, with no apparent change in nature, men whose hearts had at times trembled with fear, began to be reassured. They reasoned, as many reason now, that nature is above the God of nature, and that her laws are so firmly established that God Himself could not change them. Reasoning that if the message of Noah were correct, nature would be turned out of her course, they made that message, in the minds of the world, a delusion --- a grand deception. They manifested their contempt for the warning of God by doing just as they had done before the warning was given. They continued their festivities and their gluttonous feasts; they ate and drank, planted and builded, laying their plans in reference to advantages they hoped to gain in the future; and they went to greater lengths in wickedness, and in defiant disregard of God’s requirements, to testify that they had no fear of the Infinite One. They asserted that if there were any truth in what Noah had said, the men of renown --- the wise, the prudent, the great men – would understand the matter.

“Had the antediluvians believed the warning, and repented of their evil deeds, the Lord would have turned aside His wrath, as He afterward did from Nineveh. But by their obstinate resistance to the reproofs of conscience and the warnings of God’s prophet, that generation filled up the measure of their iniquity, and became ripe for destruction.” – Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 97.

Since the spiritual condition of the people in the time of Noah has been proven to be again reiterated by our people in this time of the end, then Mrs. Ellen G. White said :

“The sins that called for vengeance upon the antediluvian world exist today. The fear of God is banished from the hearts of men, and His law is treated with indifference and contempt. The intense worldliness of that generation is equaled by that of the generation now living.....

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“A similar condition of things exists now. That which is lawful in itself is carried to excess. Appetite is indulged without restraint. Professed followers of Christ are today eating and drinking with the drunken, while their names stand in honored church records. Intemperance benumbs the moral and spiritual powers and prepare the way for indulgence of lower passions. Multitudes feel under no moral obligation to curb their sensual desires, and they become the slaves of lust.”— Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 101.

“Jesus asked the significant question, ‘When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?’ Luke 18 : 8. And, as we have seen, He declares that the state of the world will be as in the days of Noah. Paul warns us that we may look for wickedness to increase as the end draws near : “The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the

*faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.”—1 Timothy 4 : 1. The apostle says that” in the last days perilous times shall come.”-- 2 Timothy 3 : 1. And he gives a startling list of sins that will be found among those who have a form of godliness.”-- **Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 103.***

When the Flood smote

“The people first beheld the destruction of the works of their own hands. Their splendid buildings, and the beautiful gardens and groves where they had placed their idols, were destroyed by lightning from heaven, and the ruins were scattered far and wide. The altars on which human sacrifices had been offered were torn down, and the worshipers were made to tremble at the power of the living God, and to know that it was their corruption and idolatry which had called down their destruction.

*“As the violence of the storm increased, trees, buildings, rocks, and earth were hurled in every direction. The terror of man and beast was beyond description. Above the roar of the tempest was heard the wailing of a people that had despised the authority of God. Satan himself, who was compelled to remain in the midst of the warring elements, feared for his own existence.”-- **Patriarchs and Prophets, p.99.***

*“In the six hundredth year of Noah’s life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah’s wife, and the three wives of his sons with them into the ark.”-- **Genesis 7 : 11 – 13.***

All the fountains of the great deep in the earth were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened, so that all the waters which were above the firmament in the outer space fell to rain the earth, and the waters which were under the firmament, stored in the great deep of the earth were to erupt to the surface of the earth. Thus was the earth again covered by waters, while Noah and his families in the ark were floating on the surface from one end to the other. And as the result, our beautiful earth, which was ever so cool and healthy to inhabit, without any rain falling ever since the creation, it was then become warmer and warmer on the some parts of the world, and cooler and cooler on the other parts, because no more layer of waters above the firmament to protect the earth from the heat of the sun. So is the result that ever since the Flood inundated the earth in the past, the temperature then differed from one place to the other up to this time. Therefore the condition of the earth after the Flood was then narrated by Mrs. White as follows :

“The entire surface of the earth was changed at the Flood. A third dreadful curse rested upon it in consequence of sin. As the waters began to subdue, the hills and mountains were surrounded by a vast, turbid sea. Everywhere were strewn the dead bodies of men and beasts. The Lord would not permit these to remain to decompose and pollute the air, therefore He made of the earth a vast burial ground. A violent wind which was caused to blow for the purpose of drying up the waters, moved them with great force, in some instances ever carrying away the tops of the mountains, and heaping up trees, rocks, and earth above the bodies of the dead. By the same means the silver and gold, the choice wood and precious stones, which had enriched and adorned the world before the Flood, and which the inhabitants had idolized, were concealed from the sight and search of men, the violent action of the waters piling earth and rocks upon

these treasures, and in some cases even forming mountains above them. God saw that the more He enriched and prospered sinful men, the more they would corrupt their ways before Him. The treasures that should have led them to glorify the bountiful Giver had been worshiped, while God had been dishonored and despised.” – Patriarchs and Prophets, 107 – 108.

The Earth after the Flood

Sister White further said :

“The earth presented an appearance of confusion and desolation impossible to describe. The mountains, once so beautiful in their perfect symmetry, had become broken and irregular. Stones, ledges, and ragged rocks were now scattered upon the surface of the earth. In many places hills and mountains had disappeared, leaving no trace where they once stood. These changes were no more marked in some places than in others. Where once had been earth’s richest treasures of gold, silver, and precious stones, were seen the heaviest marks of the curse. And upon countries that were not inhabited, and those where there had been the least crime, the curse rested more lightly.

“At this time immense forests were buried. These have since been changed to coal, forming the extensive coal beds that now exist, and also yielding large quantities of oil. The coal and oil frequently ignite and burn beneath the surface of the earth. Thus rocks are heated, limestone is burned, and iron ore melted. The action of the water upon the lime adds fury to the intense heat, and causes earthquakes, and fiery issues. As the fire and water come in contact with ledges of rocks and ore, there are heavy explosions underground, which sound like muffled thunder. The air is hot and suffocating. Volcanic eruptions follow; and these often failing to give sufficient vent to the heated elements, the earth itself is convulsed, the ground heaves and swells like the waves of the sea, great fissures appear, and sometimes cities, villages, and burning mountains are swallowed up. These wonderful manifestations will be more and more frequent and terrible just before the second coming of Christ and the end of the world, as signs of its speedy destruction.”--- Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 108 – 109.

Brother! There are several countries in the world today, very popularly known of their crude oil, and natural gasses, coal, and iron ore. Even Indonesia is also one of them who are producing those things as its main export commodities to several countries in the world. And from the two times disasters of tsunami and several earthquakes that have stricken Indonesia within the last few years and even up to this year, have by themselves proven that we are indeed approaching the end of the world history. The calamities seemed to be more variable with more landslides, fire that burns the vast lands and forests, flood, storms and hurricanes, calamities on the rough seas, and the last we have heard of the so-called change of climate, and its consequences to life.

**S a v e d b y G r a c e,
to give enough time to build faith in Jesus Christ**

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

-- John 3 : 16 --

Since Adam and Eve are the first couple of sinners of the world, who have benefited from the grace of God ever since the beginning, let us now learn from their experience, to know more of the grace of God offered to mankind even up to now. To Adam the Lord God said :

*“But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for i n t h e d a y that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” – **Genesis 2 : 17***

Within the day of twenty four hours ever since the time Adam ate of the forbidden fruits, he should have died for ever and ever. It is not a temporary death sentenced upon them as we have familiarly seen from time to time up to now. Because it is the wage of sin according to the Law of God. But ...*“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” -- **John 3 : 16.***

Adam and Eve had been saved by the grace of God, so that both of them had been prolonged their lives to live longer several hundred years more. For what were they to live longer? That they might believe in Him, to improve their faith in Him more and more than ever before, within a certain period of time allotted to them by the Lord. That period of time is called the time of probation, provided by the Lord God for all mankind ever since Adam’s fall in sin, up to the close of probation in the heavenly sanctuary, when the Lord Jesus would have finished His work of redemption there.

Adam died when he reached the age of 930 years, and his wife might be gone earlier ahead of him. Both of them had accomplished their work to have the true faith in God up to the time they died. So they died in the faith that justifies them in the sight of the Lord. Only such a faith that could have justified everyone of us in the sight of God, so that we would not perish for ever in our sins, but to have the everlasting life in the future.

Now we are to know, that “saved by grace” does not mean that we are to be saved right to the heavenly abode. Because no one could be saved i n s i n, but f r o m s i n. Therefore through the process of “saved by grace” the Lord .has granted us a longer life to know Him better than ever before, by making all efforts to have the true faith in God that could have justified us in His sight. So through “saved by grace”, every one of us by the Lord’s own providence, we have been led to the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, that we may know Jesus better than ever before.

Through “saved by grace” Adam and Eve had been prolonged their lives, to enable them to know Jesus and His justifying truth more and more than ever before. And from the fact, Adam and his wife at the end had successfully benefited from the grace of the Lord. Let us follow the story here below as narrated by Mrs. White in the following words,

“After their sin Adam and Eve were no longer to dwell in Eden. They earnestly entreated that they might remain in the home of their innocence and joy. They confessed that they had forfeited all right to that happy abode, but pledged themselves for the future to yield strict obedience to God. But they were told that their nature had become depraved by sin; they had lessened their strength to resist evil and had opened the way for Satan to gain more ready access to them. In their innocence they had yielded to temptation; and now, in a state of conscious guilt, they would have less power to maintain their integrity.

“In humility and unutterable sadness they bade farewell to their beautiful home and went forth to dwell upon the earth, where rested the curse of sin. The atmosphere, once so mild and uniform

in temperature, was now subject to marked changes, and the Lord mercifully provided them with a garment of skins as a protection from the extremes of heat and cold.

“As they witnessed in drooping flower and falling leaf the first signs of decay, Adam and his companion mourned more deeply than men now mourn over their dead. The death of the frail, delicate flowers was indeed a cause of sorrow; but when the goodly trees cast off their leaves, the scene brought vividly to mind the stern fact that death is the portion of every living thing.

“The Garden of Eden remained upon the earth long after man had become an outcast from its pleasant paths. The fallen race was long permitted to gaze upon the home of innocence, their entrance barred only by the watching angels. At the cherubim-guarded gate of Paradise the divine glory was revealed. Hither came Adam and his sons to worship God. Here they renewed their vows of obedience to that law the transgression of which had banished them from Eden. When the tide of iniquity over spread the world, and the wickedness of men determined their destruction by a flood of waters, the hand that had planted Eden withdrew it from the earth. But in the final restitution, when there shall be “a new heaven and a new earth” (Revelation 21 : 1), it is to be restored more gloriously adorned than at the beginning. – Patriarchs and Prophets pp. 61 & 62.

Building the true faith in Jesus Christ

The fact that for having been saved by grace, that up to this moment we all are still alive. However, not only that we are to live free wherever we are, and to do whatever we like, but that we might return to make peace with God in His Church, in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, specifically among those of the “five wise virgins” or “the wheat”. Only here among the wise virgins of the kingdom of heaven, we are to be made wise through the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY, which are the Rules of Implementation of the Law, “*that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.*”-- **John 3 : 16.**

Believeth in Jesus, or to have faith in Him in this time of the end, could no more be achieved by only depending on the sermons neither from the pulpits, nor from the Sabbath Schools lessons quarterly, in the churches. This should be seriously taken into consideration, because no more Bible prophecies that predicts the “THINGS TO COME” of John 16 : 13, upon which the destiny of the Church is to be determined, could be found in the churches. Mrs. White has repeatedly warned us in the following words:

“By a thorough investigation of the prophecies, we understand where we are in this world’s history, and we know for a certainty that the second coming of Christ is near.”—Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 592

“So in the prophecies the future is opened before us as plainly as it was opened to the disciples by the words of Christ. The events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble are clearly brought to view.” – Spirit of Prophecy, vol. 4, p. 412.

“I was shown that merely observing the Sabbath and praying morning and evening are not positive evidences that we are Christians. These outward forms may all be strictly observed, and yet true godliness be lacking.” – Testimonies, vol. 1, p. 305.

NOTE : For further investigation on the above subject, please read the next article entitled :
Saved by Grace, Justified by Faith, Sanctified by Christ's Righteousness,
and then crowned with the Everlasting Life

Concluded

Every day we hear of natural calamities occurred in several parts of the world, either by fire of the forest, by flood and landslides, by the earthquakes, by volcanoes vomiting their lavas, or by change of climate in several parts of the world. Not to mention the results of terrorists attack that have caused sufferings and deaths of so many people in several countries. And through the prophecies we also hear of the declension of the spiritual condition of the people of God just in this time of the end. Therefore through the Bible prophecies the Lord is speaking with us to warn everyone of us of the danger, not only of natural disasters that are now threatening everywhere in the world, nor of the political strife and its consequences that are now rampant in many countries wherein we are living, but specifically of the danger of the spiritual declension of our own people and the consequences thereof. Through Mrs. White, we have been warned in the following words,

"In the sight of God wealth and position do not exalt one man above another. Men are free to choose the service of God, to love the Lord, and to keep all His commandments". "The value of man is estimated in heaven according to the capacity of the heart to know God. This knowledge is the spring from which flows all power." -- **EGW. Bible Commentary, vol. 7 – A, p. 39.; Christ's Object Lessons, pp. 354, 355**

The bodies of those dying of the past tsunami in INDONESIA were strewn everywhere decomposed on the ground. Likewise to the tiny ants, the poor creature on the ground, whose value is usually absent from our mind, when we threw hot water upon them to drive them out. So were the men who lack the value in the sight of God, whose capacity of the heart fails to know their own Creator. As the poor creature of the ants, these are always exposed to the disasters, either natural or of manmade. Therefore for you and me, Sister White has warned, that "The events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble are clearly brought to view", in the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY.

It is now time for us to show our position openly as the remnant Church of God, whose spiritual identity is to keep the Law of God and the Testimonies of Jesus Christ, which is THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY. By truly and honestly having the identification, we will be recognized either in heaven or on the earth to be citizens of the kingdom of God. Only by this could we have right to be accompanied by the guardian angels of God, and to be guaranteed our safety at every time we are to face the coming disasters and the consequences. Through Mrs. White the Lord said:

"A guardian angel is appointed to every follower of Christ. These heavenly watchers shield the righteous from the power of the wicked one. This Satan himself recognized when he said: "Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not Thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?" Job 1 : 9, 10. The agency by which God protects His people is presented in the words of psalmist: "The angel of the Lord encampeth roundabout them that fear Him, and delivereth them." Psalm 34 : 7

*“Thus God’s people, exposed to the deceptive power and unsleeping malice of the prince of darkness, and in conflict with all the forces of evil, are assured of the unceasing guardianship of heavenly angels” -- **The Great Controversy, pp. 512, 513.***

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