

# A Troubling Dream

*When the foundations are being destroyed, what can the righteous do?  
(Psalm 11:3)*

I dreamed<sup>1</sup> a dream the other night and my spirit was deeply troubled. I saw a peaceful village in a beautiful valley nestled securely between tall mountains. A river meandered through the valley making everything lush and fruitful. Numerous steeples gave evidence of the faith of those who first settled in this area. I'd seen other villages in other valleys, but this was the most blessed of them all. At the head of the valley I saw a huge dam controlling the upper reaches of the river. The wall of the dam was as tall as the valley itself creating a large lake behind it which was invisible to the residents below. It had obviously been constructed by an earlier generation of valley dwellers. The dam's wall both prevented flooding and generated electric power for everyone in the valley.

Then I saw something that gave my spirit a jolt. An angry mob had gathered at the foot of the dam shouting slogans and carry placards. Some had sledge hammers while others had bags of dynamite. They intended to tear down the dam! Some had spray-painted graffiti on the wall: "Give us more water!" "Our forefathers were freedom-haters!" "Let the wall fall!" I even saw clergy leading prayers and reading Scripture to encourage the wall smashers. As I watched, many struck the dam with their sledge hammers and others placed their dynamite in strategic locations along the wall.

In my dream I approached the mob and spoke to a group that had paused to rest from their frenzied labor. "What are you doing? Why are you tearing down the dam?" I had to shout to be heard above the noise. "This dam has restricted our freedom for generations and deprives us of all the water that is imprisoned behind it," one answered. I couldn't believe my ears. "But don't you realize that if you tear down this wall your village will be swept away in a flood?" Smiling condescendingly, as if he had been trained for such questions, my respondent said, "You must be a dinosaur! Our fundamentalist, puritanical forefathers used to talk like you do. But we're wiser now. Those who built this dam were narrow-minded tyrants. They have hindered the growth and development of every citizen in our valley. It must come down." As he spoke several large chunks of cement from the dam's wall fell around us. "See! The wall is falling and none of your predictions of doom are coming true."

I realized that rational discourse with this mob was impossible. They were single-minded in their devotion to tear down the dam. Only a thin layer of concrete remained to hold back the waters. For the first time, I began to think of my own safety and wondered if I would survive the coming catastrophe. As I began to look for higher ground I heard a loud boom as one of the dynamite charges exploded sending more chunks of concrete flying through the air. People cheered with delight. But then the ground began to shake and the entire wall began to wobble precariously. Frozen in panic, I suddenly awoke from my dream in a state of great agitation.

Pastor Stan

<sup>1</sup>The "dream" is simply a literary vehicle I've chosen to share the rumblings going on deep in my spirit these days. Please, don't over-spiritualize it.