



What's Been Happening In Corolla

We wrote an article outlining the frustration that both we and our guest have experienced related to smoke from fires in bogs to the north and south of us, but then deleted it. We started to write about the earthquake that shook us up a bit, followed by the visit of hurricane Irene who left us with a modest mess, including a plague of mosquitoes, but decided against it for the same reason that the first article was deleted. It dawned on us that whatever we wrote

about those subjects would sound like whining and we have no right to whine or complain.

We are so incredibly blessed compared to many of our fellow citizens across our great nation who have lost homes, possessions, loved ones, health, etc. to tornado's, floods, fires, and hurricanes and the economic tsunami over the last year or so. Our hearts go out to those who have or are suffering from these things and our prayers go up for them as well.

We can only say that our hearts swell with gratitude to the Lord for the great many blessings He has generously bestowed upon us. We are not worthy, but are certainly thankful.

OCTOBER 2011

John W. Austin Memorial Chapel Inc.

Corolla Chapel 2011 Fall Newsletter

A World In Chaos ~ Part III

I typically devote a larger section of the newsletter to what has happened in Corolla since the last newsletter. However, I feel impressed to continue writing about ideas related to the return of Jesus. This is the third in a series of articles, the purpose of which is to encourage the followers of Jesus to think about the potential for the return of Jesus in their lifetime

The teaching of Jesus concerning watching for His eventual return could not be clearer. For instance:

Mark 13:28-37(NKJV)

28“Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.

*29*So you also, when you see these things happening, know that it is near—at the doors!

*30*Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

*31*Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

32“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.

*33*Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is.

*34*It is like a man going to a far country, who left his house and gave authority to his servants, and to each his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to watch.

*35*Watch therefore, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming—in the evening, at midnight, at the crowing of the rooster, or in the morning—

*36*lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.

*37*And what I say to you, I say to all: Watch!”

What is it exactly that Jesus is telling us to “watch” for? I think it is fair to say that Jesus wanted His followers, regardless of the age in which they lived, to live in such a way that should Jesus return that they will not have behaviors or attitudes for which they will be ashamed. Another thing, for sure, is that Jesus knew and taught the truth. One truth that he taught, but is



Male logic at its best!

A wife says to her husband, "Could you please go to the Store for me and buy a carton of milk. And if they have eggs, get six."

A short time later the husband comes back with six cartons of milk.

The wife asks, "Why in the world did you buy six cartons of milk?"

The husband answers, "They had eggs".

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not necessarily a politically correct teaching, elaborated on in the church these days, is that everyone will one day stand before the judge of the earth to give an account of their lives. The wisest man who ever lived, Solomon, certainly understood this:

¹³Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all.

¹⁴For God will bring every work into judgment, Including every secret thing, Whether good or evil.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14(NKJV)

Jesus wants each of His followers to be able to hold their head high and not be ashamed on that day and so do I. Not only that, but as the old saying goes “forewarned is forearmed.”

Jesus clearly and repeatedly warned His followers to watch and be prepared for and to “brace” themselves for those things that will occur before He returns. He wanted us to be aware of whether or not we are entering or about to enter those days, because this will be a time of great trouble and difficulty. Specifically, it will be a time of dire trouble for Israel and a time of terrible persecution for Christians.

It is possible that the events that we are seeing around the world are the signs Jesus referred to that will precede his coming. On the other hand, maybe they aren't. One thing is for sure, if they are then those who claim the name of Christ had better make sure that they are serious about their faith and that it is genuine. Because pretenders, or those who claim to be following Jesus but are lukewarm in their commitment to him will easily be washed away in the tide of persecution that Jesus warned will definitely precede His return. A flimsy faith simply will not stand up to the pressure of being hated for His names sake.

A word of caution is warranted. If we learned anything from history, it is that we are doomed to repeat the mistakes of the past if we don't learn from them. Many people and even denominations have wrongly predicted that Jesus' re-

turn was immanent, when it wasn't. Some have set dates only to suffer tremendous embarrassment when it didn't occur.

If you hear or read anyone who claims to know the date and time of Jesus' return, you can immediately dismiss that claim. I am certainly not making that claim. However, we are to know the teachings of Jesus on this and other important subjects. Jesus gave us specific as well as general signs to watch for that would signal His return. If we were not supposed to watch for the signs, He would not have given them to us. Jesus told us about these signs because His followers, especially those living just prior to His return, are suppose to be watching for them.

I realize that all of this is a long introduction before getting to the point, so without further delay this article will focus on two signs that Jesus gave us to watch for found in Matthew 24. We turn our attention to the scene in Jesus' life when He was leaving Jerusalem, soon to be betrayed and crucified. As they walked along, the disciples drew His attention to the magnificent buildings of the temple. They may have thought that Jesus would have looked at these man made structures with the same awe that they had. Instead Jesus looked at them and made a stunning prediction. He told them that the temple and its buildings would one day be destroyed. Jesus claimed that the destruction would be so complete that not *one* stone would be left here upon another.

This revelation likely shocked the disciples and certainly generated additional questions. First, they wanted to know *when* this would take place. This answer is not recorded in Matthew but is given in Luke 21:20-24. Next, they asked about the sign of His return. In their final question, they asked about the sign of the end of the age.

Matthew 24:3 (NKJV)

³Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these

things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”

Jesus' answer is found in Matthew 24:4-8. The disciples asked Jesus specific questions and He gave them specific answers. Jesus did not tell them that they should not ask such questions or that they were not to know the signs that will precede His return.

No, He answers them clearly.

⁴And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one deceives you.

⁵For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.

⁶And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

⁷For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.

⁸All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

Because of the limited amount of space I will elaborate on two phrases that I found mysterious in this passage and have not found much exposition from the scholars and commentators that I have access to.

The first phrase that I find puzzling is “*nation* will rise against *nation*, and *kingdom* against *kingdom*.” I remember reading this passage when I first became a Christian in 1976. It seemed odd to me that Jesus would use, what seemed to me to be such redundant language. Why didn't He just say “*nation* will rise against *nation*, **OR** *kingdom* against *kingdom*”, instead of and? Aren't a kingdom and a nation essentially the same thing / entity? This question stewed in my mind for several years. While continuing to study and ponder this enigma I eventually found the Greek words that were used. It was then that I finally understood what Jesus was telling us. The confusion lies in the Greek to English translation of the words nation and kingdom.

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A World In Chaos ~ Food For Thought Part III ~ *continued*

The Greek reads “*ethnos* will rise against *ethnos*, and *basileia* against *basileia*.”

First, translating *basileia* to kingdom helps us to understand that their will be conflict between kingdoms (i.e. countries, nations, kingdoms, etc.) We generally understand what nations are with their political structures, etc. So that translation is fine.

However, translating the word *ethnos* to nation causes confusion, at least it did for me. The translators generally translated the Greek *ethnos* as “gentiles”. The King James version translations breaks down as follows: gentiles—93 times, nations —37 times, nation — 27 times, heathen —5 times, and people —2 times.

In my view, modern readers would have been better served had the translators translated *ethnos* differently, perhaps to “gentile peoples” or “ethnic groups”.

Most of us will recognize right away the similarity between the Greek word “*ethnos*” and the English word “*ethnic*”. We recognize the use of the word *ethnic* particularly because America is so ethnically diverse. For us, as well as the Greek speaking world, *ethnic* nor *ethnos* speaks of a tribe, nation, or people group.

Understanding this helps us appreciate that Jesus was warning us about a colorful array of conflicts that will occur prior to and signaling His return. These conflicts may very well be those national, racial, parochial, religious, and other conflicts that we observe around the world on a regular basis.

As disheartening as it is to see people hate each other for such ridiculous reasons as their national heritage or skin color, it should also “perk up” our ears to listen for the trumpet sound announcing the return of the King.

Ethnic hatred is prevalent everywhere. Here in America congress woman Sheila Jackson Lee recently showed her ethnic bias when she told the “Right Media & Blogs to Shut Up and Stop Playing Racial Politics, Then Seconds Later Says

Obama’s Buy American Should Be Buy African American.” Her diatribe included the call to support Asian, Hispanic, and Black business owners, with Black business owners to be preferred over all others. The message clearly presented was “buy from anyone unless their skin color happens to be white.” While her words reveal a deep seated character flaw, she is not alone. The desire for ethnic superiority is clearly not isolated to America. All one has to do is look to the middle-east and around the rest of the world. Ethnic and tribal prejudice is in full view for all to see. Key Muslim political figures and clerics are calling for the destruction of the Jewish people, simply because of their ethnicity, period. Dr. Salah Sultan, a lecturer on Islamic law in Cairo University and head of the Al Quds Committee in the World Federation of Islamic Scholars, declared Friday, August 19th that an Egyptian citizen who encounters a “Zionist” should kill him. Imagine that. A religious leader calling for the death of people for no reason other than their ethnic heritage.

The second sign that is also of interest because of its obscure meaning is found in the 2nd half of verse 7 “**And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.**”

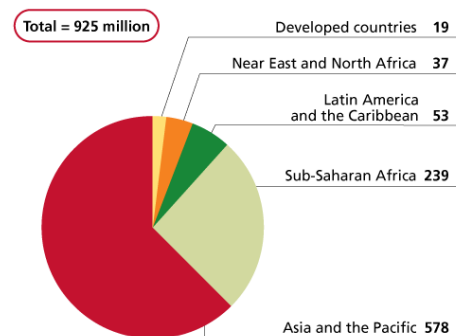
Jesus first alerted us to the occurrence of wars and saber rattling (rumors of wars) that will precede his coming. Then He says that famines, pestilences, and earthquakes will follow. This reminds me of those tests that measure your ability to reason. Which of these are not caused by war: A) famines, B) pestilences, or C) earthquakes? If you answered “C”, you answered correctly.

Famines and pestilences typically follow wars. An internet article that was written in October 2006 stated that “nine of the 12 countries with the severest hunger were racked by civil war or violent conflict.”

This may sound overly simplistic, but: famine causes hunger and the definition of hunger is the uneasy or painful sensation caused by want of food; craving

appetite (Oxford English Dictionary 1971). The following chart can be found at www.worldhunger.org.

925 million hungry people in 2010



Boiled down, there are roughly 7 billion people in the world and an estimated 925 million of them are hungry. In other words roughly 13 percent, or almost 1 in 7 people are hungry. I don’t know if that qualifies for the famine that Jesus described, but that sure is a lot of hungry people.

Not only does war cause famine, but it also causes pestilence. Usually a result of contaminated water supplies and the fact that people are often forced to live in generally less than optimal sanitary conditions, etc.

It isn’t difficult to understand that one of the principle causes of famine and pestilence is war. Interestingly enough Jesus’ warning about famine and pestilence not only is preceded by his commentary on wars and ethnic fighting, but is sandwiched between war and a warning about an outbreak of earthquakes that will shake the earth. It should come as no surprise that like war, famine and pestilence are also the natural by products of earthquakes and other natural disasters.

Most of us are well aware of what an earthquake is. I felt my first confirmed earthquake just a few short days before hurricane Irene rumbled up the east coast at the end of August. It damaged the Washington Monument to the degree that, as of this writing, it is closed indefinitely.

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The earth has experienced a number of quakes over the last few years. Of course we know about the earthquakes that pummeled Haiti, Chile, and Japan in the last couple of years. I've seen reports that suggest that the number of earthquakes have increased in recent years.

That may be, but there's more to Jesus' words to explore. Once again referring to the original Greek language will help to shed light on the meaning of the text, specifically with the translation of the word earthquakes used by Jesus.

The actual Greek word used is "*seismos*". Like *ethnos*, *seismos* should sound familiar to us. *Seismos* was used to describe a shock, a shaking, or a commotion. It is where we get our English word seismic from, which is essentially related to an earth vibration. It is the root of our word seismograph, which is an apparatus to measure and record vibrations within the earth and of the ground.

Seismic and *seismos* are similar, but different. It is proper to understand an increase in earthquakes as a legitimate sign that Jesus' follower should watch for. However, the Greek word has a broader meaning and is not limited to just earthquakes.

Remember the story in Matthew chapter 8 when the Jesus and disciples set out to cross the Sea of Galilee. The King James version says that "**there arose a great tempest in the sea.**" This was not an earthquake but a violent storm. It must have been a doozie too.



The story goes on to say that; "the ship was covered with the waves", the boat was about to sink, the disciples were

afraid. Jesus was asleep, so they woke Him. Jesus simply "rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm."

Interesting story for several reasons, but guess what the Greek word for "tempest" (KJV) is? That's right, *seismos*. It would seem that *seismos* not only means violent disturbance in the earth, but also violent turbulence in the air.

It is possible that this may not be an accurate interpretation, but I am optimistic that it is. If true, then we now have a fuller understanding of what Jesus was trying to tell us in this passage.

Famine and pestilence are evil twins inevitably born out of war and natural disasters. He seems to be telling us that not only will war and natural disaster ravish the world to signal His coming, but they will be accompanied by these evil twins.

Could Jesus have been warning us that not only would we see an increase of convulsions in the earth, but in the air or in nature in general before he returns? In other words the earth will travail.

Interestingly, Jesus ends this thought in verse 8 by telling us that "All these *are* the beginning of sorrows". In this case the NIV's translation is a little more helpful here. It says:

All these are the beginning of birth pains.

In other words, the turbulence (i.e. earthquakes, hurricanes, tornados, etc.) prior to Jesus' return are not the end of the difficulties and troubles that will be experienced, but the beginning.

Jesus may very well have been warning us about a time when the world would be embroiled in a multitude of national, ethnic, and tribal wars which cause widespread famine and pestilence, and a time when nature becomes ruthless in shaking the world.

If that is the case, then I think that it isn't too much of a stretch to say that we may be observing some of those signs around the world today.

I realize that all of this sounds like a real "downer". As troubling as these things might appear, there is tremendous encouragement in them as well. Why? Well Jesus said it best:

Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.
Luke 21:28(NKJV)

So watch, stay alert, and be ready for the return of the King.

Pastor Rick

Peace Like A River

~ by Barb Benfonte

Isaiah gave the Children of Israel a message from the Lord: "I *am* the LORD your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you by the way you should go. Oh, that you had heeded My commandments! **Then** your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea." Isa 48:17:18(NKJV) They are on their way to captivity in Babylon and have forfeited God's promised blessings of peace like a river and righteousness like waves of the sea. All because they chose to be rebellious.

I got to wondering just how does the peace that God promised compare to that of a river. What is he trying to show us with this comparison? How is a river a metaphor for living life in engulfed in God's peace? Imagine a deep flowing river that is undisturbed and smoothly flowing and that seems like the peace and rest we know when we are going God's way and embracing his plans for our lives. But of course, not all rivers are like that. Some are tumbling or raging or even dried up. How does that relate to God's peace?

Imagine we are each a drop of water in God's infinitely flowing river. The drop flows steadily along the river, always moving down and down. Sometimes it bangs against the rocks or gets swirled around and around in a whirlpool. Sometimes it might sit in a quiet pool, maybe even be stuck there for a time.

Peace Like A River ~ *continued*

And sometimes it flows right to the edge of a cliff and is thrown over the edge and tossed into the air before taking quite a fall. But it always reaches the bottom and continues following the current. Can we learn anything about being that drop in God's river that will give us the peace we crave? Isaiah promises that if we heed the directions of God, we will have peace---so in what ways does being a drop in the river like heeding God?

As a drop in his river we are never separate from the other drops, we are always touching and interacting with many other drops. A river is made up of an innumerable number of drops and no one drop can be a river by itself. God tells us that as believers we are part of his body and not to give up gathering together because our fellowship with one another is so important in his plans. We are all as intricately connected to each other and vital for each other's existence as the drops in the river. When we dwell together in unity, Psalms tells us it is good and pleasant. To be in unity with other believers is part of God's plan and when we are aligned with his plan we have a peaceful heart.

Each drop of water in a river, lake or stream began as either a rain drop or came from a spring and each drop is taking the same journey on and on down eventually to the sea. We are all at different places in our journey but the life of each drop travels a similar path. We can learn from each other's experiences and have compassion for one another which adds to our unity and our love for each other. Again, the relationships between the drops in the river will bring us more of God's peace.

If we realize that our life is more than the day by day adventures of the drop as it encounters rocks, whirlpools and waterfalls and we recognize it is a greater journey always drawing nearer to God, we can always carry peace into every circumstance. We see that it is God's plan to continually carry that drop to its final destination. We can rest in the knowledge that when the river is raging, or seems to be dried up by drought, or

even blocked by natural or man made obstacles, like beaver dams or hydroelectric dams; God draws the drops along to the perfect destination. There is nothing like knowing and trusting in the perfect plan of God to bring us perfect peace.

Drops are always drops. They maintain their essence as water no matter how much they get splashed about or how long they sit stuck in quiet pools. They are always water and God's children are always his children, his beloved children. That is our true self and that doesn't change no matter how much we get battered on the rocks or stuck in the river's debris. Even if we get drawn over the edge and experience a major fall, we are still his and his river keeps flowing and us with it.

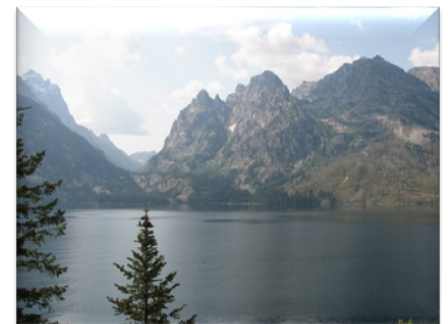
When we see a waterfall we are usually awed by its beauty, grandeur, and power. It may even inspire worship of our Lord who created such special features on Earth. Well, what is more grand and beautiful than seeing believers, though they have been thrown over the edge and fallen in the turbulent rush, trusting God all the way and even worshipping him for his protection and provision all the way down to the bottom. When a believer chooses to trust God we can see the glory of God reflected in that choice. And when each of us individual drops joins in that choice as we fall and fall, we become a waterfall to reflect his glory and inspire even the non-believers to awe and wonder! That is place of worshipful peace amidst the flood!

Drops can't really resist the current; they pretty much have to "go with the flow". Unlike drops, sometimes we miss our peace when we resist God's current. We fight against his plan out of fear or pride and we struggle and can't find peace. If we would just learn to go with the flow of God's presence, we would be happily carried away with his peace. We know that we will have some experiences, like waterfalls, that are more dramatic or perhaps traumatic than others. The Lord said through Isaiah, "I *am* the LORD your God, who teaches you..." You see, as we

experience our life with God we are to learn. Learn that in each moment of we can choose to flow with his current, his presence, and live in his rest and satisfaction.

The river of our life is always moving and we are moving with it; we don't remember the beginning, we often cannot see what is ahead and we don't know where it will end. The path of each drop is uncertain, but the way of God is always certain. Whether we are upstream or downstream he is with us each mile and over each obstacle and in each moment offering us peace if we will simply trust him. Trust that he is the one guiding us along that river's path, that he is choosing the perfect direction for our drop. This trust that urges our obedience is the key to obtaining the peace that is like a deep, smooth flowing as a river.

The metaphor is obviously imperfect. The biggest difference between us and a drop of water in a river, is we are humans to whom God gave free will and a life full of choices. The drop follows gravity and has no choice. So whether our peace is like a river depends on those choices. When we choose Jesus we get the first taste of his peace. When we choose his plans over our own, when we choose to trust him in times of trials, when we choose to rejoice and worship him in every circumstance and when we choose to stand together in unity with each other, we get "the peace of Christ" that will "rule in your hearts..." (Phillipians 3:15) It seems the choice is clear! Go with God's flow and then, as the hymn says, "When peace, like a river, attendeth my way...It is well, it is well with my soul."



JESUS IS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD



Corolla Chapel

John W. Austin Memorial

Corolla Chapel
1136 Corolla Village Road
PO Box 64
Corolla, NC 27917

Phone: 252.453.4224

e-mail: pastor@corollachapel.com

website: www.corollachapel.com

Check us out @
www.corollachapel.com

*"No vacation to the Outer Banks is complete
without attending a service at the Corolla
Chapel"*

Taken from a guest book in a vacation home



Jesus King of Kings & Lord of Lords

A special thank you to Barb Benfante for editing our newsletter.

Our Mission

To Connect People With Jesus

Our mission at Corolla Chapel is to encourage as many people as possible to make sure that they have a genuine faith based relationship with Jesus. The Bible teaches that just acknowledging that Jesus was a real, albeit good, historical figure is not adequate to save a person. It instructs us, in no uncertain terms, that we must live out our beliefs and submit our will to God. While this is a life long learning process, it is

still, without doubt, an observable process.

It is our desire to help people become fully devoted followers of Jesus.

We accept and teach the Bible's assertion that Jesus is the creator and Lord of the universe, that everyone must acknowledge Him as such, and live a life that is consistent with that confession. As evidence of this acknowledgment one

must pursue God's will for one's life.

In the case that God's will does not align with the individual's will, that person must subordinate his/her will to the revealed will of God. This practical living out of one's faith in this way establishes evidence that one has indeed been found in Christ.

