

TRAGEDIES ARE GOD'S WARNING TO AN EVIL WORLD

Mt. 24:3-14

Sept. 3, 2017

Is there anyone in the whole world who hasn't heard about or seen pictures of the tragedy unfolding on the South Texas coast, namely Houston? Water is up to the second stories of homes, businesses are ruined, thousands have lost everything and have to be rescued, many are trapped in their homes. The death toll so far as is known stands at 23 as of last Wed.

I saw nursing homes flooded with people sitting in wheelchairs in water. People were rescued from trees and cars. This is a tragedy of historic proportions and people will be working at getting back to some kind of normal life for a long time.

And yet, as bad as this tragedy is, this is but one of many that the Lord lays out to His disciples when they ask Him, 'what are the signs that the end is near?' Many will come, Jesus says, in My name, to lead many astray. Remember Jim Jones? He was a self-proclaimed preacher who talked many people into giving him their money and they all went down to French guinea, living in a communal type setting. There were reports of problems and a congressman went down to look into things. He ended up dead and Jones and company all drank poison cool aid.

Joseph Smith became a charismatic leader in the mid 1800's, calling his group the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The Mormons. His teachings are not Biblical and Jesus Christ is not the Savior. Your good works are your salvation.

The point is, Jesus is saying that false Saviors will appear and many will follow them to their own damnation.

Jesus says that you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. And so we do. There is always conflict somewhere in the world. More tragedies unfold as blood is shed for no good reason. There is always some little potentate who wants to be in charge and doesn't care what the common man thinks.

Nation will rise against nation. More tragedy. More death and destruction. And finally, speaking to our point today, there will be famine and earthquakes in various places. We must remember that all creation has been affected by the fall into sin. The Apostle Paul says in Romans 8; "For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now." The tragedies we witness daily are all the result of sin. As you talk to people over a cup of coffee, almost all will agree that it seems to be getting worse. More deaths from drugs, more violence in our cities, more and worse natural disasters, like hurricane Harvey coming out of the Gulf.

More families that are having problems. Jails are full. The police have targets on their backs. Our two political parties just cannot get along.

What in the world is going on? God is speaking to a people who, in many cases, are not interested in what He has to say. So, maybe He can get their attention by taking away their homes. All their earthly belongings. Family harmony. A whole community and all that we all take for granted.

So, what does God want? He wants to save us. All of us. Look at it all this way. The end of the world is coming; any day. Many people in the world pay no attention to that fact that is stated in Scripture many, many times. Ah, but, who reads the bible? God is actually being very kind and patient with us on this insignificant little ball floating in an immense universe. He is giving us time to get the message that all the tragedies we witness are like the birth pains of a woman in labor. As the time of her deliverance draws closer, the pains become more severe. Houston has never seen a hurricane and water like this before.

Imagine if God were to put this message in a paper like the New York Times. MAY I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE? This is the Almighty God whom many of you on earth deny even exists. Let Me assure you, I do. I let this massive hurricane which you have named Harvey devastate your coast so that you will take notice of My power. Let Me assure you that there will come a day, soon, when I will knock all the stars and planets from the sky. I am coming back to earth; some of you do believe that I did once visit earth in human form to take all your sins on Myself and let Myself get nailed to a cross and I did die in your place. But, I came back to life, destroying the power of death for you. I am coming back to earth to take all who believe I am the Savior from sin, death and the devil home to heaven and eternal life. I am the only one who can give eternal life. There are no other gods. There is no other way to be saved from an eternity of suffering in a lake of fire. Believe and be saved. Your local Christian Church is there to help Me to gather My flock for that great day. I am your only Savior, God.

What do you think? Would a front page article from God make a difference? Probably not. Remember the rich man who wanted Lazarus to give him a drop of water as he was being tormented in hell? Lazarus said he could not. So, the rich man asked that Lazarus send a resurrected Moses to his brothers so that they would not end up in hell. Lazarus said he could not do that either because they would not believe Moses. Besides they have the Word of God to guide them.

And this really is the bottom line, isn't it. God has given us His Holy Word as the instrument to gather His flock that will enjoy eternal life. And His Word has gone out into all the world thru many different ways. It can be heard in Christian churches throughout the world every Sunday. It is on the radio, TV, print, computer, and who knows where else. It cannot be said that God has not warned the earth that its days are numbered.

The problem is that the devil is doing all he can to short-circuit that message. He has influenced some to preach a different message; one that says, you can do what you want. You can make your own god. Besides, God really isn't going to destroy the earth. He just wants to scare you into following Him and giving Him your hard-earned money. The devil gets people to ignore God and His gracious invitation to live forever in a wonderful place. Just live your life as you want and everything will be fine. The devil lies a lot. He hates God.

There seems to be a general apathy, a I-don't-care-attitude toward the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ. As if this world is going to continue on like this forever. I see this even in those who have been confirmed and should know that the end is going to come.

We do have sympathy for those having to deal with the tragedy of Harvey and we will do what we can as Christians to help. But, let us all be aware that God is speaking to all those on the face of the earth whenever there are tragedies of any kind. As if to say, you think this is bad, Just wait. You have not seen anything yet.