EXTREME WEATHER AND REFLECTIONS ON END TIMES

In recent years, global disasters caused by extreme weather conditions take place one after another; each time greater than the last. Some regions have great storms, some encounters drought. Just like the disasters that took place recently by the Mississippi River in the United States. The major storms and melting snow caused great flood that affected eight states. Their neighboring country, Cuba, has also encountered one of the most severe droughts in the last 50 years. Weather for the entire earth is no longer working in an orderly fashion, thus missing events are happening continuously. This year’s theme appears to be shallow earthquakes. Japan’s 311 earthquakes in 2011 was also a shallow earth quake. The tsunami that arose from the earthquake caused men to realize the great power of natural disasters. The scenes of destruction were portrayed very clearly through the mass media. Men were terrified by the reality of the earthquakes and tsunami. Even a country as advanced as Japan was in a helpless state when facing such a great natural disaster. Men then appear even more miniscule in this situation. It then becomes more difficult for men to say things such as “man by his efforts can conquer nature”. Men will gradually learn that in order to co-exist with nature, men must submit to God in order to walk a longer journey.

Due to the nonstop natural disasters, the topic of the last days blasts from the media around the world. A popular blockbuster hit in 2009, “2012”, directed by Roland Emmerich was number one in the charts consecutively for a few weeks even since the movie was released. From this we can understand that the topic of the end of the world is not only a concern to Christians, but also a concern to non-believers! The world we live in today is getting worse in the ecology of the earth. From a spiritual stand point, not only is the environment bad, men’s heart and moral standards are deteriorating as well, the world is filled with sinful things. The current situation is just as Jesus’ description regarding the last days. “And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.” (Lk 21:11), the natural disasters of the end days are flashing before our eyes. How do we Christians face this fast changing environment in the end days as Christ is soon to come?

1. Keep watch and be ready

But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Take heed, watch and pray; for you do not know when the time is.” (Mk 13:32) “This is what Jesus said towards the coming of the last days. The days set by God is not known to men, or the messengers of the heavens. Of course, even Satan would not know. It is God’s will that men do not know. Imagine if they do, then more people would have depression, and more evil things would happen in the world. Although God did not tell us the time of the last days, but He gave hints on things that will happen, “Now learn this from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near.” (Mt 24:32) There are a few places in the Bible that describes and hints at the situation that will occur in the last days; out of which the most special is the book of Revelation God inspired John to write. We must read Revelation often; even though the content is very profound, it is a book that is most relevant to us. As the last day approach us, we will be able to understand the mystery within through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. Just as John wrote in Revelation, “Then I took the little book out of the angel’s hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter.” (Rev 10:10) When the end day comes, there will be a spiritual battle. Even though the days are toilsome, we must gain victory through relying on the Lord in all things. We will also see God’s prophecies fulfilled one after another. This feeling will be as sweet as honey and our faith will be even more strengthened. We will be able to welcome the Lord’s second coming to take us back to God’s home.

2. Cherish the Salvation of the Lord

Jesus has already resurrected from the cross. The Lord made covenants with men through His precious blood. In Matthew 26:28 it states, “For this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” It is a great blessing for those who believe in Him to have their sins washed away through the Lord’s blood. Those who receive Salvation must know to cherish it because the door of grace will not always be open. The Salvation through the precious blood existed as early as the apostolic times. However, the Holy Spirit departed and the door of Salvation temporarily closed because of the deterioration of faith and the emergence of cults at the end of apostolic times. The Salvation through the precious blood did not occur again until God Himself established the True Jesus Church, where the latter rain of the Holy Spirit descended again.

The rise of True Jesus Church is just as described as the first seal in chapter six of Revelation, “And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.” (Rev 6:2) The true church holds the crown of victory and gains endless victory in the spiritual battle. God will abundantly provide His people to the church; of course, when the Salvation of the latter rain ends, the door of grace will be closed.

We must thank God for being able to enter this door of grace. Those who are at the stage of truth seeking and understands the truth must baptize at once. Do not wait until you have time or retire to baptize because you don’t know when the door will be closed. Grasp hold of the opportunity to receive the Salvation of the Lord while the door of grace is still open.

3. Take Opportunities to Preach the Gospel

Before Jesus ascended, He gave the disciples a mission, “And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.’” (Mk 16:15) In this coming of the last days, we must grab on to every opportunity and diligently preach the gospel. “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.” (Rom 1:16) The fruit of preaching the gospel will follow us, which is more than money can measure. Aside from the holy work of preaching the gospel, there are other holy works to accommodate. As long as you have a willing heart, doing God’s work will not be in vain. We will receive rewards from the Lord in the future.

Conclusion:

We must build of the habit of spiritual cultivation in order to face all sorts of woes in the last days. Reading the Bible will help us gain spiritual knowledge and wisdom. Prayer will strengthen our faith toward God; therefore, we must pray always, that way, faith will naturally build up when we encounter calamity. For those whom God loves, He will keep them to live a victorious life.
A) Establishing Cambodia’s Worship Centre

1. In May 2007, we rented the third floor of a shop lot at No.31, 230 Phnom Penh Street as worship centre. From June to December 2007, the rental per month was USD 130. More than two-thirds of the rental was donated out of love by the Chinese church members of Cambodia.

2. After renting the place as worship centre, evangelical work continued to progress, service was held every Friday night and Sabbath Day. Elder Joshua Phoong and I discussed and decided to subsidize for Cambodia Worship Centre. Commencing from 2008, Eastern Hemisphere started to subsidize the expenses of the rentals, meals, transportation, etc.

3. On 16th-18th May 2005, the Eastern Hemisphere sent Elder Joshua Phoong, Elder Stephen H-Chee, Deacon Jason Hsiao, Deacon Daniel Goo, to hold the first Spiritual Meeting. On 18th May, there were 8 truth seekers who were baptized in the name of Lord Jesus.

4. The newly baptized members experienced the love of God. On 24th May, they discussed to look for a more convenient and spacious place for worship and volunteered to donate for the rental. On 1st June, they decided to move in a new place: No 75/3, 230 Phnom Penh Street.

B) Gospel Was Spread to the Province of Po Lo Mian

1. In August 2008, Si Wong Jia Hui (王素慧) from Chao Gang Church (潮港教会) in Taiwan sent messages to me, wanting me to preach to the gospel to her friend who was a Christian, named Xu Mei Ying (徐美英). However, I was only able to contact Xu Mei Ying by end of August. On 1st October, Xu Mei Ying and her parents made a special trip to Phnom Penh to meet me. From that point of time, God had opened the gospel outreach work in the province of Po Lo Mian which was near to a famous county of Dian Guang region.

2. Xu Mei Ying was a Cambodian, she could speak Mandarin and could read a little of Chinese. Her house became a hotspot for evangelical work. On 14th December 2008, Elder Joshua Phoong went to Cambodia for pastoral work, at the same time demolished all the idol worshipped by Xu Mei Ying.

3. On 14th May 2009, near the province of Po Lo Mian, the tributary of Melong River baptized 16 truth seekers (3 of them were from Phnom Penh). In the afternoon, foot washing and Holy Communion were conducted at Xu Mei Ying’s house.

4. If Dian Guang village is representing as the central point, our gospel has reached the west of Pei Si De (Distance around 3km); east of Ken Nuo Koi (Distance around 3km); Chang Qiao (around 3km).

5. On 14th-16th of May 2009, the Eastern Hemisphere sent Elder Che Fu Ming, Deacon Jason Hsiao to hold Spiritual Meeting In Cambodia. In the province of Dian Guang, 9 truth seekers were baptized on 15th of May, foot washing and Holy Communion were conducted at Xu Mei Ying’s house (Phnom Penh province 3 were baptized on 15th of May).

6. Currently, there are 16 members in Dian Guang village, 4 members in Pei Si De, 2 members in Ken Nuo Koi. With a total of 22 members (Phnom Penh 14 members).

C) The Three Co-workers in Cambodia

1. Bro Chen Li Xing (陳利興) helped the preachers to flock in two regions (Phnom Penh and Dian Guang province), Chen Chen becomes an important worker in Phnom Penh.

2. Si Xu Mei Ying is the worker in-charged of the Dian Guang village and Pei Si De.

3. Bro Yang Jin Yan (楊金燕) is the worker in-charged of the Ken Nuo Koi and Chang Qiao.

4. Reading the bible and praying are the motive of strength for these three workers. Visitng churches, leading hymns, praying were their duties. May God remember their labour and let them have rest.

5. The church developed regularly, it is inter-related to the developments of the local workers. Therefore, cultivating the workers is an urgent need.

D) Next Year’s Direction of Evangelism

1. In the province of Phnom Penh, the main target is Chinese. It’ll be more effective for evangelism if the venue of bible study and discussion on the truth can be arranged earlier.

2. In the province of Dian Guang, tertiary students are the main targets. Currently, one person has been baptised and there are 4 truth seekers.

3. However, evangelism work depends on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. May all be done according to the God’s will. We truly believe that “the more we sow the more we harvest”, those who sow in tears shall reap in joy.

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