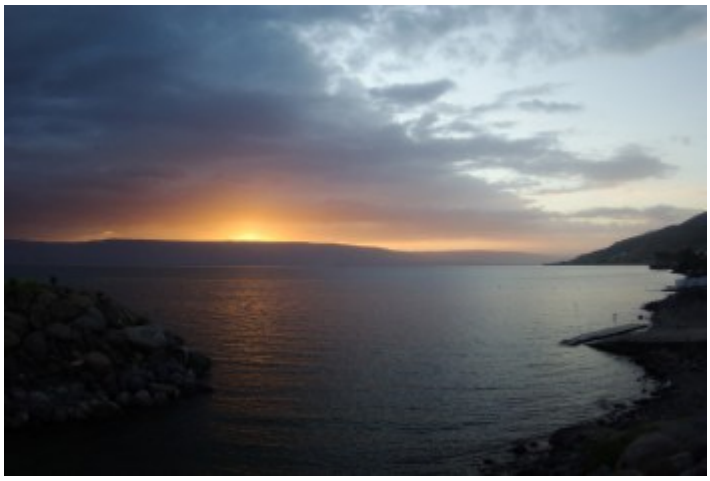
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When the Storms Come, Don’t Be Afraid



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #35 ~

In the past few posts, I’ve talked about the birth pangs – the wars, earthquakes, famines and plagues we’re now going through, and that will only increase as we get closer to the coming of Christ. Let’s be honest, this is scary stuff, and God knows our natural tendency is to be alarmed and get worried by events like these. And so right in the middle of His instruction about these birth pangs, Jesus says, *“See that you are not frightened, for these things must take place”* (Matthew 24:6). Some people, when thinking about the future, just want to put their head in the sand and hope these things won’t happen. But no, these birth pangs are going to take place, and the way to truly get through them is to have a close relationship with the Lord and trust Him, for He will give you all the grace and peace you need. Isaiah 26:3-4

This past weekend, a Cat 1 hurricane came very close to Tampa, and to be honest, I was tempted to be afraid. Days ahead of time, I was listening to the weatherman, and he was warning us that it was going to

be bad, with high winds, heavy rain and possible flooding. Then on Sunday afternoon the storm started and it continued through early Monday morning. My wife and I, tucked inside our home and with the power out, were listening to hurricane updates on our little radio. Once in a while we'd step outside our front door and we'd see the swaying trees, hear the howling wind, and feel the strong wind, this force of nature from the hand of God. And yes, it was frightening.

Through the years, I've seen that one of man's most common problems is his fear, a troubled mind, a gnawing spirit, an anxious soul. But man's real root problem is that he's not trusting God. He's looking at the storm, but he's not looking to God. Do you remember the story when the disciples were in the boat with Jesus and there was a *"fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat?"* And the disciples frantically wake up Jesus and He says, *"Why are you afraid? Do you have no faith?"* (Mark 4:35-41). Now has Jesus ever said this to you, *"Why are you afraid?"* Of course He has.

Yes, we can be afraid, but we are not to stay afraid. We are to look to God and say, *"Father, I'm scared, but I trust you."* And I promise you, that He'll calm your heart and take away your fear. I think of what God told Joshua, *"Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go"* (Joshua 1:9). When attacked by enemies, David prayed, *"When I am afraid, I will put my trust in You"* (Psalm 56:3). In speaking to the Jews, God says, *"Do not fear, for I am with you; do not look anxiously about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will help you"* (Isaiah 41:10). O remember these truths, that you have a Father who greatly loves you, who truly cares for you, who is always with you, and as you pray to Him and trust Him, He will give you His peace, He will help you, He will make you strong and courageous. As you go through the storm, don't forget that Jesus is always with you in the boat, and He will take you to the other side. Psalm 107:23-32

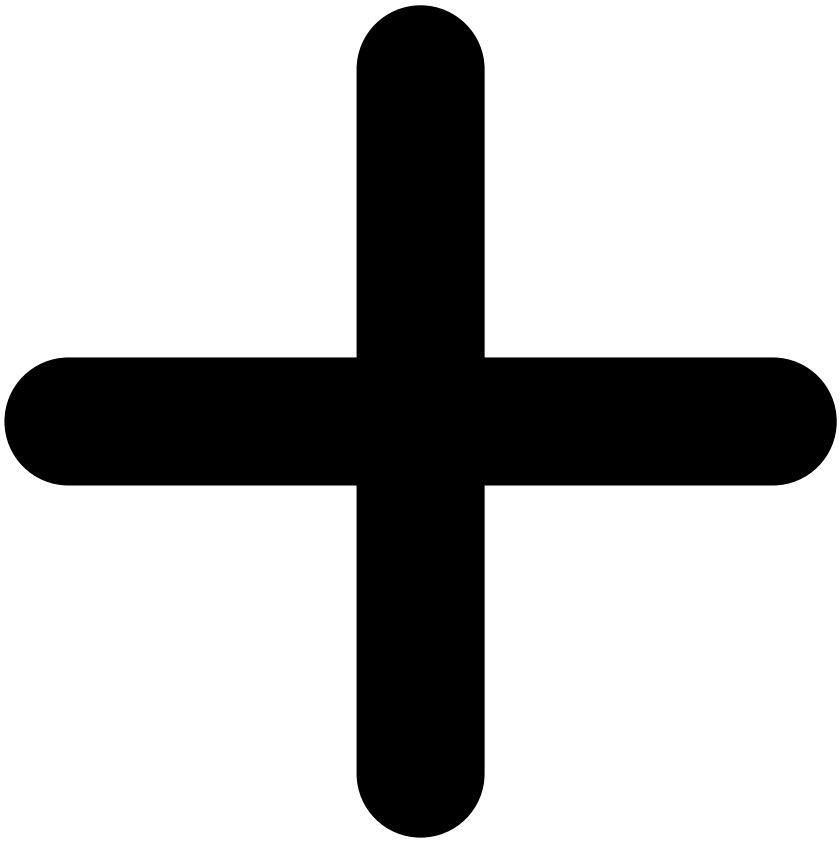
Then there's Psalm 46, that end times' chapter about wars and earthquakes, similarly described in the birth pains of Matthew 24. Our

response is verse 2, *“Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change.”* But why are we not to fear? Because verse 1 says God is our refuge and He will protect us and keep us safe, and He’s our strength and will help us make it through even the most difficult and troubling times of life.

Then verses 4-5 tell us about hope, and hope helps take away fear, for hope means that we believe that the Son will soon be seen in the clouds and right away we will be in heaven, in the city of God. Verse 7 tells us the fear-removing truth that the Lord is always with us, that He’s our constant companion. Then verses 8-9 speak about the *“works of the Lord,”* and it’s imperative that you get your mind off yourself by seeing what God is doing. It’s not about you, and the little things you are so concerned about and get so worried about. It’s about seeing God and His end times’ work, that He will cause all wars to cease, He will defeat our enemies, and He will bring peace, not just to our hearts, but to this entire planet.

Then there’s the conclusion. Verse 10 says you are to *“cease striving”,* to be still, to relax. O might you know your powerful, loving and sovereign God, and stop thinking about yourself and your own little problems and being so afraid. Make it your goal to work for the glory of God, and He will take care of the rest. *“Seek His kingdom and these things will be added to you. Do not be afraid, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom”* (Luke 12:31-32). Remember God’s promise, for this is what will most certainly take place, “*I will be exalted in the nations; I will be exalted in the earth.”* Psalm 46:11

P.S. Here are two more of my posts that relate to hurricanes, and important lessons for us to learn during this time in history: “A Hurricane is Coming – Be Ready, Watching and Working” and “The Alarm is Ringing! Wake up America! The Storm is Coming!”



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