



THE CAREW CONNECTION

2019

Genesis 7:19 (KJV)

And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered.

A rather long newsletter, but you likely have some extra time on your hands, so why not read it...

Why does God allow evil?

Some think this to be the unanswerable question. Is it? From a human viewpoint, most would likely think so. Other questions often asked when evil confronts us are: *If God is all-powerful, why can't He stop evil?* And *If God is all-loving, why does He allow suffering?*

Well, this short update will not likely answer the questions to the satisfaction of many, but I do think the element of the answer is in the last question. Why does God allow suffering among people He claims to love? *In my opinion, it is because suffering focuses our attention on ourselves and our mortality.* For the unsaved, this is a difficult thing to understand. How could God have destroyed the entire population of the earth, except for one family, and be a loving God? Isn't that evil in itself?

As I look out the window this morning and see a fresh blanket of snow upon the ground and on the branches of the all the trees, it is easy to forget about what lies beneath. The ground is barren of the greenery that covers it in summer. The trees appear to be life-less without their leafy decorative coverings. Without this snowy, pristine white covering the outside world would seem dead and gloomy. The world looks at itself as though it is covered in a snowy blanket. It does not like to take a realistic look at its core, at its heart, because it would have to observe the reality of itself, of its true nature. It is a world where sin is embedded in our hearts. It is a world that wants to set God aside, deny its need for Him, and especially wants to deny Him as an authority in its life. *But truly, God is Love.*

God offered us a covering!

There is a flood upon us now. It is called the CODIC-19 Corona virus. It is literally taking the earth by storm like a flood whose waters rise until everything is covered. The great minds of the world are working together trying to find answers to dam the flow of the virus before it overcomes the world. The flood in Noah's day did overcome the world. BUT, before the flood occurred God offered the world a chance to repent and change, to recognize and acknowledge Him. It took Noah over 100 years to build the arc. For all those years, Noah was telling people there was a flood coming but their eyes had so covered their own sin that they ignored, even ridiculed, the man who was trying to save them. Sound familiar? There was another man who came to save people...

Since that time, God promised He would never cover the earth in a watery flood again but there have been many times when God has sent a vivid message to us to remind the world of who He is. The Hebrews were put into bondage in Egypt. Israel was overcome by the Assyrians. The Babylonians oppressed Judah. The Romans conquered vast portions of the then known world. All these events were in response to the world's failure to recognize the darkness of its own heart and the Light that was available to them. Since that time there have been numerous catastrophic events and wars in the world. That Light is just as available today as it was then. Though our eyes see ourselves like we are covered in the white, clean blanket of snow, God sees the barrenness and darkness of our inner selves. 2000 or so years ago, God sent a Light into the world to cover it in another filter—the filter of the shed Blood of Jesus Christ.

In Noah's day the people were given a choice—repent or die. Israel was given a choice—repent or be put in bondage. Judah was given the same choice, but still did not turn back to God. There have been devastating natural catastrophes, there have been cataclysmic wars—were these all directed by God in response to our lack of response to Him? *Why does God allow evil?* Answer to question 1—very likely. Answer to question 2—Because he wants the world to repent and accept Him in their lives and hearts, *because He loves us.* 1 John 4:19 says, *We love him because he first loved us.* Because He loves us, it grieves Him to see us live in a world riddled by sin. Genesis 6:6 tells us God grieved because He was changing the way He dealt with sin in the world. It grieved Him that the world had turned away from Him. He sent Christ into the world for a new dispensation—a new way to deal with sin in the world. Again, the world had, and has, the opportunity to make a choice. Accept Christ—or be in bondage to sin. Accept Christ—or die an eternal death of suffering. John 3:15-21 tells us the story of God sending His Son into the world and why He did it—*because He loves us.* He wants us to have joy in our lives. He doesn't want us to live in bondage or in fear. He offers a way to choose not to. He offers a way to have life and have it abundantly. Read Jeremiah 33:6-8. It is God's promise that He can cure, that He can save, but in verse 3 he predicates the promise by saying, *call unto me...*

Do you know the Son?

Our lives have really changed over the past few weeks, haven't they? The world has, for the most part, been shut down and people ordered to isolate themselves from each other. Carol and I recently returned to Michigan since our scheduled meeting were cancelled due to the virus. We thought it best to return to our 'home base' rather than remain in N. Carolina and face the possibility

of not being able to get back home. Turns out it was the right decision as we see more states invoking 'stay at home' policies. We just heard the isolation is extended for another three weeks here in Michigan. We, humans, were not created for this isolation. We crave fellowship. We crave togetherness. We crave attention. We crave activity. We crave so many things we cannot get when isolated to our homes. How are you going to use this time of isolation?

This kind of isolation can be a very trying time. Families with children will likely have difficulties as the children become bored and frustrated. Couples will face difficulties since the day-to-day routines are taken away and they find themselves in close quarters they are not used to. I have seen several news articles indicating the rise in domestic disturbance calls to the police as a result of people being overcome by the inability to have daily escape from close quarters. People are crying for help, crying for answers. We are looking to our governments—federal, state, and local, for answers. Will they—can they—solve the problem? Will they help us get through this COVID-19 flood? They may. They probably will. They can certainly use your prayers and God's help! Can they solve the greater problem—the problem of a sinful world turning its back on God? No.

Let me ask you...*do you crave God?* Have you placed your trust in Him? Has the shed Blood of Christ covered the barrenness and darkness that exists in your heart? Have you chosen eternal life over eternal death? Have you acknowledged God's love for you? Do you know Jesus Christ? Have you asked Him to save you? Has this virus and the resulting isolation and devastation it has caused provoked you to ponder the frailty of your life. Has it roused a fear within you? If it has, isn't this a great time to get into the Word and discover how to have eternal peace? Do you have something better to do with your time? I think you have a lot of time on your hands right now...

What do you fear the most?

Yesterday, Carol and I watched a livestream sermon and the scripture was in Matthew 4. Near the close of the message the preacher pointed out something significant in verse 40 and 41. In verse 40, in the KJV, is the word *fearful*. In verse 41 the word *feared* appears. Each is a different Greek word having drastically different meanings though. In verse 40, it speaks to a fear of things. It is the kind of fear that causes us to cower in helplessness and tremble. The word *feared* in verse 41 is talking about the AWE that we should have for the Lord as described in Hebrews 12:28...

Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

If you have fear in this life, *fear* of the Lord is the answer. Only Christ can give us true peace. Even in times of difficult trials, if you know Christ as your Savior, eternal peace will be yours. James wrote that life is a vapour that appears for a short time and soon passes away. He speaks about our mortal life. God promises that if we accept His Son as Savior, we will have eternal life—supernatural life that surpasses anything we can imagine. Which have you—or will you—choose?

Gen. 8:1

And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged

God can calm the storms of life. Has he sent this pandemic to wake us up to our own mortality? Probably, as He has done many times in the past. Use this time to get to know Him better. And if you have not ever done so, ask Christ to be your Savior. Read the passages I've mentioned. Dive into the Word of God and find peace there. Trade in the fear of worldly events for the fear of God. Be safe, stay healthy, remember that God is in control...

UPDATE OF EVENTS...

As in yours, our lives and schedules are in upheaval and uncertainty regarding when we get back to a 'normal' routine. Our next scheduled meeting is on April 5th and it may be optimistic to think it will be possible. The following Sunday would be Easter, a good reminder of what Christ did to save us from the pandemic of sin in our lives.

Our greatest prayer requests at this time, other than an end to the pandemic, are for us to be able to return to Chad as we have been planning, for the health of our family and friends here and abroad, and for our support needs. If we cannot return to Chad by mid-August, we will have to apply for new visas. Also, due to the ongoing issues with the house in Chad and the desire by the owner to sell at the year's end, if we cannot return we will have to have someone move and store all of our possessions, including our solar power equipment and generator which would be a large undertaking. Thank you for the prayers and support! We are praying for you as well! Stay safe. Stay healthy. Stay focused on Him for He is the Rock that stands firm through all storms!

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