

EARTHQUAKES & GOD

A. All over the world, there are unseen forces that put the Earth's crust under great pressure.

1. When the crust finally gives way, the land can shake for several miles in all directions.
 - a. This sudden, powerful movement is called an earthquake.
 - b. When geologists find a place where the crust has moved, they call it *fault*.

B. Earthquakes play an important role in shaping our world.

1. Movements along a fault can force land to rise, or fall, or shift sideways.

- a. An airport in Napier, New Zealand, lies on new land that rose out of the sea after an earthquake in 1931.
- b. Much of the old pirate city of Port Royal, Jamaica, sank beneath the sea after an earthquake in 1692.
- c. In 1985, an earthquake hit Mexico City that was ten times stronger than the one that hit San Francisco in 1989.

C. Earthquakes are awesome events, but why do they happen?

1. The quick answer might be that they result from unstable conditions beneath the surface of the Earth.
2. On the other hand, if we look at earthquakes in terms of history, there is good reason to

believe that the great Flood in the days of Noah created conditions that make it easier for earthquakes to occur today ([Gen 7:11](#)).

- a. This would suggest that these powerful land movements, which sometimes are very destructive, can be traced back in history to man's disobedience to God.

[The Bible mentions earthquakes many times, & in each case God is showing us something about Himself.]

I. GOD IS ALL POWERFUL

Psa 97:4-5 – His lightnings light the world; *the earth sees & trembles*. 5 The mountains melt like wax *at the presence of the LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth*.

II. GOD IS NEAR & WE MUST LISTEN TO HIM

Exo 19:17-20 - And *Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, & they stood at the foot of the mountain*. 18 Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, & *the whole mountain quaked greatly*. 19 And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long & became louder & louder, Moses spoke, & **God answered him by voice**. 20 Then the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. & the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, & Moses went up.

III. GOD WILL PUNISH REBELLION

Num 16:28-30 – Then Moses said: "By this you shall know that the LORD has sent me to do all these works, for I have not done them of my own will. 29 If these men die naturally like all men, or if they are visited by the common fate of all men, then the LORD has not sent me. 30 But if the LORD creates a new thing, & the earth opens its mouth & swallows them up with all that belongs to them, & they go down alive into the pit, then you will understand that these men have rejected the LORD." 31 Now it came to pass, as he finished speaking all these words, that *the ground split apart under them*, 32 *& the earth opened its mouth & swallowed them up, with their households & all the men with Korah, with all their goods*. 33 So they & all those with them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them, & they perished from among the congregation.

IV. GOD'S SIGN PRECEDING JUDGMENT

Matt 24:4-14 (Destruction of Jerusalem) – And Jesus answered & said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. 5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' & will deceive many. 6 And you will hear of wars & rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation will rise against nation, & kingdom against kingdom. & **there will be famines, pestilences, & earthquakes in various places.** 8 All these are the beginning of sorrows. 9 Then they will deliver you up to tribulation & kill you, & you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. 10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, & will hate one another. 11 Then many false prophets will rise up & deceive many. 12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. 13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, & then the end will come.

V. CHRIST DEATH WAS NO ACCIDENT

Matt 27:50-54 – And **Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, & yielded up His spirit.** 51 **Then**, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; & **the earth quaked, & the rocks were split,** 52 & the graves were opened; & many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; 53 & coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city & appeared to many. 54 So when the centurion & those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the **earthquake** & the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

CLOSING – The next time you feel the earth tremble (and you may some day, because about 50,000 earthquakes happen each year), or the next time you read about an earthquake, remember these points:

- God is All Powerful
- He Is Near & We Must Listen To Him
- He Wants To Bless, But He Will Punish
- He Has Given Signs To Prove That Jesus Is His Son

CLOUDS – & GOD

- A. In 1803, an English scientist by the name of Luke Howard described three types of clouds based on their shape & height.
1. **Cirrus** – thin, feathery clouds that are formed at such high altitudes that they are primarily made of ice crystals. Sometimes called “mare’s tails”
 2. **Cumulus** – fluffy clouds that form as warm, moist air rises to meet the lighter cool air.
 - a. When “nimbus” is added to the name, then it means that the cumulus cloud carries enough water to produce rain (even violent weather with thunder, lightening, & even hail & tornadoes).

3. **Stratus** – clouds spread out in a layer & cover a wider area than the other two types.

[But were not here tonight just to have a science lesson, so how does God use the clouds as a way to illustrate the lessons that He would like for us to know?]

I. THE GLORY & PRESENCE OF GOD

Exo 19:7-9 – So Moses came & called for the elders of the people, & laid before them all these words which the LORD commanded him. 8 Then all the people answered together & said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do." So Moses brought back the words of the people to the LORD. 9 And **the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I come to you in the thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, & believe you forever."** So Moses told the words of the people to the LORD.

II. GOD LEADS HIS PEOPLE THROUGH LIFE

Neh 9:19-20 – Yet in Your manifold mercies You did not forsake them in the wilderness. **The pillar of the cloud did not depart from them by day, to lead them on the road;** nor the pillar of fire by night, to show them light, & the way they should go.

III. GOD'S SIGN TO PROVE A PROMISE

Gen 9:11-17 – Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." 12 And God said: "**This is the sign of the covenant** which I make between Me & you, & every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: 13 I set **My rainbow in the cloud**, & it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me & the earth. 14 It shall be, **when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud;** 15 & I will remember My covenant which is between Me & you & every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 **The rainbow shall be in the cloud**, & I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God & every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth."

IV. A SYMBOL THAT GOD WILL COVER SINS

Isa 44:21-22 – Remember these, O Jacob, & Israel, for you are My servant; I have formed you, you are My servant; O Israel, you will not be forgotten by Me! 22 **I have blotted out, like a thick cloud, your transgressions, & like a cloud, your sins.** Return to Me, for I have redeemed you."

V. THE FLEETING NATURE OF RICHES

Job 30:15-16 – Terrors are turned upon me; they pursue my honor as the wind, & **my prosperity has passed like a cloud**. 16 And now my soul is poured out because of my plight; the days of affliction take hold of me (Matt 6:19-21).

VI. THE SKILL OF THE CREATOR

Job 37:14-16 – Listen to this, O Job; stand still & consider the wondrous works of God. 15 **Do you know when God dispatches them, & causes the light of His cloud to shine?** 16 **Do you know how the clouds are balanced**, those wondrous works of Him who is perfect in knowledge?

VII. FALSE TEACHERS

2 Peter 2:17 – These are wells without water, **clouds carried by a tempest**, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

Jude 12-14 – These are spots in your love feasts, while they feast with you without fear, serving only themselves. **They are clouds without water**, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots; 13raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

CLOSING – **God** has taught us many valuable lessons by means of His created things. **Earthquakes & clouds** He

has used as symbols, or pictures, of great truth. **The next time you see a cloud remember these points:**

- **God's Presence**
- **God's Leadership**
- **God's Promise**
- **God's Forgiveness**
- **Passing Nature of Riches**
- **The Skill Of The Creator**
- **The Nature Of Hypocrites & False Teachers**

RAIN & GOD

A. The summer months in Texas can be sparse with rain.

1. When they are, prayers are lifted up continually for a blessing from God.
2. When the dry conditions lessen, we thank the Lord & go on with our lives knowing that He controls & intervenes in the world that He created & in which we live.

C. Let's turn our attention to God's word & learn some important lessons about the rain.

I. A BLESSING FROM GOD

Ps 147:7-9 (Psalmist)

7 *Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving*; ...8 Who covers the heavens with clouds, *Who prepares rain for the earth, Who makes grass to grow on the mountains*. 9 He gives to the beast its food, & to the young ravens that cry.

Isa 55:8-11 (Lord used rain to describe a spiritual blessing)

8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD. 9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, & My thoughts than your thoughts. 10 *"For as the rain comes down, & the snow from heaven, & do not return there, but water the earth, & make it bring forth & bud, that it may give seed to the sower & bread to the eater, 11 so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, & it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.* (Psa 19:1-6; Job 5:8-12; 38:22-30; Psa 135:5-7; Jer 14:20-22).

II. A SYMBOL OF CLEANSING & DELIVERANCE

Gen 6:5-8

5 *Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth,* ...6 And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, & He was grieved in His heart. 7 So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have

created from the face of the earth, both man & beast, creeping thing & birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." 8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

Gen 7:11-12

11 In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day *all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, & the windows of heaven were opened*. 12 *And the rain was on the earth forty days & forty nights*.

Gen 7:19-24

19 And the waters prevailed exceedingly on the earth, & all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. 20 The waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward, & the mountains were covered. 21 And all flesh died that moved on the earth: ...22 *All in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life...He destroyed all living things which were on the face of the ground. Only Noah & those who were with him in the ark remained alive*.

1 Peter 3:20-22 (Peter)

when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, *eight souls, were saved through water*. 21 There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven & is at the right hand of God, angels & authorities & powers having been made subject to Him.

III. GOD SHOWS NO PARTIALITY

Matt 5:43-48 (Jesus)

43 You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor & hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, & pray for those who spitefully use you &

persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of ***your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil & on the good, & sends rain on the just & on the unjust.*** 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? 48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Matt 7:24-27 (Jesus said the rain, floods & wind descended on both)

24 Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, & does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: 25 **& the rain descended**, the floods came, & the winds blew & beat on that house; & it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. 26 Now everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, & does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: 27 **& the rain descended**, the floods came, & the winds blew & beat on that house; & it fell. And great was its fall.

IV. A WITNESS OF GOD'S EXISTENCE

Acts 14:15-17 (Paul & Barnabus at Lystra after healing a cripple)

We also are men with the same nature as you, & preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, & all things that are in them, 16 who in bygone generations allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. 17 **Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, gave us rain from heaven & fruitful seasons**, filling our hearts with food & gladness."

V. TWO ILLUSTRATION FROM JAMES

James 5:7-8 (Patience in waiting for the Lord's coming)

7 Therefore ***be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early & latter rain.*** 8 You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

James 5:16-18 (Power & effectiveness of prayer – 1Kgs 17-18)

16 Confess your trespasses to one another, & pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. 17 ***Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, & he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; & it did not rain on the land for three years & six months.*** 18 ***And he prayed again, & the heaven gave rain, & the earth produced its fruit.***

CLOSING

- A. Like earthquakes & clouds, there is a lot we can learn from rain.

- B. Perhaps most importantly we should learn & keep in mind where our rain comes from, & that without it, we would have none of our possessions & no physical life – & thus no opportunity for an eternal spiritual life.

- C. Everything of significance is somehow tied to rain & water.

Rev 21:6-7 (Jesus to John after giving him the vision of Heaven)

6 It is done! I am the Alpha & the Omega, the Beginning & the End. ***I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.*** 7 He who overcomes shall inherit all things, & I will be his God & he shall be My son.
