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A World in Chaos! Should We Be Afraid?

Luke 21:25: (NASB) *There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves.*

A world in chaos! We have the Ebola virus - war between the Palestinians and Israel - Iraq being plundered by ISIS - Christians in the Middle East being persecuted and killed - worldwide anti-Semitism on the rise and we have the tenuous problems with Russia and Ukraine. In our country, we have lawlessness - on the southern border there are government scandals over the IRS - the health care system - Benghazi - a skyrocketing national debt...shall we continue? It certainly seems that chaos and unrest are spreading faster than ever before. What should we be doing? Should we be afraid?

Today's conversation is going to be all about TROUBLE! We are surrounded by trouble of many different kinds. On each segment of the program, we will highlight one aspect of the trouble and then give a God-driven perspective on that trouble or "storm cloud." So, each storm cloud we present is guaranteed to come with a *silver lining*!

First Storm Cloud: Financial and Economic Disasters. James 5:1-3

Let's take a quick look at our current financial position here in America now compared to our financial position at the time of the mortgage crisis of 2008. There are some startling differences with where we are today:

(Source for the following: <http://www.usdebtclock.org>)

	CURRENT	2008
POPULATION:	319,238,000	305,202,000
NATIONAL DEBT:	Almost \$18 trillion	About \$11 trillion
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT	\$17,119,374,000	\$14,142,380,000
"REAL" UNEMPLOYMENT	17,908,000	13,500,000
NOT IN LABOR FORCE	92,396,000	80,209,000
FOOD STAMPS	46,264,000	32,700,000
DISABLED - SOCIAL SECURITY INCOME	10,954,000	8,380,000

The following is a graphic illustration of one trillion dollars: If you had a stack of \$1000 bills, to get \$1,000,000, the stack would be four inches high. To get one billion dollars, that stack of dollar bills would now have to be 33 feet high. To get to one trillion dollars, that stack would need to be 61 miles high! The point is that a national debt of about eighteen trillion dollars is an incredible and unimaginable amount of money.

Silver Lining: James 5:7-8: The return of Jesus is going to oversee the rebuilding of society...not on society's terms but on God's terms.

Second Storm Cloud: Dishonesty, especially on the part of those with power. Luke 12:1-3: This is a VERY revealing statement - the sin (leaven) being spoken of is hypocrisy. Once identified, Jesus gives a prophecy to explain God's handling of the matter: ²*But there is nothing covered up that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known.* ³*Accordingly, whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in the inner rooms will be proclaimed upon the housetops. All that has been hidden will be revealed!*

Here is the value of the words we speak - notice Jesus is not referring to the value of what we want an end result to be, but he is referring to the value of the pathway (the words) that we use: Matthew 12:33-37: Jesus is not saying by your intentions you will be judged; he is saying by your words and by what you do will be the judgment upon you. We are in a world where the idea of saying what is convenient is acceptable rather than speaking what is true. Sometimes truth is not convenient, sometimes truth is not easy and will not get you the reaction that you would like to have, but truth is truth.

Silver Lining: The scripturally principled answer: Ecclesiastes 12:13-14: Reverence God and keep His commandments.

What are the commandments of God? Exodus 20:16: We can apply this principle to every interaction we have.

Deuteronomy 25:13-15: Be fair and honest no matter whom you are dealing with. We need to be full of integrity.



Third Storm Cloud: The growing roots of anti-Semitic sentiment and actions.

Worldwide poll - more than one in four adults harbor anti-Semitism, CBS2 News, New York

- *(Dana) Anti-Semitism is more widespread than you might think. The Anti-Defamation League conducted its first global survey and said the results are sobering. CBS Richard Brennan here with more. Dick?*
- *(Dick) Well, Dana, the poll asked eleven questions based on age-old Jewish stereotypes about power, loyalty, money and behavior. People who responded YES to six or more negative statements about Jews are considered to hold anti-Semitic attitudes.*
- *(Reporter) The poll held by the Anti-Defamation League says that around the world some 26 percent of those surveyed are deeply infected by anti-Semitic views and 35 percent have never heard of the Holocaust.*

There is a deep privilege and a deep responsibility in being chosen: Amos 3:1-2: Such punishment must be public - we have seen this in the dispersion of Israel to the four corners of the earth!

Examples - global wave of anti-Semitism has little to do with Gaza, Fox News

- *I think there was an expectation after the Nazi Holocaust that anti-Semitism would die out. In fact, the creation of Israel has given an opportunity for anti-Semites to reinvent, to re-brand their hatred and to target Jewish communities throughout the Jewish state.*
- *Right, and Rabbi, I am going to move to you next. You spent your time educating people about the Holocaust. Is this something worrying to you?*
- *Oh, absolutely. If you look at what's happening now, the chief Rabbi of Holland's home was broken in five times. The Director of International Relations for the Simon Wiesenthal Center of Paris - his tires were slashed, and last week at a so-called peaceful demonstration at a Palestine demonstration, his car windows were shattered. In Berlin, you have one of the main Imams for Islamism there, and he preached a sermon where he said, "Oh, God, kill every last Jew," and then he reminded his listeners that the Jews are responsible for all the plagues and all the wars in the history of mankind. Now that is exactly what the Nazis said 75 years ago.*

Even though we have witnessed the miraculous return of Israel to their land, more trouble is still to come: Psalms 83:1-5: Prophetically there will be some very difficult times coming for Israel.

Silver Lining: Now, the rest of the story: Romans 11:25-29: They are blinded! But because of God's love and promises to Israel's forefathers, they still have a place in God's plan. *(But we will see God remove that blindness!)*

Israel is, in spite of all their coming troubles, to be richly blessed! Amos 9:11,14,15: The symbolism is the same as the time of the return of Jesus. It is just like today. Jesus is saying, when you see these things, I am not on my way but I am already present to bring in the end of this world and bring in the new world. Jesus told them to pray *thy kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*

Fourth Storm Cloud: The developing power and destructive presence of ISIS.

A time of Trouble: Daniel 12:1: Daniel says there will be the greatest trouble you have ever seen...and then the greatest deliverance. God has a plan and Israel is the centerpiece. Israel has a major positive blessing role to play in the plan of God.

ISIS is looking to take over the Middle East with their radical perspective on Islam. They are fighting everybody.


The day cometh that shall burn as an oven: Malachi 4:1



 **Where did ISIS come from? NBC News**

- *The Islamic state is really the descendent of Al Qaida and Iraq, which began under Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. He took advantage of the disorder and disaffection amongst the Sunnis in Iraq after the U.S. invasion to establish this new group. The big thing that set Al Qaida and Iraq apart from a lot of the other groups was that it became very well organized and very quickly and this did a variety of things for it: One, It made it efficient and very effective at mobilizing fighters and resources. Another thing, though, is it made it very difficult to destroy the organization by killing its leader. The United States began targeting the leadership of a variety of resistance movements -very successful targeting, some of them. Some other leaders fled the country, and when that happened to a lot of these groups they simply collapsed, whereas Al Qaida loses leadership and is able to continue fighting. This gives them a big advantage because they're then able to absorb some of the former fighters from some of these other groups.*

The Day of Vengeance: (The Day of Trouble) Isaiah 34:8: (KJV) *For it is the day of the LORD'S (Jehovah's) vengeance, and the year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion.*

 **Where did ISIS come from? NBC News**

- *Yes they're violent, but there are lots of violent extremists. You can look at Boko Haram and other groups in Africa and the Movgrab, but the real distinguishing feature is that they're not just violent they are incredibly effective. If you think about it, they've been fighting to at least some extent the Syrian government, the Iraqi government, the Kurdish Peshmerga, the freed Syrian army and they've made progress on all of those fronts that really has only been blunted recently by the application of U.S. airpower.*

This is **pure speculation**, but ISIS may be the tool of God Almighty to reduce the power and authority of the Islamic nations against Israel.

Silver Lining: **Now the absolute and dramatic turnaround:** Zechariah 8:21-23
Zechariah 12:9-10

What is the lesson from the tragedy in Ferguson, MO?

Fifth Storm Cloud: The restlessness of the masses that do not feel respected.

The situation in Ferguson is a current example of the roaring of the sea and the waves mentioned in our theme Scripture. Luke 21:25

While this next text is NOT about the events that transpired in Ferguson, it does show the principle of God's view of attitudes that are solely focused on their own agenda:
Zechariah 7:8-14: (NASB) ⁸*Then the word of the LORD came to Zechariah saying, ⁹Thus has the LORD of hosts said, Dispense true justice and practice kindness and compassion each to his brother; ¹⁰and do not oppress the widow or the orphan, the stranger or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another. This is the proclamation of God - an instruction to follow for all men. ¹¹But they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears from hearing. Sometimes we block out reality to only hear what we insist upon hearing! If justice is not in accordance to what we want, we just block our ears. What happened then is what happens now. We can create a tremendous storm cloud of unrest. ¹²They made their hearts like flint so that they could not hear the law and the words, which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets; therefore great wrath came from the LORD of hosts. ¹³And just as He called and they would not listen, so they called and I would not listen, says the LORD of hosts; ¹⁴but I scattered them with a storm wind among all the nations whom they have not known. Thus the land is desolated behind them so that no one went back and forth, for they made the pleasant land desolate.*

Here is the recompense for that attitude. God called Israel and they would not listen. So, God said as a result, "I will not listen. I will give them what they gave out to show them the injustice of their actions." Their land was left desolate.



In this country, we all have access to the examples of those who have gone before and paved the road as overcomers. Whether it is biblical or a contemporary example, the answer is there!

What happens in these situations is there is often one group of people that sets themselves against another group of people. Unfortunately in the example of the Ferguson situation, it ends up looking like a black versus white kind of thing. That is very unfortunate. For most of us, that sense of racism is not a part of our life. Do I really want justice or do I want *what I want* justice to be? Bottom line: God is watching us, just like in the Zechariah scripture. Every man truly wants true absolute justice.

Silver Lining: True Justice will be served with compassion: Isaiah 42:1-4: Jesus will bring justice! All will have opportunity to prosper: Micah 4:3-4:

Sixth Storm Cloud: Rampant disease and despair spreading throughout the world.

When you think about rampant disease, you think about Ebola. It is very real and very prevalent. It has created quite a stir and rightfully so.

Luke 21:25-26: Ebola is a symptom of what is happening in the world around us. It is an example of the fear in the *roaring of the seas*. There are other diseases that we do not think about or talk about much, but they belong in this conversation. We are not asking God to take away the difficulties. What we are asking for is the understanding to bear them and to focus on the silver lining rather than the dark cloud.

Silver Lining: God knows. He has always known and has always had His plan in place for relief! Isaiah 35:5-10: (NASB) The silver lining is that all the distress, all of the disease, all of the dysfunction, all of the lack of morality and lack of integrity, the wars, the rumors of wars, the interracial tension... all of these will be dissolved in accordance with the will of God for eternity!

So, what do we have? **Fear**- and we now see that we can look at it in two different ways:

F - Fear

F - Faith

a decision, not an emotion.

E - Emotion

E - Expectation

here is where you test the Roots of your faith.

A - Alters

A - Action

here is where you test the Reality of your faith.

R - Reality

R - Rejoice

here is where you witness the Results of your faith.

The rejoicing and results come in the middle of the storm. We are happy that God's plan understood those things ahead of time, labeled those things ahead of time and He said, "here is what is going to happen" and here is what the end result is going to be. We know the ending of the storm is not the ending of humanity. The storm must come, the storm must be difficult and hard but through it all rejoice because *your redemption draweth nigh*.

**So, a world in chaos, should we be afraid?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!**