

It Might Be Today

The Truth about Earthquakes

The daily news and the trends in the world are corroborating centuries-old prophecies found in the Bible. We like to highlight some of the things that are happening and present them to you as a weekly Prophecy Update.

Earthquakes are a natural event that often get mentioned in the discussion of the end times. We certainly want to be in prayer for folks in Japan and elsewhere whose lives have been touched by the recent massive quake in the Pacific.

Earthquakes interest us because of something Jesus said. We read in Matthew 24:7,

Matthew 24:7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, **and earthquakes in various places.**

Jesus was definitely saying that there would be more earthquakes, and that they would occur in unusual locations, in the future. However, the future time He was talking about is the Great Tribulation. His comments in Matthew 24 & 25 are *not* about the age in which we live. They are *not* directed at the church but to Israel in the midst of the Great Tribulation.

Research shows that earthquakes are not really on the rise! Just about one year ago, in April of 2010, the United States Geological Survey was asked, *Why are we having so many earthquakes? Has earthquake activity been increasing?*¹

Here are some excerpts from their answer:

Although it may seem that we are having more earthquakes, earthquakes of magnitude 7.0 or greater have remained fairly constant throughout this century and, according to our records, have actually seemed to decrease in recent years.

¹ <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/learn/faq/?faqID=110>

There are several reasons for the perception that the number of earthquakes, in general, and particularly destructive earthquakes is increasing.

- 1) A partial explanation may lie in the fact that in the last twenty years, we have definitely had an increase in the number of earthquakes we have been able to locate each year. This is because of the tremendous increase in the number of seismograph stations in the world and the many improvements in global communications.
- 2) The population at risk is increasing. While the number of large earthquakes is fairly constant, population density in earthquake-prone areas is constantly increasing. In some countries, the new construction that comes with population growth has better earthquake resistance; but in many it does not. So we are now seeing increasing casualties from the same sized earthquakes.
- 3) Better global communication. Just a few decades ago, if several hundred people were killed by an earthquake in Indonesia or eastern China, for example, the media in the rest of the world would not know about it until several days, to weeks, later, long after such an event would be deemed newsworthy.

In 2008 they recorded a total of 31,777 quakes of various magnitudes whereas the final total number for 2010 was 19,918. 2007 was a peak year for quakes with a magnitude greater than 8.0; there were four of them. In 2010 there was one in that range.²

What about the thought that earthquakes are occurring in unusual places, like the state of Maine? The official Maine website states,

There is a long record of earthquakes in New England, going back to the 1500's... We have a good record of small earthquakes since 1975, which shows that Maine has had an average of one magnitude 3 earthquake per year. They do not occur at a constant rate, however. In some years we don't have any, and in other years we have had up to five. They are sporadic.³

As students of Bible prophecy we want to be accurate. We don't want to become sensationalists who point to every occurrence as being the fulfillment of prophecy. Each time we do, we lose a little of our credibility.

And, worse, we can even give the impression that these disasters are the deserved punishment God is meting out upon the globe when, in fact, we are not in that time yet.

² <http://daveschumaker.net/earthquakes-in-2010-a-final-update/>

³ <http://www.maine.gov/doc/nrimc/mgs/explore/hazards/quake/quake-faq.htm#q9>

Having said all that, you can't help but think about how awful conditions will be during the future Great Tribulation. What is happening in Japan will be happening everywhere simultaneously. It should motivate us to be about the business of sharing with others that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him would not perish but have everlasting life.

We're not going to be here, on the earth, during the Great Tribulation.

The Lord promised to return in the clouds to resurrect and rapture His church to keep us from that hour of trouble that is coming.

We are here now to tell others about Jesus.

Are you rapture-ready? If not, get ready, stay ready, and keep looking up.

Ready or not, Jesus is coming!