

Disaster-Ridden Japan in Store for More Trauma

Immediate aid is being determined and released for Japan to keep survivors surviving. When assessing the aftermath of an earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear scare, immediacy is vital, but experts agree it will not fully solve the problem.

The psychological effect of this triple-threat disaster is bound to last for years to come.

Many experts agree that these recent events will undoubtedly trigger a wave of depression throughout the country. In an article with "PsychCentral," Psychologist Dr. Magda Osman says that the effects of feeling out of control during the natural disaster, combined with the inevitable aid lull that takes place a few months after any disaster, could easily trigger severe depression.

Others agree that post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) will set in, especially as a result of the nuclear plant explosions. Dr. Joan Anzia, Professor of Psychiatry at Northwestern, told ABC News, "The distress from the nuclear threat is very different; an 'act of God' like an earthquake is different from a man-made disaster. With a man-made disaster, there's more of a feeling of betrayal by your government, and betrayal traumas have, in some ways, a heavier impact."

Yemen Forces Kill 40 Protesters

Yemen security forces have killed 40 people and injured hundreds more. Snipers opened fire from rooftops at thousand of protesters gathered in Taghyeer Square demanding an end to Yemen President Ali Abdullah Saleh's 30-year rule.

The shootings mark the deadliest state force in two months of political unrest in the Middle East. Saleh declared a state of emergency—but protesters are not giving up despite meeting with shootings, water cannons and tear gas. Saleh called those who were killed martyrs of democracy.

President Obama strongly condemned the violence in Yemen and called on Saleh to adhere to his public pledge to allow demonstrations to take place peacefully.

Online Dating Sites Cater to Virgins

✖ Online dating is nothing new, but the \$1.8 billion industry is growing—and diversifying—by leaps and bounds.

There are dating sites for cheaters, dating sites for millionaires, and dating sites for Christians. There are dating sites for specific ethnic groups, dating sites for divorcees, and dating sites for age groups.

Now, there are even dating sites exclusively for virgins and abstinent singles.

WeWaited.com and WeAbstain.com are catering to singles on the dating scene that are looking for someone of the opposite sex that holds the same values. While WeWaited.com targets virgins looking for other virgins to date, WeAbstain.com focuses on singles who decide not to have sex before tying the knot.

Ohio Pastor Finds Spiritual Renewal in Homeless Experiment

✖ Ryan Riddell has sold hundreds of homes. But the Keller Williams agent—and pastor of a local church in Dayton, Ohio—spent the month of January homeless.

No, Riddell wasn't behind on his mortgage. He willingly took to the cold streets of Dayton—leaving behind his wife and three children—to follow his heart in a campaign to raise awareness of homelessness.

“I felt the Lord leading me to do this,” Riddell says, still sporting the beard that grew on his face during his experiment.

Riddell got the idea at a Francis Chan conference.

“I felt convicted to do more than just talk about people that are hurting, dying and lost. I felt compelled to do something to help these people,” he continues. “Jesus became like us in order to reach us. For me, this was a spiritual renewal.”

Manigat or Martelly? Haiti Decides Sunday

✖ This Sunday, Haitians will hit the polls—hopefully the last time for this particular presidential election.

Elections were first held a few months ago in November 2010. Riots immediately erupted at polling places, however, when registered voters' names weren't on the list and ballot boxes were full. Accusations of fraud filled the air for weeks.

A couple of weeks later the results were announced for a run-off election to be held in January between former first lady Mirlande Manigat and government technocrat Jude Celestin. At that point, thousands poured into the streets in protest over what they believed to be a rigged presidential poll favoring ruling government coalition.

Nuclear Crisis Escalates in Japan

✖ Japan may be heading toward the largest nuclear disaster in human history.

Naoto Kan, Japan's prime minister, said the crisis at the Fukushima plant is "very grave" and that the military, police and firefighters are "putting their lives on the line" to contain the crisis.

The island nation on Friday raised the severity rating of the nuclear meltdown at the Fukushima plant from a level four to a level five. The international nuclear event scale ranges from one to seven.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) developed the scale to communicate the safety significance of reported nuclear and radiological incidents and accidents. A level four rating marks an accident with local consequences, while a level five event marks an accident with wider consequences. Level six is a serious accident and level seven is a major accident.

Why Even Bother Praying Anymore?

When I recently heard Christians suggesting that a prayer initiative for America was useless I was struck to the core with the realization that the Body of Christ is far from unified. I mean, if we can't unify around prayer, what can we unify around?

For all the impactful prayer movements in the Body, I still run into some believers who seem embittered by the efforts. They throw up their arms and ask, "Why even bother praying anymore?" because they don't see the fruit of their supplications. Yet faith is the evidence of things not seen (see Heb. 11:1). I shudder to think what would happen if we stopped praying for America.

What's the solution to this disunity? More intercession, more equipping, and more love.

Egypt's Weekend Vote Could Open Door to Terrorists

✖ The headlines coming out of the Middle East are troublesome.

News reports detail pro-democracy activists allegedly tortured by Egyptian soldiers, dozens injured in renewed Yemen protests, Saudi Arabia protests turning violent, the brother of al-Qaeda's second-in-command released in Egypt, Iran exploiting Israel-Egypt coordination difficulties, Libyans fleeing to Egypt, and so on.

The Arab revolution may have started in Tunisia, but onlookers say Egypt holds the key to the future of the Middle East—and this weekend is a potential turning point as the people who fought for freedom vote on changes to the constitution. Those changes set the stage for free elections this summer. With such a fast process, many are concerned that the Muslim Brotherhood could sweep the elections.

Japan Pushed to the Limit with Triple Threat

✖ Two strong tremors shook Japan Wednesday. These join the dozens of aftershocks that continue to unsettle the displaced after Friday's quake and tsunami.

However, the nuclear crisis is what really has the government worried. The radiation from damaged nuclear reactors in the Fukushima complex complicates Southern Baptist disaster relief efforts in Japan, according to one member of the assessment team. Jeff Palmer, Executive Director for Baptist Global Response, says, "We've looked at plans for helping in the earthquake areas. The tsunami areas are fairly well closed to private volunteer organizations. The Japanese government is handling that, and on top of that, those are in the radiation areas."

The scope of the damage is in the billions. A wide swath of the country lies in ruins. Within the government restrictions, Palmer explains that "a lot of us are focusing our response on those peripheral earthquake-affected areas which are requiring food, shelter, and help for folks who are being evacuated or have left the area."

Hinn Dismisses Defamation Suit Phil Cooke

✖ On January 12, 2011, Pastor Benny Hinn filed suit in Orange County, California, against self-described Christian media consultant Phil Cooke for disseminating false and defamatory information by improperly linking Pastor Hinn to a prominent female minister on his Twitter account.

In a tweet dated January 10, 2011, Mr. Cooke wrote, "TV EVANGELIST NEWS: Benny Hinn and Paula White reported engaged. Prayer cloths are rejoicing everywhere."

Cooke's utterly false report resulted in embarrassment and adverse financial consequences to Pastor Hinn, his family, and

his church.

After Hinn filed suit, Cooke agreed to, among other things, recant his fallacious tweet. He did so on Saturday, March 12, 2011, writing, "My tweet last month that Benny Hinn was engaged was wrong—my source was mistaken. I'm sorry and apologies to Benny Hinn and his children."