

Is Japan Disaster Another Apocalyptic Sign?

✘ The crisis in Japan is worsening. At the same time, the situation in the Middle East is volatile. And let's not forget last month's seismic shock in New Zealand, Sumatra 9.1, Katrina, Rita, massive flooding in Australia, birds and fish dying around the world, and bees disappearing.

Even the secular media is using phrases like "of biblical proportions" to describe current events. Believers who recognize the signs of the times aren't surprised, and high-profile evangelists are proclaiming that the end is near.

Jesus issued an ominous warning more than 2,000 year ago: "There shall be signs, and great earthquakes in various places...the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear and for the expectation of those things that are coming upon the earth" (see Luke 21:11,25,26).

Does such an idea reflect merely the hardhearted ravings of religious fanatics bent on making a buck from humanity's misery, or is it possible that planet earth is indeed approaching the biblical "end of days"?

Charisma magazine sat down with Steve Wohlberg, director of White Horse Media and author of 25 books, including *Surviving Toxic Terrorism* and *End Time Delusions*, to talk about why things will grow worse before they get better—and the eminent return of Jesus.

Egypt Faces Landmark Constitutional Vote on Saturday

✘ Controversy over Saturday's referendum on proposed constitutional amendments is intensifying in Egypt.

Rex Rogers with SAT-7 explains, "This is the hard part, after the revolution, when you have to put back together the pieces in order to form some kind of government that meets the needs of the people. In terms of SAT-7, we've been encouraging people to pray for new leaders to emerge with the right kind of heart."

Rogers goes on to add that "there are those who are suggesting they should wait until after a presidential election and form a constitutional committee—revise from the ground up. Then, of course, there are those who wish to move on and accomplish things incrementally."

Japan Emperor Expresses Deep Concern in Rare Address

✘ Deeply concerned. Those are the words that Japan's Emperor Akihito used to describe his feelings about the nuclear meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi plant in northeastern Japan.

The 77-year-old emperor's taped television address is especially significant because it marks the first ever in his reign. Akihito ruled during the 1995 earthquake in Kobe that

killed 6,500, but did not take to the airwaves to address the nation.

Akihito's remarks were also his first public comments since the 8.9 magnitude earthquake and tsunami devastated part of his country on Friday. Akihito called the situation at the plant "unpredictable" in the wake of radiation levels surging, forcing 70 workers off site on Tuesday.

Judge May Dismiss Ground Zero Mosque Suit

✘ The public relations battle over building a mosque at Ground Zero is cranking up even as a New York Supreme Court judge considers whether to allow the suit to go to trial.

CNN is running an opinion piece that suggests "Mosques are a positive force in America." The cable news network also rehashed a six-month-old Islamophobia report last week. And a Boston University professor thinks Mormons should support a Ground Zero mosque because they know what it's like to be a hated religious minority.

Japanese Ordered to Stay Indoors After Third Nuclear

Plant Explosion

It's the biggest nuclear crisis in decades as a third explosion erupts at Japan's already fragile nuclear plant that was damaged in the 8.9 magnitude earthquake last week.

The crisis is being compared to Three Mile Island and Chernobyl, two of the most devastating meltdowns in nuclear history.

The government ordered residents that live within 12 miles of the plant to leave. Another 140,000 people have been ordered to stay indoors and seal their doors and windows as radiation spread in the wake of the fire.

"Now we are talking about levels that can damage human health. These are readings taken near the area where we believe the releases are happening. Far away, the levels should be lower," said Yukio Edano, chief cabinet secretary. "Please do not go outside. Please stay indoors. Please close windows and make your homes airtight. Don't turn on ventilators. Please hang your laundry indoors."

Triple Threat Hangs Over Response Teams in Japan

❑ Experts are already predicting that the devastating earthquake and tsunami in Japan will rank among the most costly natural disasters on record.

Three days later, officials struggled to deal with the dead, hospitals ran out of medicine, and entire communities in the

hardest-hit areas remained completely silent. Peter Howard with Food For the Hungry (FH) says, "It's a modern country, so this is unparalleled for the scale of this disaster in a modern country. People are without food and without shelter. The Japanese emergency services are moving very quickly, along with the Japanese military. The U.S. military is heavily engaged, so it's really an international partnership on a large scale."

Millions are without shelter, food, water or heat today, heading into yet another night in near-zero degree temperatures. "We like to take the cues from our local partners," says Howard. "There are typical things that we do in a response like this, and that's helping people get shelter, food and basic non-food items like hygiene kits or kitchen kits."

Death Toll, Damages Rise in Post-Quake Japan

Although it's far too soon to measure the full impact of the 8.9 magnitude earthquake and tsunami in Japan—especially since meteorologists anticipate possible 7-magnitude aftershock, volcanoes are erupting and the nuclear power plant is leaking radiation—early estimates are emerging.

Iwate, Fukushima and Miyagi, three districts in northeastern Japan, were the hardest hit. The death toll in that region is expected to surpass 10,000. More than 3,000 people have been confirmed dead in northeast Japan, but another 15,000 people have not been accounted for. That compares to about 250,000 deaths in the 2010 Haiti earthquake.

Japan's Quake Creates Opportunity and Obstacles

✘ Much of northern Japan was rattled to wreckage Friday.

The 9.0 magnitude earthquake struck shortly before three o'clock in the afternoon (local time) and spawned several tsunamis, including a 33-foot wave along the country's coastline.

The temblor was the fifth-largest to hit the world since 1900, and the tsunami it set off swallowed whole sections of land as it fanned out across the Pacific Ocean. Warnings were issued for 53 countries, including ones as far as Colombia and Peru.

Radiation contamination from damaged nuclear power reactors is also being reported. Aftershocks followed throughout the weekend as emergency workers scrambled to respond to the overwhelming needs. The death toll is also expected to rise.

Missions Group Launches Prayer Strategy for Japan

✘ With news just rolling in that Japan's nuclear plant has been hit by a second explosion—and with Japan's Meteorological Agency predicting a 70 percent chance of at least a 7 magnitude earthquake hitting within the next three days—the situation is growing more dire in the Asian nation.

To put things in perspective, a 7 magnitude quake would equal the rumble that devastated Haiti in 2010 and could do irreparable damage to the Fukushima Nuclear Plant that has already seeing radiation levels exceed legal limits.

While the international response does everything possible in the natural, many leaders in the Body of Christ are crying out for supernatural intervention.

Charisma magazine caught up with Mary Alice Isleib over the weekend to discuss a prayer strategy for Japan. Isleib is the director of [Christian Outreach International](#) (COI), a world-wide, faith-based, humanitarian, mission and outreach organization, and the author of *Effective Fervent Prayer*.

Twitter Pushes Prayer, Donation Requests for Japan Quake Victims

✖ News of the 8.9-magnitude earthquake in Japan – an event that triggered a 32-foot tsunami and has killed several hundred people so far – is dominating media headlines around the world even as the ripple effects are not yet fully understood.

Much like other natural disasters, social media is at the heart of the coverage. From prayer requests to on-site reports to cries for help to requests for donations, social media is delivering the messages of tsunami victims. Citizens of Japan, California, Oregon, Hawaii and beyond tapped into the power of social media to share information.