

Is God Speaking Through the Storm on the Nation's Capital?

Then the Lord spoke to Job out of the storm (Job 40:6).

The sun is out today! The reflection off of the several inches of ice and snow is almost blinding. We were just on the edge of the epic storm, Jonas, which continues to impact the East Coast even as I write.

The bull's-eye of this storm seemed to be our nation's capital. After an inch of snow created havoc when it fell on Thursday in the city, the mayor declared a state of emergency in anticipation of the blizzard and white-out conditions that were anticipated over the weekend. Already being described as one of the top 10 largest storms in Washington's history, Jonas was not over. With a storm surge of five feet, winds up to 50 mph, visibility at miles, a snow accumulation predicted to be 16 to 36 inches, and the city brought to a complete standstill, this storm has been nicknamed Snowzilla.

But the official name is "Jonas," which means "gift from God." We are more familiar with the English, biblical version of the same name, which is "Jonah." That leads me to wonder: Could this storm be more than an environmental storm? Could God be sending us a message?

Jesus explained in Luke 11:29-30, "This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet." While the sign of Jonas was the resurrection of Jesus Christ, another thought struck me when I considered who Jonas was. He was a man sent by God to give a warning to Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, the world empire of his day. And what was the warning? Very simply, "Judgment is coming."

Like Jonah of old, could Jonas be delivering God's same message to the capital of the United States of America? "Judgment is coming"? Don't wait to find out. "Even now," declares the Lord, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning." Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity. Who knows? He may turn and have pity and leave behind a blessing (Joel 2:12-14).

The wonderful truth is that when Jonah, the prophet, delivered God's message to Nineveh, the people believed God. They humbled themselves and repented of their sin. When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened (Jonah 3:1-10).

God is speaking out of this storm. Are we listening?

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