

SHOCK AND AWE

January 2021

A few weeks ago the words 'shock and awe' came to my mind. A few days ago I felt it was now time to write about it. Those words reminded me of the time in March 1993 when the U.S. and their allies launched a massive aerial attack against various targets in Iraq. The 3000 bombs and missiles launched were meant to bring '**shock and awe**' to Iraqi leaders. This method of operation is not unique, for we see that God used it quite often throughout the Bible. God often shocks His enemies and causes His people to have a greater awe of Him. Here are just a few of those stories.

World Wide Flood c.a. 2350 B.C.

It was another sunny day in the Middle East, life was going on as normal.....even the mocking. For over two generations the masses of people had derided a righteous man named Noah as he built a large barge like structure and warned the world of a coming flood. This was not a whim from the mind of Noah, but a warning from the living God. One week before the fulfillment of the prophesied catastrophe, Noah began loading the animals into the ark and then he and his family went into the ark and the Lord shut them in on the seventh day. On that very day, great gushes of water erupted out of the earth into the atmosphere and then a massive rain came down for 40 days and 40 nights. - Genesis 7:11-12. This was a shock to the people outside the ark, for it had never rained before. Life had been going on as usual as they were eating, drinking and marrying, but the day Noah entered the ark, God **suddenly** sent the flood to destroy them all. - Luke 17:26-27. It was not a shock for Noah and his family, for they had been preparing for this event for over two generations - Genesis 5:32, 7:11. They must have been filled with awe and gratefulness as they heard the pounding rain above them. God's prophecy had come to pass and they were protected safely inside the ark of God. Their obedience to Him had saved their lives.

Fiery Destruction of Two Cities c.a. between 2000-1900 B.C.

Sodom and Gomorrah were thriving cities that had descended into moral darkness by the time Lot and his family had settled near Sodom.

'But the men of Sodom were exceedingly wicked and sinful against the LORD. - Genesis 13:13 NKJV

'And the Lord said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great and because their sin is very grave (grievous/ NIV) I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to me." - Genesis 18:20-21 NKJV

Sodom was filled with rampant homosexuality and sexual perversion (Genesis 19) but also arrogance, self-indulgence and a heartless attitude towards the poor and needy.

- Ezekiel 16:46-49; 2 Peter 2:6 (all of Ezekiel 16 exposes even worse sins in Jerusalem). Unlike in the times of Noah, God did not seem to give the people of Sodom much warning, although the Word of God itself was clear about evil practices and lifestyles. God rained down fire and brimstone (sulphur) As I wrote before, a friend of mine let me handle one of the sulphur smelling little balls that came from Sodom. (Jesus reminds us that the days of Noah, the days of Lot and just before His second coming.....people will be going about their daily activities, but then **judgment** will come **swiftly, suddenly** and as a **shock** to the wicked, but God's people will be in **awe**. - 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10

'It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just like this when the Son of Man (Jesus) is revealed - Luke 17:28-29

Miracle at the Red Sea c.a. 1250 B.C.

There was more shock and awe at the Red Sea. (our 11/08/20 message of Stand and See looked at the miracle there from Exodus 14) Moses and the nearly 2 million Israelites were trapped as Pharaoh's army was coming upon them and death seemed imminent. **Quite often God appears to be late , but that is only because He wants to show himself as great, for He wants His glory to be the story** - Exodus 14:4,17,18 Just as Pharaoh's army closed in on the Israelites, God opened the Red Sea. His people went through and then the deep waters closed upon the Egyptians, drowning them all in the sea. God's people were then in awe and trusted the Lord. - Ex. 14:31 Note: some scientists say that the parting of the Red Sea was caused by a natural weather event but in my mind that theory does not hold water (no pun intended). Even if it was, that would have been miracle for it to happen at exactly the time it was needed. Exodus 15 gives the celebration song that God's people had after the great deliverance through the sea!

Who among the gods is like you, O Lord? Who is like you - majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders? - Exodus 15:11

Showdown at Mount Carmel 1 Kings 18 c.a. late 800's B.C.

Elijah was a prophet of God in Israel and King Ahab and his wife Jezebel had the most wicked of reigns in Israel with worship of the false gods of Baal and Asherah. Ahab had 450 prophets of Baal and Jezebel had 400 prophets of Asherah. Jezebel was so wicked that she had been killing off the Lord's prophets (to silence their opinions) which reminds me of ungodly politicians, professors, the press and tech giants that suppress the free speech of patriots, Christians and conservatives. We are in an information war where truth is our weapon, which is why they want to suppress us. Truth is hate speech to those who hate the truth.

When Elijah went to visit the king, Ahab said to him, **'Is that you, you troubler of Israel?'** Elijah responded and said that he had not made trouble but it was Ahab and his father's family that had done so, because they had abandoned God's commands and followed the Baals. Elijah then challenged him to assemble all 850 prophets to see which God was the real one, The Lord God or Baal. At the showdown Elijah had each side place a bull on an altar with wood for a sacrifice and then he said that they would have an opportunity to call upon their god, and he

would call upon the Lord God. **‘The god who answers by fire - He is GOD’**. The prophets of Baal went first, they prayed and danced to Baal all morning. No answer. At noon, Elijah began to taunt them. They prayed even louder and cut themselves until evening, but no answer. Elijah then took his turn. Just to make it even more dramatic, he had the altar and wood drenched with water. He then prayed to the Lord God and asked him to answer so that the people would know that the LORD God is the true one. **God’s fire fell** and the whole altar of the bull, wood, stones and soil were burned up and the water was licked up. The people responded:

‘The LORD He is God. The LORD He is God!’

Elijah then had all the prophets of Baal seized and slaughtered. (Apparently, Jezebel’s prophets of Asherah did not come to the showdown but only the prophets of Baal.) Now that was a memorable day that people talked about for a very long time.

David and Goliath

All of Israel was afraid of the giant Goliath.....except the young shepherd boy David. Goliath continually taunted the people and mocked David. In the end, David shocked Goliath with the help of God and one little well placed stone at Goliath’s head that killed him. Awesome!

The Resurrection of Lazarus

When Jesus heard that his friend Lazarus was sick, he told the sisters that this would not lead to his death but would be for God’s glory and the glory of the Son. When Jesus finally went to visit Lazarus, he had been dead for four days. To Mary and Martha, Jesus had come too late, for He should have come to heal their brother when he was sick but now he was dead. All hope was gone, since according to Jewish law, the spirit of the dead leaves the body after three days. However, Jesus was living on God’s timetable and not theirs. He wanted to teach them about faith so they would see God’s glory.. - John 11. He is the resurrection and the life. The powers of darkness were given forewarning of the power of the Son of God to raise the dead by that miracle. Nonetheless, their hatred for Jesus led to his crucifixion and blinded them from the realization that Jesus himself could be raised from the dead!

The Resurrection of Jesus c.a. 30 A.D.

There was a violent earthquake the morning that Jesus rose from the dead. The guards at the tomb shook with fear and fell down as dead men. Shock waves spread throughout the city of Jerusalem and among the religious leaders and Roman rulers after the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. They thought they were done with this Jesus who had shed his light on their evil ways and systems of control. The greatest shock however, came to Satan and his demons. They thought that Jesus had been defeated at the cross, but it turned out to be their greatest defeat. Their celebration was short lived after Jesus went to hell and reclaimed the keys of death and the grave. It was accomplished through the cross and vindicated by His resurrection. His ascension to the throne of heaven was his reward for his suffering. His faithful obedience to the will of the Father while he lived on this earth and His victory over the world, the flesh and the devil was awesome.

Shock and Awe Today and Beyond

Recently while on a bike ride I began to pray this phrase several times.....

Lord, shock your enemies and bring awe upon your people

Over the past years, I have chided friends of mine a few times about the trivial way the word awesome is used today to describe mundane things and experiences.

AWESOME - profound and humble fearful reverence inspired by deity or by something sacred or mysterious / submissive and admiring fear inspired by authority or power - Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary

God is truly awesome, as is His creation and His displays of power. He is **HOLY** and set apart from all other beings or things in this universe. The fear of the Lord is much needed today in our world. A reverential awe of God will cause us to run from sin and run to His glorious presence, which is good preparation for the most awesome event in history.

The greatest shock to come upon world will be the day when Jesus returns to judge the world.
The greatest awe will come when Jesus returns to meet His bride and take her back to her heavenly home. Now that will be awesome!

I realize that many Christians have not been praying because they have not accepted the reality of war in which we find ourselves. There is a spiritual war mode that we must appropriate. It is an aggressive stance that we take against evil. It is governed by love for people, but it is fearless and uncompromising with the powers of darkness that manipulate people to fulfill evil plans. - Francis Frangipane

THE WAR ROOM We must be able to cope with some losses or seeming losses in this spiritual battle for God given freedom, justice and righteousness and we should never concede to evil. The Communists have slowly been eroding our society values and structures. It has been disappointing to see Christian leaders and government leaders cave in so easily to public pressure and manipulated media stories instead of holding on to principles that matter.

Battle fatigue Jesus told us to keep on asking...seeking.....and knocking. Do not be weary in well doing for in due season you will reap if you faint not. - Luke 11:8-10, Galatians 6:9

A leader who is against the Most High God has a desire to **wear down the saints.** - Daniel 7:25

Pray:

- **Widespread exposure of corruption in all areas of society**
- **Divine Justice over the corruption in our government and courts etc.**
- **God to shock the wicked and open their eyes and hearts to Him**
- **God to bring awe to His people**

