



May 16, 2010

Warning Signs

I believe God created the physical universe to mirror certain spiritual realities and truths so we can have a connection with him and understand Him. Nature is filled with animals and processes that signal danger. It is interesting that some of these warnings look scary. Snakes invoke fear in most folks, not just because of the story of Eve and the downfall of man (**Gen 3**), but because they look intimidating. Most of us are not well versed on how to tell deadly from nonpoisonous snakes and so we tread lightly, literally, when walking in the woods or large fields because there are potential dangers. Spiders are another creature that God created that stirs up revulsion and fear in a lot of us. They look scary. Many spiders in the world are not deadly, but most of them will bite and can make one sick. Their appearance, like the snake, is a warning that we might want to exercise caution before coming into contact with one of the eight legged wonders. The sky is awe inspiring on most days, but when a storm is brewing clouds take on an ominous look. They darken and some are lower to the ground with a shredded look letting us know there are currents driving them and forces within them to be respected and feared. Winds preceding and accompanying a storm may gust with cold or hot air signaling the approach of forces that can cause destruction and in the extreme produce violent winds that take lives and destroy property. We understand these but when it comes to spiritual things we avoid the appearance of warnings. Many people become anxious in the presence of one who tries to talk to them about their souls. There are some who avoid reading God's word so they won't be disturbed by the statements made concerning judgment and destruction. Others do not recognize the scriptures as a warning at all. During the first century Christ pointed out the blindness of the religious leadership using nature as a reminder. When tempted by the Pharisees and Sadducees, Christ told them, "***When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?***" (**Matt 16.2-3**). In spite of the miracles that he performed, the leaders of the day were unwilling to yield to the power of God. They did not heed the warnings although they were intelligent and observant enough to know what the weather was going to be like, they ignored the fact that Christ represented. I say that they ignored them because this is Christ's point here. They knew who he was and by what power he performed miracles. Nicodemus admitted that they, the council, recognized that he was from God (**John 3.2**). Christ later warned them of the destruction of Jerusalem (**Matt 23.37- 24.2**) and stated that this was because they opposed God to the extent they would eventually kill him. Peter warned about "scoffers" who would question the claims made in the scriptures and cast doubt on the statements of God (**2 Pet 3.4**). God's word is a warning, an encouragement and a source of hope. It is only a comfort if we heed what it says and do those things that we find there. Many people accept doctrines and ideas that have no basis in God's word and will be greatly disappointed when they leave this life or Christ comes again to find they have been robbed of the promises that God has made to us. The Pharisees and religious leadership of the day refused to believe in Christ. They influenced the multitudes to do the same and persecuted the church when it began in an attempt to suppress the truth. No matter how much we don't want to accept the truth, it will not go away. As long as we continue along a path that takes us away from God we have nothing to look forward to but destruction in the day of judgment. Like ominous storm clouds, earth tremors, spiders and snakes, the Bible stands as a warning to do the right thing before it is too late. We would warn folks to stay away from areas filled with dangerous creatures so why would we not warn the lost?

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