

SPEAKERS

January 2 - Ken Storm, *Holy Communion*

January 9 - Paul Coponen

January 16 - Ken Storm

January 23 - Nathan Ruonavaara
Potluck Meal Following Service

January 30 - Herb Jarvi

CHURCH SCHEDULE

Sunday School/Adult Bible Study, 10:00 a.m.

Sunday Service:
11:00 a.m.

Wednesday Bible Study:
7:00 p.m.

CONTACT

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Ankle Deep Water

“Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the LORD” - Jeremiah 23:1

Jeremiah often warned Judah of false pastors and of a coming destruction at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. He also reminded Judah of what had happened to the Northern Kingdom roughly 100 years earlier because of their stubborn apostasy. Jeremiah predicted that the world around Judah would begin to fall apart and that they would deal with enemies, both foreign and domestic, before being militarily attacked. The signs of strife and corruption at all levels of society were already evident, yet the people refused to take Jeremiah seriously. Perhaps the situation had not become bad enough to make them change? Eventually, Nebuchadnezzar did attack just as Jeremiah had said he would. He attacked three times over a 20-year period while the false pastors kept telling the people not to worry because God loved them and would protect them from all harm and danger: *“Ye shall have peace...No evil shall come upon you”* (Jeremiah 23:17). (The pastors did not direct people to the door of the tabernacle where sin could be confessed and forgiven through a priest sprinkling blood.) The good-sounding sermons preached by the pastors of that day lulled the people into a spiritual slumber masking the distress all around them to where a chaotic life seemed normal. Living went on until, like a thief in the night, the final attack brought sudden destruction upon them, but then it was too late!

Approximately 1700 years before Jeremiah, Noah warned of a coming flood. God *“saw that the wickedness of man was great...and the earth was filled with violence”* (Genesis 6:5, 11). *“And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth”* (Genesis 6: 6-7). So, God instructed Noah to build an ark large enough to house every kind of living thing on the earth, including all of mankind if anyone wanted to board. The great patience and longsuffering of the Lord is evidenced by the fact that He gave mankind one hundred twenty years to decide if they would believe Noah and board the ark or if they would decline. Perhaps, like the situation just explained with Jeremiah, the people could not imagine such a catastrophe ever happening. After all, it had never rained up to that point. And, perhaps, they wanted more proof of the so-called flood before repenting. Until they could see with their own eyes evidence of water puddling on the ground, they probably were not too inclined to believe. The huge ark that was being built before their eyes was not evidence enough. It was not until Noah and his family entered the ark and God closed the door and it started to rain that the people reconsidered their stance and began to repent and to plead for Noah to open the door, but then it was too late!

Today, things have not changed. We have been warned for many generations of the coming Day of Judgment but many people either refuse to listen or choose to wait for more convincing evidence. God’s warnings are for our benefit and He has provided us with numerous warnings of the coming judgment. Even Jesus’ disciples, though they followed Him, could not fully understand end-time events so they questioned Him *“saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?”* (Matthew 24:3). In answer, Jesus spoke of wars and rumors of wars, of famines and pestilences, but he said that the end is not yet as *“all these are the beginning of sorrows”* (Matthew 24:8). He also said that as it was in the days of Noah and Lot, *“so shall it also be in the days*

of the Son of man” (Luke 17:26) implying that civilization will become both violent and immoral as the Day of Judgment arrives.

It is clear from the events taking place in our streets today that the Day of Judgment is nearing—perhaps even nearer than anyone realizes. Fortunately, God has promised never to forsake his believers and Scripture says that He allows distress to enter our lives to prove whether we *“will keep the way of the Lord...or not”* (Judges 2:22). While Satan works to convince people to wait for a more convenient time to repent, Jesus warns everybody that *“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel”* (Mark 1:15). The writer of Hebrews concurs: *“While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts”* (Hebrews 3:15). In other words, don’t wait for a better time to be reconciled with God because the door of God’s grace may be closing while you stubbornly stand in ankle deep water!

God’s Peace,
Charles Korhonen