

The earth is the LORD'S, and all its fullness,
The world and those who dwell therein.
For He has founded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the waters.

Psalm 24:1-2 NKJV

*Reflections
by the Pond*

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the Wonder and the Fury

THE LONGER ONE BURROWS AND SCRAPES his fingers through the soil, the more one realizes how little control mere humans have over the earth and its elements. We may fancy ourselves as being relatively experienced—even experts—but the truth is that it takes very little to nullify our efforts.

Weeks of careful sculpting of the garden terrain can be destroyed in a moment when the deer hold their nocturnal dance amidst the garden rows. In mere seconds strong winds or hail can demolish an entire stand of new corn. And all the studied expertise in the world won't help a hybrid crop if it never rains.

Like it or not, whether we choose to admit it or not, we are not the ones in charge. And the brutal truth is that we haven't all the answers. Every year it happens—every year “nature” reasserts its supremacy.

In March of this year a powerful earthquake and resulting tsunami overwhelmed the northeast portion of Honshu island in Japan. In the dramatic video footage we saw automobiles bobbing about like corks on the tide, boats and ships tossed about as if flimsy toys in a bathtub. On Sunday, May 22, a massive tornado demolished a large portion of Joplin, Missouri. The devastation would not have been worse if the city had been a major theatre of operations in a world war. And now spring rains and snowmelt have combined to overwhelm the Missouri River basin—a situation exacerbated by the futile efforts of the Army Corps of Engineers to “manage” the flood.

Engineers contrive elaborate systems for altering the path of rivers—but in a moment, after a little too much rain, “nature” reasserts its supremacy, reclaiming its

stolen land. Strong, thick walls of cement block are constructed, seemingly permanent, and a whirlwind drops down from the clouds and suddenly they are toppled like Tinker Toys. Mighty oceangoing ships are designed and built, declared “unsinkable,” and are rendered new fish habitat by a simple block of frozen water.

Yours is the day, Yours also is the night;
You have prepared the light and the sun.
You have established all the boundaries of
the earth;
You have made summer and winter.

Psalms 74:16-17

Arrogance is certainly one of man's more egregious sins. When we hold things tightly—things such as land and possessions, knowledge and actions—the day will certainly come when God will pry them painfully from our grasp. When we imagine ourselves to be masters of our domain, able to out-build nature, the Lord will, inevitably, see fit to put us in our place.

But when we hold all things loosely, confessing happily that we haven't all the answers, opening our minds, instead, to the eternal truth of God; when we admit freely that we are not owners, but mere stewards of what we have; when our expectations are based not on our own efforts, but rather on a simple, undemanding reliance upon God—when we realize that He is in charge, and we are not, then God is free to work wonders and marvelous things in our lives.

“...that you may know that I am the LORD.”

Exodus 10:2b

