



Random Ocean Musings

Hello everyone. Welcome to “Notes from the Presence.” Last week Adeline and I took a road trip down to Ocean Shores, Washington. We own a cottage in this sleepy little ocean town, a place we spend time every month. There are endless photo ops and walking paths as well as numerous shops with plenty of small town charm. Over the years, we have discovered that as a couple, we love the ocean.

This time, we ended up doing quite a bit of driving up and down the coast, venturing out from our little town. On one particular day, we happened upon a roadside state lookout. It was a small information kiosk with a whale watching room in the back complete with binoculars and telescopes. As soon as we walked in the door, we noticed quite a bit on excitement in the whale watching room. When we inquired as to what was happening, we were informed that there was a whale putting on quite a show in the bay. They told us that they hadn't seen one for months now, but it was our blessed day. We spent more than an half hour watching the whale spouting around, one time breaching right out of the water. There were plenty of other spectacular moments as well. The ocean never has a day short on adventure.

I am struck by the way time seems to stand still at the ocean. It seems as if every time I am there, I have some kind of crazy useless musing on the action of the big waves as they come crashing in. However, this time, I came up with a most stunning revelation - the result of way too much time spent staring at the surf. Are you ready for this? OK, here it goes ... The waves and the rocks on the shore (where we were driving the shoreline was rocky) are in a never ending battle. On this trip, I became convinced that it is the result of the fact that the ocean, which is made up of water, was here first. I am going to get biblical here for a moment in an attempt to generate support for my outrageous theory. In Genesis, it tells us that when the heavens and the earth were first created, the earth was completely covered with water. Then on the second day, God

separated the water and made the dry land appear. Ever since that time, the water has been put in it's place and given a "boundary," as the bible describes it.

In my opinion, the ocean is not happy about having a boundary. It gathers up it's strength time and time again, creating big, powerful waves that come rushing at the shore with great determination. It's goal - to conquer the land and once again be the only substance covering the earth. The waves seem to come in groups. There are four or five big ones, then a period of smaller ones as the ocean goes back to re-group and figure out a new strategy with which to crush the land. Every now and again a massive wave (these are called "sneakers" in surf language) will come rushing at the rocks. Sneakers are the result of several large waves banding together in synergy, combining their strength in an attempt to catch the lackadaisical shoreline off guard. They are actually quite dangerous to any humans who might be walking on the shore and the reason for the phrase "never turn your back on the ocean." They are quick, powerful, random, and can easily sweep a person into the surf and rips tides. Sneakers have killed many people and even the shoreline seagulls seem to have respect for them. Eventually, the ocean gets tired of trying to get past the rocks and the sand and retreats for a period of time in order to develop a new battle plan. This is called the tide going out. Then, in approximately 12 1/2 hours, the ocean, all charged up with brand new strength and zeal, makes another go at trying to conquer the land. This cycle has been repeating for eons and it is a never ending source of amusement to watch. I am impressed with the determination of the ocean. I am convinced it actually believes that one day, if the planets line up just right, it will conquer the land and once again become the dominate covering on the earth. I am quite certain that because it had a brief period of victory during Noah's flood, the waters are fuelled with eternal hope that this scenario will happen again - the next time for keeps!

Now let's talk about the land. There are various shoreline shields - rocks, cliffs, sandy beaches, and bays and inlets. I am duly impressed with the security of the shore. No matter what kind of covering it has for protection, it seems to not care what comes it's way. The shoreline just rests in the eternal word that God has given it:

Genesis 9:11-13 I (God) establish My covenant with you; and all flesh shall never again be cut off by the water of the flood, neither shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth." God said, "This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all successive generations; I set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth.

The ocean can do whatever it pleases. It can throw the biggest wave that gravity can muster. It might even enlist the help of a few extremely destructive friends -

earthquakes, tsunamis, tidal waves, hurricanes, and other natural disaster scenarios in order to conquer the land. But, after each and every onslaught the ocean must retreat back to its place, go back to the drawing board, develop a new strategy, and try again another day. The land, on the other hand, has God's word to protect it. In my endless hours of watching the struggle of the ocean this past week, I never once saw the rocks break out in a sweat. They just stayed in their place, Starbucks coffee in hand, thumbed their nose towards the ocean, and laughed at all the eternal noise and commotion. Then, periodically, something else happens at the ocean - the rain falls at the same time as the sun shines. Then, for a few minutes, the shoreline looks up and sees a rainbow. While we were in Washington, this phenomenon appeared at least twice - an ocean rainbow is extremely beautiful BTW. The rainbow in the sky gives the rocks a whole new assurance that they can rest while the ocean churns, sleep while the storms gather, and sip their coffee in peace while the waves gather up their strength for another onslaught.

OK, I am not really sure what I have even written here today, but I am certain there must be a lesson in there somewhere. However, my goal today was not to teach anyone anything. It was to write about the ocean which I love, and let you in on my crazy random thoughts at the ocean, while walking on beautiful paths, letting myself dream about leading God's people into His presence, and catching my breath. If there is an object lesson today, I will let you, my readers discover it uniquely for yourself.

Have a fantastic week, don't take on the cares of the world, be as secure as the ocean shores - your heavenly Father has got you.

Thanks for reading. Jesus is real and He is the rock of ages.