

THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God
IN CHRIST JESUS.*

(Philippians 3:13-14 NASB)

#05-1146

Irene Means "Peace" [Gematria 181]

August 27, 2011

On August 18, 2011, I had a different type of dream than usual. I was in a prayer meeting and the person leading the time said: "Stu said something is going to happen in the southeast." In the dream, I was sort of embarrassed by the announcement, for I knew this group was not very open to the prophetic. Later, I told my wife about the dream and indicated to her that there was significance to it.

Frankly, I sensed this could be of the Lord but was not sure what it meant until two days later. On August 20, it was reported that a tropical storm had formed and was named *Irene*. On August 22, 2011, Irene became a hurricane, and it was reported that it was headed for the southeast Bahamas.

In other words, **Hurricane Irene** was happening not only in the southeast Bahamas but also off the southeast of the United States eastern coast.

As I write this, Irene has made landfall on the coast of North Carolina on its trek up the entire coast from the Carolinas to New England. It had been projected to be a mighty powerful hurricane, but now it looks like some of its punch has been lost and perhaps it won't be as devastating as initially projected. Instead of a Cat 2 or 3, it is a Cat 1. However, this doesn't mean that it won't cause widespread damage, for surely it will due to the rain and tropical-force winds hitting roofs and trees rooted in already water-soaked soil. Already, over 400,000 homes have lost power in one state alone.

Obviously, my dream announcement on the 18th that something is going to happen in the southeast and then something actually happening or, we could say, forming in the southeast in relation to the US east coast caught my attention.

I see and hear many news reports each day but usually do not attempt to link them to other events or even things the Lord might have revealed to me. However, in this case, I felt led to count the days from the time of the toppling of the National Christmas tree on February 19, 2011 to the day I received the dream of the happening. If you have read my most recent issues, you know that I have already linked the toppling of the tree to the 5.8-mag quake in Virginia and the toppling or cracking of the top stones of two other national iconic structures, the Washington National Cathedral and the Washington Monument, both in Washington, D.C.

I figured that perhaps all of these are connected, including Hurricane Irene. After all, a major earthquake hitting DC followed by a hurricane hitting the US mainland 5 days later should grab our attention or, at least, generate a little bit of curiosity. As it turns out, there is a connection.

The number of days from February 19 to August 18, inclusive of the last day, is **181 days** or exactly 6 months.

Now, here is the interesting part. In the Greek, the word *Eirene*, from which Irene is derived, has a **gematria of 181**. Further, the name **Irene means "peace."** Thus, the number 181 also signifies peace. As if to make sure that I saw the connection, the Lord also gave me this dream on 8-**18-11**, which has the number 181 within the date, whether reading it from the left or the right.

As I have stated elsewhere, I do not see these things as coincidences.

But this raises the question: Why would God want to draw attention to a hurricane's name that means peace? I wonder if the ones who name the hurricanes ever check the meaning of the names they assign to these cyclones. The fact of the matter is that a hurricane is noisy, violent, and destructive; it is not generally associated with peace. So, what could God be saying to us?

Of course, on one level, the answer to the question is quite obvious. Jesus is the **Prince of Peace** (Isaiah 9:6) and the **King-Priest according to the order of Melchizedek**, who was the **king of righteousness and the king of peace** (Hebrews 7:1-2). Thus, the character of the coming kingdom of Christ is righteousness and peace. In this regard, this is a reminder that the **King of Peace** is coming. This must be our encouragement no matter what the near future looks like.

After His resurrection and before His final ascension to the throne of His Father, Jesus appeared to His disciples on two occasions, eight days apart, and blessed them with peace.

So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "**Peace be with you.**" (John 20:19 NASB)

After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, "**Peace be with you.**" (John 20:26 NASB)

The first day of the week is the same as the eighth day, which signifies **the last day, the great day of the Feast of Tabernacles** (John 7:37). Thus, Jesus was not only blessing His disciples but also prophetically pointing to the day when all the conquering sons of God are blessed with peace in His kingdom and reign with Him over the nations of the earth for 1,000 years.

On another level, the story of Jesus with His disciples in the midst of a great storm on the sea should remind us that Jesus is with us in the midst of the storms of life, especially the storms that precede His coming to meet us in air at the end of our present wicked eon.

(23) When He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him. (24) And behold, **there arose a great storm on the sea**, so that the boat was being covered with the waves; but Jesus Himself was asleep. (25) And they came to Him and woke Him, saying, "**Save us, Lord; we are perishing!**" (26) He said to them, "Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?" **Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it became perfectly calm.** (Matthew 8:23-26 NASB)

Jesus was in the midst of the storm with His disciples, and He brought peace into the midst of it when He calmed the winds and the sea.

For those who know, love, and obey the Lord, there should be no doubt that Jesus is with them no matter how dire or great the storm might be in their life. In fact, most likely, He brought the storm their way in the first place, just as He most definitely raised the wind and sea when He was asleep in the boat with His disciples. I can imagine the Lord smiling to Himself as He was resting in the boat as it was being covered with the waves.

I believe there is a two-fold message to us with this announcement of a happening in the southeast that manifested as a hurricane named Irene, meaning peace, and the connection to the toppling or cracking of national icons, 181 and 186 days apart. First, God's judgments often manifest as great upheavals, either upheavals of the physical (earthly) realm (e.g., quakes and hurricanes) or of man's institutions, governments, and religions, that is, man's **isms**. Second, even though God's judgments might manifest as great storms, they have a purpose that is good. In this case, God wants us to know that, out of His judgments, peace will come to the whole earth. For the conquerors, peace will not only be with you, but it will be in you. The nations of the world will experience peace as they have never experienced it in the history of man's kingdoms, for the character of the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ is peace.