Divine Provision for Anxiety | January 8, 2011 | Order Info

Scripture: Genesis 3:6-10; 15:1-3; John 14:1, 2; Matthew 6:25-34; 18:3; Philippians 4:11, 12.

“The sky is falling!” was Chicken Little’s fearful prediction in a funny little child's tale, but people in Arkansas aren’t laughing. “Dead red-winged blackbirds, starlings, and grackles rained down on Beebe, Ark., on New Year’s Eve, freaking out local residents. After 3,000 birds fall from the sky, state biologists look for answers,” proclaimed a news article on Monday of this last week.¹

In another article, lightening or fireworks have been identified as possible suspects to the strange incident. “There were multiple thunderstorms that night and for several days that week,” said Dr. George Badley, state veterinarian for the Arkansas Livestock and Poultry Commission. "Red-winged blackbirds fly in large groups and if they got pulled into a thunderstorm, likely lightning struck them. That would be my best guess.”²

Officials sent some of the carcasses of the red-winged blackbirds to Badley's Arkansas laboratory. The rest of the birds to be tested were taken to laboratories in Georgia and Wisconsin. "Almost every one of them...had multiple internal hemorrhages which would mean that it was trauma, not a disease process. Their stomachs were empty, which would rule out toxicity from eating some kind of poison grain," Badley said.³

The Guardian hints at biblical connections. “In a devoutly Christian state such as Arkansas, it’s a sequence of events that could get residents leafing through the Book of Revelation for portents: anything up to 5,000 blackbirds fall dead from the sky, and then 100,000 fish wash up along a river. Environmental officials, however, insist they expect to find scientific explanations for the Biblical-seeming phenomena.⁴

This week our Sabbath school lesson focuses on anxiety and fear. What raises the back of the hair on your neck? What do you worry most about? Perhaps it is the economy or health reform. Maybe it is flooding and tornados. Or possibly (if you lived in the one mile long, one-half mile wide stretch in Beebe, Ark.) it would be dead birds falling out of the sky.

We believe as readers of Revelation that the end of all things is near, that the signs of the times point to the culmination of earth's history, and that even nature will heave and thrust itself about. But how do we cope with our emotions over these traumatic events?

Surely we have compassion for our friends in parts of the world suffering from natural disasters. We pray for innocent victims. We grieve that even God’s creatures (like birds and fish) suffer. But we also have peace. Anxiety and fear give way to faith and hope that our soon coming Friend will end all these sad and bizarre happenings. We know, that even in the face of strange things like birds falling from the sky, that our future is secure in the hands of One who cares if even a sparrow falls.

~cr

¹. CS Monitor
². ABC News
³. Ibid.
⁴. Guardian

How to Order Sharing Scripture

1. Order this week’s Sharing Scripture study guide for $1.49, click here.
2. Order the entire electronic 1st Quarter Sharing Scripture for $8.75 click here.