

Greetings from Tyler,

Some of our East Texas mornings are beginning to carry a hint of cool air, which can mean only one thing. The Feast of Tabernacles is just around the corner! It's only about six weeks now. We hope you're all well along with your plans for one of the several feast sites, and I'll certainly look forward to seeing most all of you at one of them!

Our local news reports that all our local area motels are booked solid with people fleeing coastal areas in advance of the powerful storm they've named Gustav. Forecast models show it could make landfall anywhere from Texas to the Florida panhandle, but the greatest concerns are for the low lying areas of Louisiana and particularly New Orleans, again. Let's hope and pray not.

It's been a huge week for presidential politics, with the Denver convention drawing one of the largest television audiences ever for that type of event. And then of course there was the surprise announcement of the female VP Republican candidate today. What to make of it all? It's all very exciting, according to reporters across the spectrum. They'll treat the election like a horse race until all the ballots are counted and the next president named. It's not our place, organizationally, to get involved in the political struggle and it's just as well!

Whichever of these candidates becomes president will have a weight on them that is all but unimaginable, given the current state of world affairs. As you've seen in recent articles and updates, the situation has become much more complicated by Russia's brazen invasion into Georgia and its unbelievable verbal threats against Poland. What will become of NATO? Can it continue to guarantee Europe's security? In the face of a newly aggressive Russia, are those guarantees any good? Or might Europe move toward responsibility for its own defense? These are all interesting questions, and we'll be watching for answers!

It is about oil, and it is about strategic ports and territory. But it is also about Russia putting the U.S. and the world on notice. Russia is a major player and will not be dismissed in Europe or in the Middle East. You may have seen that Russia and Syria just signed a cooperative "defense" agreement that awards Syria some high tech missiles, and gives Russia port access in the Mediterranean. Why is it important? It places Russia and the U.S., more firmly than ever, on opposite sides of every aspect of the potential conflicts in the Middle East. And, as we've covered over these recent weeks, there are many aspects indeed! The main concern is a nuclear Iran, what can be done to prevent it, and what happens if it's not prevented?

Will the world stand still while America elects a new president? Not entirely. It has been suggested that no conflict with Iran will be undertaken until after the election. But an eventual conflict with Iran is all but guaranteed. We know the outlines of the prophetic scenario, and we know the ultimate outcome! We do not, however always understand how each twist and turn of world events will factor in. But we are told to watch, pray always we'll be accounted worthy to escape the worst of it, and to witness and to warn.

We're making final corrections on a new issue of 21st Century WATCH, and will have it to our printer, Mr. Tony Brazil, not later than Monday. The Garner Ted Armstrong telecast this week offered the brochure and an audio presentation on the "144,000" of Bible prophecy. We've tallied 440 responses so far, with one

hundred sixty first time contacts. We hope all is well with all of you in the field, and that we'll all have a great Sabbath and holiday weekend.

Until next time,

Mark Armstrong