

Greetings from Tyler,

Here we go again! And this time the hurricane they've named Ike is bearing down on the Texas gulf coast with mandatory evacuations for Galveston where we have reserved a waterfront hotel and meeting facility for the upcoming Feast of Tabernacles. We certainly hope and pray that the facility and Galveston itself can weather the storm without long term damage.

Up here in Tyler there is something of a crisis atmosphere. Our area is bulging with people from further south who have come to our area to escape hurricane force winds and flooding expected to arrive later tonight. Area grocery stores are jammed with shoppers making provisions for the problems associated with forecast high winds, torrential rains and power outages that may visit here as the storm is expected to track right up our way. Some of the gas stations up and down the highway where our offices are located are out of regular gas, in some cases roped off and completely out. Local forecasts are calling for 50 or 60 mph winds, but we also have the potential for tornadoes. We've made calls to members of the local congregation, canceling the Tyler service for tomorrow.

From the broader perspective, there are a number of developments worth noting. Iran is engaged in war games this week, amid regular and constant speculation that Iranian nuclear facilities may soon be targeted by the U.S. or Israel. Venezuela, Iran's newfound ally led by Hugo Chavez, is also conducting military exercises with Russian involvement. On Monday of this week wire services announced that Russia was sending a nuclear warship to the Caribbean for the first time since the end of the Cold War nearly 20 years ago. Yesterday, Thursday, two Russian strategic bombers reportedly landed in Venezuela to take part in Chavez' military maneuvers which obviously coincide with what's going on in Iran.

All of this is intended as provocation to the United States, and it comes at a time when our leadership in the immediate future is in serious question. While this may appear to be off the subject in terms of the players that are of concern from the standpoint of Bible prophecy, there are Middle Eastern and European components factoring in. Russia backs Iran's nuclear program, and is looming as a serious threat to Europe.

The Garner Ted Armstrong telecast this week offered the insightful and educational paperback book, *The Real Jesus*. The tally stands at 404 requests so far, with one hundred eighty-nine first time requests.

We've just contracted for the fourth quarter with the entire ION network that includes all their local "air" stations as well. Beginning in October, we'll be on Thursday at 6:30 am EST and also 6:30 am Pacific. This represents a major increase in expenditure over our current schedule, and we certainly hope and pray that God will bless this effort for our sake, and for the sake of the tens of thousands more who will be exposed to His truth.

To all of those of you in the field who have avoided deception and remained true to God's calling, and worked to be of service in local congregations and communities, we

salute you and thank you!

I expect we'll be in touch before next Friday.

Mark Armstrong