

Pillars of Fire and Cloud

Lebanon Lodge No. 138 – May 9, 2012

“These pillars were placed at the porch way or entrance of the temple as memorial to the children of Israel of the miraculous pillars of fire and cloud, which had two wonderful effects – the fire gave light to the Israelites during their escape from their Egyptian bondage, while the cloud proved darkness to Pharaoh and his followers, when they attempted to overtake them.”

You will recall from Exodus in the Holy Bible the statements about “all the waters in the river turned to blood”; “And the river shall bring forth frogs abundantly”; And there came a grievous swarm of flies”; “So there was hail and fire mingled with the hail”. These statements sound farfetched or do they? Graham Philips in his book *The Templars and the Ark of the Covenant* claims that everything recorded in the bible could have happened with the exception that the eruption would have occurred first and then the various travesties that are recorded would have followed. Since the Exodus was not recorded for several centuries later this variation in the record is not surprising.

My comments this evening come from “*The Templars and the Ark of the Covenant*” and a televised film that I have seen describing the eruption of Krakatau in 1883. Graham Philips has researched and has drawn a comparison with other eruptions such as Mount St. Helens in Washington State, USA in May 18, 1980 and Mount Pelee on the Caribbean Island of Martinique in 1902 and 1851.

When Mount St. Helens erupted ash went up for 5 miles turning the day into night and people up to 600 miles downwind were taken to hospital with skin rashes. Most of the fish died in the rivers affected by the toxic fallout of pumice that blanketed the country side and flattened crops for hundreds of miles. The frog spawn was protected from the toxic ash and the predatory fish were gone. The result was that all of the frog’s eggs hatched and became adult frogs. The numbers were so great that they plugged the rivers. Cattle perished in the fields and many had to be destroyed due to the pumice damage to their lungs.

When Krakatau erupted killing 36,000 people, the iron oxide from the ash turned the rivers red and the fiery pumice set fire to their houses, to trees and to crops growing in the fields. Later, on the ocean floor they were able to identify ash, 80 meters deep west of Krakatau. The ash was reported to have gone up 50 miles and the sky was in darkness for several days. The explosion was heard 3,000 miles away in Melbourne, Australia.

The ash from the eruption of Mount Pelee, 1902 drifted over the nearby port of Saint Pierre killing 30,000 people. Following the eruptions of both 1902 and 1851 huge swarms of flying ants attacked the people and reportedly even killed babies. This is not surprising as the predators of the insects are killed by the ash while the insects are protected in their larval, chrysalis or egg stage and after the ash has cleared hatch out in large numbers. Burrowing snakes and rodents are also protected from the ash when underground.

Now the question becomes when might there have been an eruption in or near Egypt and would it tie in with the escape of the Israelites from Egypt? Phillips would suggest that there was a massive eruption on the Island of Thera now called Santorini in the year 1360 B.C.

Historians have dated that there had been a massive eruption on the island of Thera sometime between 1600 and 1300 B.C. They have also found that a massive tsunami had gone across the Greek Islands after 1400 B.C. Ice cores of Greenland taken in the early 70s and analyzed indicated that there had been a massive eruption in the world between 1340 and 1440 B.C. Santorini (previously called Thera) is now crescent shaped with a bay 6 miles wide covering an area of 30 square miles with waters so deep that ships are unable to anchor.

The Bible indicates that the Israelites brought down the walls of Jericho 1320 B.C., 40 years after leaving Egypt. History tells us that a catastrophic event happened in Egypt during the last year of the reign of Amonhotep III which was in 1360 B.C. To appease Sekhmet, the goddess of destruction, Amonhotep III ordered hundreds of statues of Sekhmet, to be created. The majority of these statues are located at the temple of Luxor. The number of statues to honour Sekhmet was far greater than had ever been created to recognize any other god of goddess indicating that a catastrophic event had occurred in his last reigning year. This all leads to a common date of 1360 B.C. which was the most probable date of the Israeli Exodus from Egypt.

By comparison with other destructive events this eruption was catastrophic. The bomb dropped on Nagasaki in 1945 was a 20 kiloton explosion while it is estimated that Mount Saint Helens had an explosive force of 50,000 kilotons. Krakatau exploded with the force of 1,000,000 kilotons while it is estimated that the explosion at Thera was at the level of 6,000,000 kilotons.

When Krakatau blew up in 1883 it is estimated that 6 cubic miles of debris was emitted into the atmosphere. This explosion created a tsunami that travelled around the world and was measured 2 feet high in the Thames in London England. Apparently based on the size of the original volcano compared to the size of the crater it is estimated that 70 cubic miles of debris was sent skyward. This explosion sent a Tsunami that wiped out all life on all of the Greek Islands.

It is easy to say a cubic mile however think for a moment how much is 70 cubic miles. Cobourg is located on the North Shore of Lake Ontario and surrounded by Hamilton Township. Cobourg and Hamilton Township which is located between Lake Ontario and Rice Lake is about 6 miles from East to West and 10 miles north to south. To equal 70 cubic miles it would require removing all of the earth rock and water in the township with the town of Cobourg to a depth of 6,000 feet. To put this depth in perspective Lake Superior the largest great lake and one of the largest in the world has a maximum depth of 1,300 feet.

We know that the ash went up 5 miles from St. Helens and obliterated that sun for some time and the ash and debris from Krakatau went up 50 miles. The ash from Krakatau drifted west and has been measured on the ocean floor to be up to a depth of 80 meters. A passenger ship in the area of Krakatau at the time of the explosion was in danger of capsizing due to the pumice accumulation on the deck. It was necessary for the crew to shovel the pumice from the decks.

The Vema survey has identified that the fallout from Thera drifted southeast over the Mediterranean, Egypt and the Nile. From what is known of the fallout from Mount St. Helens and Krakatau, Egypt would have experienced all of the horrors imaginable from this catastrophic event.

Considering the information that we have on Mount Saint Helens and Krakatau, the eruption on Thera must have been horrific. It is not surprising that it was recorded in the scriptures and has taken a prominent place in our lecture. The next time you hear the Senior Warden's Lecture, picture for a moment the rare events that were taking place in Egypt when the Israelites managed to escape.

We can only imagine the fear of the people and the damage to the environment that was occurring at that time. In our minds we can picture how the pillar of fire gave light to the Israelites during their escape from the Egyptian bondage and how the pillar of cloud proved darkness to Pharaoh and his followers when he attempted to overtake them.

The Holy Bible

The Templars and the Ark of the Covenant – Graham Philips

The Work – Grand Lodge

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