

## Arenal: The Young and Deadly Mountain

February 2020, After a thrilling ATV ride and a short hike I stood on the flank of the Arenal volcano in Costa Rica. To go any higher was illegal and considered too dangerous. It was a beautiful clear day. Carlos, our guide, commented that the unobstructed view of the whole mountain was quite unusual.

I had awakened at sunrise and stepped out onto my deck to behold about the most perfect picture of a volcano that one can imagine. A picturesque plume of steam rose from the sleeping mountain.

Arenal was a young sleeping mountain until the morning of July 29, 1968, when it suddenly and violently erupted. When it was over, ash buried the land for miles, 87 people were dead and three villages destroyed. Giant boulders, weighing tons, were launched at a speed of 1300 mph. Three new craters formed on Arenal's east flank. Residents fled in every direction in fear. Interestingly, the native indigenous tribe is reported to have left before the eruption.



Again in 1968, 1975, 1984, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998, and in 2010 the mountain erupted and destroyed. It was considered Costa Rica's most active and dangerous volcano. Over the course of 38 years it formed a second peak rising to 5300 feet in elevation. Can you imagine a mountain a mile high forming in just 38 years?

As we stood looking at the mountain, listening to Carlos describe these details, he spoke of being on the mountain when it was so hot that it burned through his hiking boots. He described gases hovering on its summit and slopes that killed all wildlife close to the ground.

Why then, I asked, are all these people living so close to this deadly mountain when they know that mountain is overdue?

I was given a simple answer, “Business.” They live here to make money, playing long odds against their lives that they will prosper before the volcano gets them.

How like that mountain is the second coming of the Lord?

While we wait and wonder when or if he is coming, some of us are taking terrible chances ignoring the rumbling quake of our conscience seeking our wants and not his will. BUT, He will come. The fire of his presence will consume not just a few villages, but everything! And touch both sides of the veil.



No one will escape his notice. Arenal is a warning to *all*—take no chances, stay away from danger and above *all*—be ready!

*Copyright © 2020 Glenn Rawson*

*Music: Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing by Jason Tonioli*