

## **DISASTERS AND GOD'S JUDGMENT #1**

Fred Coulter – January 1, 2005

Well this past week we have been watching television. Of course the news now is 24/7 and they have reporters on the spot whenever disasters strike and so we get the news fed right into our living room. With the great earthquake, it took place under the sea, apparently it lifted the fault line 100 feet for 600 miles. So it was the largest earthquake recorded since the one in 1964 in Alaska, which was 9.0. And they had tremendous tsunami waves that really killed and destroyed hundreds of thousands of people. And we are looking at a situation where, because of the tropical climate and dead bodies everywhere, that disease could break out and really be rampant. They already have a plague of measles among children. There could be cholera, dysentery. And cholera can kill within two hours. And they just are really stymied on how to handle it. They are overwhelmed in trying to bury the bodies, and so forth.

But the question comes up: If God is love why did He not prevent this? Good question. Especially when you consider that the final count from the earthquake and all the plagues and everything may be a million people. And especially when you consider all the children that died. Why did God do this? Why didn't He prevent it? Surely, doesn't He want everyone to live? Well these are hard and perplexing questions.

But before we get in to understand what the Bible says about it let's understand something here: time and chance, Ecclesiastes says, happens to all. There's a time to be born, there's a time to die, there's a time for war, etc., etc. Jesus also touched this subject. Let's go to Luke 13 and let's see what Jesus said, because every time something like this happens someone sure enough is going to stand up and say, "They deserve it. That's God's judgment." Well who knows whether they deserve it or not. And only God knows whether it is His judgment or not. And if it is His judgment then we better all hear and fear and learn. But let's not be standing up and so quick as to point an evil finger toward those who suffered from the tsunami disaster. Jesus wanted people to understand that these things are going to happen. And you cannot say that, "Those people over there deserved it because they were greater sinners than anybody else", which someone surely is going to do.

Now Luke 13:1: "Now at the same time, *there* were present some who were telling Him about the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices." What Pilate did, he took them and killed them. Took their sacrifices, poured their blood upon their sacrifices and forced those to be burned on the altar. "And Jesus answered *and* said to them, 'Do you suppose that these Galileans were sinners above all Galileans, because they suffered such things? No, I tell you; but if you do not repent, you shall all likewise perish.' " So when these things happen there is a lesson for us to learn. For those who do not suffer the disaster, we need to understand that we need to repent and turn to God.

Now then he talks here, continuing verse 4: “ ‘Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them, do you suppose that these were debtors above all men who dwelt in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but if you do not repent, you shall all likewise perish’ ” (Luke 13:1-5, FV). Now God is in charge of everything. He did not prevent it. He knew that it was going to happen. And we need to understand this: all those who died, including all the little children, God will not forget and will resurrect them to have an opportunity for salvation, because now is not the day of universal salvation. So why did God cause it? [Let's] put it that way, because He made the earth to do that. Why did God cause it?

Well, first of all we need to understand that sin affects the earth. Sin affects the environment and God will judge for that sin. Now let's see why we are where we are today and that God has given man choices – all mankind, all human beings. And remember that children born into the world are taught by their parents, so their parents are responsible to teach the children the right way.

Now let's come to Deuteronomy 30. Let's see what God sets before every human being, before every nation, before every group of individuals and He will judge them thus. Now let's pick it up here in verse 15: “See, I have set before thee this day life and good...”, and that's what everyone wants. Everyone wants life and good, don't they? But God says: “...and death and evil...”, and no one wants death and evil. However, in asking the question: “Why does God allow this? Why did God not stop it?”, we need to also ask another question: Do you think that God is going to come and help you when you reject Him out of your life, out of our schools, out of our government, out of our churches? And do you think that God is going to give His blessings to those who worship idols and demon spirits and have mean and hateful religions? No. God set before you life and good, and death and evil, and that's the way the whole world works.

Now God gives a command. How many people are doing this? How many people are seeking to do this: “...In that I command thee this day to love the LORD thy God...” How many people truly love God? Love God with all their heart, and mind, and soul, and being? No, in many of the areas of the world today there is war, hatred, violence, killing, plagues, diseases. And we'll see why those come.

“...To walk in His ways...” How many are walking in the ways of God? How many are taking the Bible and living by every Word of God as Jesus said? “...And to keep His commandments...” How many are keeping His commandments? “...And His statutes and His judgments, that thou mayest live...” You see, just the opposite of what atheists and the agnostic elite think. And if anyone thinks that we are the product of evolution, God says you are a fool. And you go look in the mirror and look at yourself and say, “I descended from apes”, and you are an absolute fool. That's what the Bible says. The Bible says, “He who says there is no God is a fool” (Psa. 53:1, paraphrased). So God wants you to live and multiply. That's your children. Take care of your children. Watch over your children. “...And the LORD thy God shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it” (verse 16). Everyone wants the blessings but they don't want to do the things to receive the blessings. Everyone wants peace and health and kindness and

goodness from God but they won't love God, they won't keep His commandments. Yes, a lot of people flatter God, profess Him with their mouths, but their hearts are far from Him.

Now notice verse 17: "But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear, but shalt be drawn away, and worship other gods, and serve them; I denounce unto you this day, that ye shall surely perish [it means death – death to people, death to their children], and that ye shall not prolong your days upon the land, whither thou passest over Jordan to go to possess it." Now they were going in to the Promised Land. Now how sure is this that God is saying? Well all you have to do is just go outside and look up at the heavens and look at the earth because God says: "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you..." Remember this whenever you go out and enjoy the outdoors, or whether you're sitting in your home. Regardless of what you are doing there is a witness against you and every human being on earth: "...that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life..." That's what God wants. God is life giver, God is law giver, God is sustainer. And God made us so that we will be blessed if we live by His laws and commandments and love God. He says: "...therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live [profound statement, isn't it?]: that thou mayest love the LORD thy God, and that thou mayest obey His voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto Him: for He is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them" (verses 17-20). So that's the choice.

Now we will see that this is in operation from the very beginning. Now let's go back to the book of Genesis and let's see that sin, which is the transgression of the laws of God (the commandments of God, the statutes of God, the testimonies of God, the precepts of God), they [the transgressions] are all sin. So when God first made Adam and Eve, He made them after His image and after His likeness. And He gave them intelligence, He gave them language, He gave them perfect human bodies. And He told them to multiply and replenish the earth. And since He is Creator and Lawgiver He gave them some laws and commandments to do. Now let's notice the first one that He gave them.

Genesis 2:9: "And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil." These are the choices. The way that leads to life or the way that leads to death. And the experience of Adam and Eve, as we will see, is most profound for the whole human race.

Now let's come over here to verse 15: "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." So God expects us to have responsibility. He expects us to work. He expects us to take care of the creation that He has given. As a matter of fact He gave the whole earth to mankind and it is their responsibility to take care of it. It is their responsibility to dress it and keep it. "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but..." Here's what people don't like, and Adam and Eve were not different. But

their sin was special because they knew better. And they were taught directly by God their Creator, whereas all human beings after that are taught by their mothers and fathers and whatever school system they have. So it's a different situation. "...But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil...", and this is profoundly important to understand. Now if you don't have the series "Evil Works, Good Works", we have a series on that. I think it's three or four tapes. Please understand this: not all that appears good comes from God. And not all that is deemed good by human perception is necessarily good. It could be evil because there is pleasure in sin for a season, and there is a benefit to sin temporarily before the curse comes. "...But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (verses 15-17). And the Hebrew there means "in dying you shall die". It didn't mean that they would instantly die that day because then there would be no human race to follow.

So then God created Eve out of one of his bones, and you know the rest of the story. The encounter by Satan the devil, and Eve, and Adam. And what happened with the eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which God said do not do, you see they transgressed the commandment of God. They made the wrong choice. There's a penalty which is sin. The wages of sin is death. Transgression of the law is sin. And that's exactly what we see here, but their sin was especially heinous because they believed the liar, the adversary Satan the devil who said, "If you eat of this you will become as gods." Now that means, you will become as god's now. God's plan in the long run is that we be changed at the resurrection and become His sons and daughters and be like Him – His way. This way that Adam and Eve chose was Satan's way, and their way. And there seemed to be an apparent benefit right away, because it looked good; I don't know how it smelled but it tasted good; and it did open their eyes to see and understand evil. And what it did was this: their choice in doing so means that they took to themselves the prerogative, which is only God's, to decide for themselves what is good, what is evil, what is right, what is wrong, what is sin, and what is not. That alone is God's prerogative. That's why He's God.

And so then they were ashamed, they covered their nakedness, and then they had an encounter with God. Now let's see what God says in His judgment and His curse. Because you see since God is righteous and holy and true He must also judge sin. And so He did here. And so we find that instead of the beautiful Garden of Eden, and after God had made everything, behold everything was good, now then it was going to begin to change because of the sin of Adam and Eve. And then we will see in just a bit, that this passed on to all their progeny. Their sin, being the original sin of mankind, caused mankind to be removed from God. And they accepted Satan the devil as their god. They gave up serving the true God to serve Satan the devil, and we will see what happened as a result of that.

So then God, after He found out what happened there... And of course just like human nature the man blamed the woman, the woman blamed the serpent, and God gave judgment against all of them. Now let's read it here Genesis 3:15. After He gave the judgment to Satan: "...And I will put enmity between thee [Satan] and the woman, and between thy seed [Satan] and her seed [the offspring of Adam and Eve, and also a

prophecy of Christ]; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. Unto the woman He said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children..." And this goes beyond just the pain of childbirth. This goes on into the rearing of children and whether they do good or whether do evil, and all of the emotions and everything that mothers have concerning their children. "...And thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam He said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife [instead of the voice of God], and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground..." Sin affects the earth. Now we're going to see that and how much magnified that it is. "...Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. 3:15-19). And so man was put out of the Garden of Eden. God put cherubims to guard the entrance of it. God also made clothes from them. And now they were removed from God, exiled from the Garden of Eden.

Then we have the story of Cain and Abel. Abel did that which was right in the sight of God. Now Josephus records that they were about 130 years old when this took place. Here's another lesson concerning Cain and the way of Cain: God expects people to come to Him as He has commanded. You don't come to God your way because you think you have a way to God. And that's what Cain's way was. He didn't do what God said. He brought that which was a sinful offering. Something which God did not command. So he got mad and killed his brother out of jealousy. So we have here within the first four chapters just about every sin committed, don't we? Rejection of God, breaking His commandments. We have Adam listening to the voice of his wife instead of God. We have Cain killing Abel. And then this just multiplies all the way through.

Now let's come to Genesis 6. Let's see what happens here. So Cain and his descendents went their way. God provided another son, Seth, to take the place of Abel. And there were very few righteous men because the offspring went their way. They went the way that Adam and Eve had established by accepting Satan the devil as their god. And so what happens to the world? Well, here we are some 1500 years later. Now I realize that there are other things that we could cover but what I want to show is this: the collective sin of mankind affects the creation of God – the earth. And that's why these things take place. There are other things also that take place which we will cover here in just a little bit.

Genesis 6:5: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." This is what the Bible calls a carnal mind – a mind of flesh, which is a mind of sin. But notice what they did. They trained themselves so that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And we need to understand that's exactly what we are doing in this whole world society today. Oh they don't want God, but why is there murder, why is there adultery, why do we have these disasters, why are there diseases, why are there plagues? And they go on their merry way to do what they do. Why is there

war? I mean right now today, just today, not counting the tsunami that took place look at what's happening in Sudan – war and hatred. Rwanda, the Congo, the Ivory Coast, Morocco, Iraq. Look what's happening. Terrible, wretched, evil, war, sin, death, disease. All the result of mans way. And God uses these things to punish man, hopefully that some will repent of their evil. That's what He did here. Now I want you to understand how this evil before the flood affected the whole creation and it affected God.

Verse 6: “And it repented the LORD that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth Me that I have made them” (verses 6-7). Now that's quite a state to be, isn't it? Now we also know that Jesus said, “As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the coming of the Son of man” (Luke 17:26, paraphrased). So we are going to see the same thing happen. Today they are training children in evil from almost the first consciousness that the child has.

Now let's go on, verse 8: “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.” Does God respect those who love Him and keep His commandments on an individual basis? Yes. So here's Noah. Now let's read a little more here: “These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God” (verses 8-9). That means he walked in God's ways: after God's commandments, God's statutes, God's law. He obeyed the voice of God, did he not? And because of that he found grace. You're not going to find grace if you're living an evil life. You're going to find cursing and death.

Verse 11: “The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth” (verses 11-13). So then He told him to make an ark, and he did. God caused all the animals that He wanted to save to come to the ark. It took 120 years to build the ark. Great huge mammoth ship. The biggest ship that has ever been made in the history of the world until some of our modern aircraft carriers today.

And so He caused it to rain. Now let's read about that, chapter 7 and verse 11: “In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up...” Now what is that? Now let's look at this earthquake which happened under the Indian Ocean just exactly one week ago today. And by the way today is the first of January, 2005. That was a very small quake compared to this. All the fountains of the deep broke up all over the earth at the same time. There were violent tsunamis, rushes of water, and the rain started coming down in torrents. Now here in California this past week we've received a lot of rain. We have some floods. But if you stop and think of all that happened just in America, which if we be the remnant of the ten tribes of Israel, has not God been correcting us through the weather? How many hurricanes hit Florida? How many disasters? How many tornadoes? How many wrecks? How many whatever that kill people? How many murders

and rapes and all of the things against God's law. And God is going to judge. And at the end His judgment is going to again be upon the whole world as it was before the flood. We're going to see that in just a little bit. This is no small matter. The sin was so great that God destroyed the earth with the flood. And that was in proportion to their sin. So we need to understand what is going to be in proportion to the sin of today. Now we are told by the apostle Paul that all these things in the Old Testament happened as examples so that we would not do the same things.

Now what happened here when the fountains of the deep broke up... And of course they were probably laughing at Noah: "Ha, ha, ha. What are you building this big boat for? It's never rained like you said it's going to rain. How is God going to flood the whole earth?" Well you know, even today you look at the earth – three quarters of it is water, is it not? And you sink the land, and you break up the fountains of the deep, and you bring the water from the heavens, and it flooded the whole earth and covered the tops of the mountains. And you can go, like here in Wyoming, to the top of the continental divide (about 10,000 feet) and you can walk up the mountains and you can find trilobites, signs of marine life which are evidence of the flood. And yet some geologists go out there and say, "Oh, there was never a flood." Some people will never learn.

Now let's come down here, verse 17: "And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered" (verses 17-20). Every mountain. "Fifteen cubits [above] upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered." That means the tallest mountains in the Himalayas were covered by 15 cubits of water above it. There are some people who say, "Oh well, God couldn't do that. This was a natural disaster and it just happened in the area around Babylon." Fool, dream on. It happened in the whole world.

Now they also know two things concerning geology that I want to mention here: They know because of the first explosion of Mt. St. Helens that strata is laid down quickly, not slowly. One on top of the other. And that those trees which were destroyed, uprooted and broken because of the volcano, became waterlogged and stood straight up. And the strata covered them, and so the log went through many layers of strata and this was all laid down in one day. So there's no such thing as the old geological thing which took millions and billions of years to occur.

Now another thing: I want to mention about global warming. "Oh there's global warming, and everything is going to heat up and the ocean is going to rise." Well you know this last week it snowed in Qatar and the Arab Emirates. That's because it was warm. [audience laughter] Man is foolish in his judgment. Nearly all of the ice in the north pole and the south pole are from existing water supplies. Now, you do this, which will prove that if all the ice melted there would not be hardly a rise in the ocean level. You take a glass, you fill it up with ice then fill it up with water. You take another glass and fill it up with water with no ice. Put them side by side. Let the glass with the ice in it

melt and you will see it did not overflow. It is the same. That is a lie for political control over people.

Now I got off on the subject here but I since we're talking about the earth and disaster and things I just want to let you know that those things are lies for political control, political ends, political means. See, now the flood is a good lesson for all men who are arrogant and smug and think that they are so smart that they can tell God what to do, that they can do better than God, so God is going to take the earth and destroy them with it. Now when Christ returns, as we will see before we finish (I don't think I can finish it in one sermon so we'll have to finish it the next time) but we will see that God is going to take all the arrogance of men and He is going to make this earth so absolutely (how shall I say) like just a little rubber ball that is tossed to and fro, that it's going to absolutely scare the liver out of them.

Now let's finish the flood. Sorry for the diversion. But I'll tell you what, when we see things like that happening, when we see war and famine and pestilence and plague – know God is angry. Know that that is God's correction. Know that God demands that there be repentance. That's what it's all about. There was no repentance before the flood so it came.

Now notice verse 21: “And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth [now that's God's judgment]: and Noah only [and that is of his sons] remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days” (verses 21-24), so that you would know without a doubt that everything died.

Now after the flood God again said be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. He made a special covenant with the sons of Noah. And that special covenant would be that He would never flood the earth again, and that in spite of the fact that man was inherently evil God would not flood the earth again. Now let's read it here in Genesis 8:21. After Noah gave an offering of clean beasts, which shows you... Now you see, some people say, “Well, you know, today we don't have to abide by the law of clean and unclean animals because you see, we have refrigerators and we cook it well.” Dream on. God says you shall not eat it. Very simple. That's why it was an offering of clean beasts and clean fowl.

Verse 21: “And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake...” That is as He did with the flood and before the flood. Now notice, we're going to see why it was cursed: “...for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease”

(Gen. 8:21-22). Now doesn't this tell you what a wretched condition and cursing that there was before the flood? That the seasons were changed and all upside down? Yes, indeed.

Now then God is not going to curse the earth that way that He did here, but we are going to see that sin brings curses to the earth automatically. See because all the laws and commandments of God are always in force all the time upon every human being everywhere in the world whether they know the laws and commandments of God or not. If they commit murder they suffer the penalty of it. If they commit adultery they ruin and destroy their lives and the lives of others. If they steal, if they do all of these things they are sinning against God. That's why God gave the administration of death, as I covered in the sermon "The Administration of Death" beginning with Noah this side of the flood, so there would be some semblance of law and order. But nevertheless God still judges because of sin. So then after God gave the covenant then again there was sin concerning Canaan the grandson of Ham. And right away perversion started all over. So then there were curses against the Canaanites, which exist down to this very day. Some people don't like that but that's just the way it is.

Now chapter 11, man still didn't learn, did he? So they wanted to resurrect the way of Cain again. So they started to build a tower – the Tower of Babel, and the whole earth was of one language. And they wanted it to reach to heaven to make a name for themselves, because as we find in the book of Josephus that God had told them that He was going to disperse them to their inheritance and different places of the earth. And you can rest assure this: that the inheritance of blessings went to Shem and partly to Japheth and a little bit to Ham and virtually none of it to Canaan. And that's the way God has determined it. Now some people don't like that because they think all people are good. And all people, "If we just give them enough money and just give them enough good things, why they will become civilized, wonderful human beings, won't they? Oh yes." All of the beheadings in Iraq?

So what did God have to do. Instead of causing a flood, because He said He wouldn't do it again, He changed their language [and] scattered them abroad across the fact of the earth. Then we come to chapter 12.

(Turn Tape)

Now let's continue on. Here's another factor to put in the overall picture that we need to understand when there are wars, and pestilence, and violence, and earthquakes and things like this, and it has to do with all the seed of Abraham. Genesis 12:1: "Now the LORD had said unto Abram [who's name was changed to Abraham], Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (Gen. 12:1-3). Now today that is manifest through the United States of America and Britain. And we have been a blessing to this world. And if you go back and you count all the foreign aid,

which I had Ron Carey go back and look up the report of it. So I looked at it. It compiles a rather detailed report. Because just like many people in America were incensed when the Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations said America was penurious in their aid. The United States has given out over two trillion dollars in aid. Now that's just America. That's the government. That's not counting churches, that's not counting organizations. And because Americans are, as a result of the blessing of Abraham and the blessings that God has given, very generous and kind people in the world. And if you take away the United States and Britain from the earth and these people, you have nothing but savages and cruelty and hatred reigning over the whole earth. And that's just a fact. Now whether you people like it or not, like what I say or not, that's too bad. That's what the Bible says. Don't look at me and get mad at me. You go shake your fist at God and see if you can get away with it. But Jesus says repent. So that's another factor.

Who, in this disaster that happened, who was the first one there with planes and food and water and relief and medicine? The United States and Britain. Where's the money from Russia? Where's the money from China? Yet they hate us and curse us. And we do more good as a nation to help people in the world. And of course when disasters come like this we should all help. We should all give something. They need the help. See, the Bible says even if your enemy is hungry – feed him. If he's thirsty give him something to drink. Now, we'll learn some other things as we go along, but I think that needed to be said in the overall situation here.

But you see when these disasters happen we need to understand that God is speaking to all of those involved. He's showing how fragile human life is. He's showing that without His sustaining power of giving food, and air, and water, and the means to use these things there would be no life. Now we are going to approach a time that is going to be so bad that unless God had not limited the time, and unless God does not intervene to stop it, all human flesh would be destroyed. So we're talking about some pretty powerful things here.

Now let's understand down through history that God has always judged. Let's come to Psalm 96 and as we're turning there we'll bypass Sodom and Gomorrah but that was a lesson for all human beings from that time forward not to live in that kind of lifestyle and evil and sin. And it doesn't matter how much you dress it up, how much you try and make it right, how much you try to make that behavior acceptable, God says it is an abomination.

See, God is always judging everyone everywhere all the time because He is God. And He doesn't have to be there to personally do it, though He can be. And He knows every hair on your head, does He not? He knows even when a sparrow falls, does He not? Yes, He does. But God has His laws, which when transgressed, the penalty automatically comes. That's God's judgment.

Psalm 96:13, it talks about let all the fields rejoice in verse 12 and all therein, and then all the trees of the wood rejoice before the LORD: "...for He cometh, for He cometh

to judge the earth: He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with His truth.” That’s Gods standard.

Now let’s see what He uses. What are the instrumentalities of judgment that God uses? Let’s see this. Now we all know that we’ll come before the judgment seat of God. Let’s again come to Mark 13. Why don’t you do this for a Bible study. First of all I’m going to read them off and then you will see what God uses. Here’s what God uses to judge and test people:

- 1) False prophets: And look what happened when Satan came [to] Adam and Eve – false prophet. Was not Satan a false prophet? Yes, indeed.
- 2) War: And what was the first war? Killing of Abel by Cain.
- 3) Disasters: They had a lot of those before the flood and the flood was the ultimate disaster.
- 4) Famine
- 5) Disease and death

These are the things that God uses to execute His judgment. Now, so we find it not peculiar at all here in Mark 13 to see that these things are what Jesus spoke of.

Now let’s pick it up here in verse 4. The disciples came and said: “ ‘Tell us, when shall these things be? And what *shall be* the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?’ And Jesus *in* answering them began to say, ‘Be on guard lest anyone deceive you [false prophets – number one]. For many shall come in My name, saying, “I am *the Christ*”; and they shall deceive many’ ” (Mark 13:4-6, FV). I just finished reading a book called The DaVinci Deception. Quite a good book. It’s a small book. It’s a good read. You can get this on Amazon.com, and it’s Erwin W. Lutzer. And what The DaVinci Code and “The Passion of the Christ” (and I’ll bring some sermons on it in the future) are leading to the acceptance of the anti-Christ because The DaVinci Code is a lie. And people believe lies because they don’t have a love for the truth. He does a very good job on it, but I’ll talk on that at a later date.

But there are false prophets everywhere. That’s why God has given His Word. You check it by the Word of God whether those things be so, and you make sure that you, today, have a Bible that is a good Bible based upon the right Greek and Hebrew text – not all of these modern combined ecumenical New Age Bibles.

For this book, The DaVinci Deception, the ISBN number is: 0-8423-8430-8.

So there we have number one – false prophets.

Now let’s look and see how this follows what we find the pattern in the Old Testament. Now let’s go back to Deuteronomy 12. After God gave them the laws and the commandments, and He told them that these are His, and let’s see the instruction that He gave. And this applies today because people are trying to amalgamate all religions with the Bible and come out with some sort of ecumenical conglomerate. Now let me read you

this coming from the Jesus Seminar: “Paul Alan Laughlin, author of Remedial Christianity, and Getting Oriented, and professor and former chair of the Department of Religion and Philosophy at Otterbein College in Westerville, Ohio will make the case for the promise of the mystical strains of Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, in producing a new enlightened version of the Christian faith.”

Now let me read you something here and we will see what we’re reading here is as modern as I just read you this which was printed on December 7. Deuteronomy 12:28: “Observe and hear all these words which I command thee, that it may go well with thee...” How are you going to have things go well with you? By giving heed to God’s Word. “...And with thy children after thee...” We’re going to see the children also have a responsibility. Because if you teach them the right way and after they grow up and leave home and they go another way, they stand before God and are held accountable for it. “...And with thy children after thee, for ever, when thou doest that which is good and right in the sight of the LORD thy God.”

Verse 29: “When the LORD thy God shall cut off the nations from before thee [and that’s God’s judgment against all of their sin, if you go back and read the whole account, you see], whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their land; take heed to thyself [watch out to yourself] that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou inquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise.” First warning, right? “Thou shalt not do so unto the LORD thy God: for every abomination to the LORD, which He hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it” (Deut. 13:28-32). Let me just state here: any “adding to” or “diminishing from” is the prerogative only of God. And Christ is the only one Who did that. Now if you don’t have the article “How Did Jesus Fulfill the Law and the Prophets” you can read it either in the New Testament [Faithful Version] or the Harmony of the Gospels, one of the two.

Now chapter 13. The first test of whether you’re going to keep the laws and commandments of God or not comes along, which is what? False prophets. Verse 1: “If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods...” You see, because demonism does work. Evil does work. “...Let us go after other gods...” Just like this man said, “Oh, let’s have a blending of the mystical strains of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism to produce a new and enlightening version of the Christian faith.”

“...Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams...” A lot of people said, “I’ve dreamed.” Or “I heard a voice from God. God told me.” If it’s not according to the words of the Bible and the words of Jesus Christ God never sent them. Even if they come in the name of Christ, as Jesus said. Is that not what this man is doing in blending Buddhism, Hinduism, Taoism for a new brand of Christianity? Yes, indeed.

Now notice: "...for the LORD your God proveth you..." These things come as a test. And we might ask the question: How many people have failed the test because they haven't checked with the Word of God? Most people. "...For the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear Him, and keep His commandments, and obey His voice..." Doesn't that sound familiar all the way through the Bible? Yes, indeed. "...And ye shall serve Him, and cleave unto Him" (Deut. 13:1-4).

And then under the administration of death that God gave to Israel, He said, "You'll take that false prophet out and kill him." The last part of verse 5: "So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee."

Now notice how important it is. Your love to God, your loyalty to God, your service to God goes beyond family. Verse 6: "If thy brother, the son of thy mother, or thy son, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy bosom, or thy friend, which is as thine own soul, entice thee secretly, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou, nor thy fathers; namely, of the gods of the people which are round about you, nigh unto thee, or far off from thee, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth..." Now that's all encompassing, isn't it? See now in the New Testament we are told Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, and there's only one way and that is the truth. Now it says: "...Thou shalt not consent unto him, nor hearken unto him; neither shall thine eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him; but thou shalt surely kill him..." (verses 6-9). Now today we don't. They are in the hands of God because we don't administer the administration of death. But they are disfellowshipped from amongst our midst. If anyone comes and says, "Oh, I have a special gift of that or the other. I have a gift to know where there [are] demons. I have a gift to heal." But it never happens, see. No way. So there we have false prophets.

Now let's come back to Mark 13. Let's see what else comes along. And these are the things that God uses, as we will see. Verse 7: " 'But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars...' " What was the second one I had written down? Wars. " '...Do not be troubled; for it is necessary for *these things* to come to pass, but the end *is* not yet. For nation shall rise up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be earthquakes...' " What was the next one, number three? Natural disasters. And I'll tell you in Asia there have been earthquakes, just tremendous earthquakes: in Japan, in the Kamchatka Peninsula. Volcanoes have gone off in the Kamchatka Peninsula. See, God has it this way: every time the earth warms a little bit a volcano goes off and guess what it does? And the EPA has no control over it. Produces more carbon dioxide than all the cars in the whole world and puts it into the air with soot and fine dust and this lowers the temperature of the earth back where it should be. This helps cause it to rain and all of these things, you see. So these things will happen. So we have disasters. " '...Earthquakes in different places...' "

Next one: " '...and there shall be famines [that's number four, right?] and disasters.' " It says in other places – pestilence. " 'These things *are* the beginning of

sorrows' ” (Mark 13:7-8, FV). And I think that's right where we are. We're somewhere a little past the beginning of sorrows. How long that will be – don't know. We don't know what God's judgment is going to be. That's why you need to go back and review the tape “Fourteen Things To Happen In Prophecy Before Jesus Returns.”

Now let's go to Revelation 6 and let's see how at the end the same sequence of things that God uses is going to happen again. God uses the false prophets to test you. And you can read there in Revelation 2 and 3 (just in comment on the side before going to Revelation 6) what God says to the churches because of false prophets and wrong ways. We are to repent of them, get rid of them. The comment was made, and I think it's very interesting that during this so-called Christmas season they had on the History Channel a lot of things about the birth of Christ and the Bible and so forth. But they also had on there a series, “The Wrath of God,” showing these very things, but they don't say it's God. But it's entitled “The Wrath of God.” That's what it is.

Revelation 6:1: “And I looked when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures say, like the sound of thunder, ‘Come and see.’ And I looked, and behold, *there was* a white horse...” False prophet – looks like Christ, sounds like Christ but it's not Christ. Later we'll cover Revelation 19 where Christ is on His white horse. But this is false religion. Why can this not be Christ? Very simple. Christ opened the seal. Did He all of a sudden jump on the horse after He opened the seal? And if that happened, how could He open the second seal, third seal, the fourth seal, the fifth seal, and the sixth seal? No, this is false prophet. The great false religion of the world. “...And a crown was given to him; and he went out conquering, and to conquer” (Rev. 6:1-2, FV).

“And when He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, ‘Come and see.’ And another horse went out *that was* red; and *power* was given to the one sitting on it to take peace from the earth, and *to cause* them to kill one another; and a great sword was given to him” (verse 4, FV). What is that? War.

“And when He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, ‘Come and see.’ And I looked, and behold, *there was* a black horse; and the one sitting on it had a balance in his hand. And I heard a voice in *the* midst of the four living creatures say, ‘A measure of wheat for a silver coin, and three measures of barley for a silver coin: and *see that* you do not damage the oil and the wine.’ ” (verses 5-6, FV). Now we've had exactly one week since the tsunami and what are they worried about? Death because of lack of food. How long does it take after a disaster or war for death to ensue? Almost immediately. So there's famine. That's what it's talking about.

Now what follows right on the heels of that? Verse 7: “And when He opened the fourth seal, I heard *the* voice of the fourth living creature say, ‘Come and see.’ And I looked, and behold, *there was* a pale horse; and the name of the one sitting on it *was* Death, and the grave followed him; and authority was given to them over *one* fourth of the earth, to kill with *the* sword and with famine and with death, and by the beasts of the earth” (verses 7-8, FV). So when you see all these things these are God's judgment. God

says He judges the earth. He judges the nations. That's what we're seeing here. This is a time for all to fear God whether they are called unto salvation or not.

Now let's go to the book of Ezekiel and let's see some things where God says the same thing again. These are the things that God always uses. Well last night I was reading the book of Ezekiel and boy, I tell you. That book will take your breath away. It will just take your breath away. Now let's begin right here the first part of the chapter because this is really a very instructive chapter. And it shows the same sequence: false religion... And it also shows God calling to repentance. See, in all of these things God wants repentance. That's what's important. That's why I started out where I did with Luke 13 where Jesus said, "Unless you likewise repent, you shall likewise perish."

Now Ezekiel 14:1: "Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me. And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face..." Now what idol do you have? What possession do you have that is your idol? What religious practice do you have that is your idol? Now a little later in chapter 20 God shows that these things come because people do not keep His Sabbath and holy days. And not only is there idolatry of idols, but idols that are in the hearts of men. And in the hearts of men are the idol of Sunday-keeping, which never came from God, which is roundly condemned in the Old Testament and New Testament. And because of that, because they weren't repentant God says, continuing verse 3: "...should I be inquired of at all by them? Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet [that is the true prophet of God]; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols..." (Ezek. 13:1-4). See, because they are following strange god's, right, which is idolatry. And if you follow strange gods and you have it in your heart and your mind you are believing false prophets, are you not, or teachings of false prophets.

Verse 5: "...that I may take the house of Israel in their own heart..." Understand this – this is another principle of God: God will judge you as you choose. Very important. Not only in the world are there false prophets but the church of God has had it's battles with false prophets, and a lot of false prophets around claiming things that God never said. And unless we understand as a church of God everywhere, and I mean the general church of God – all 300 fellowships and denominations of them – we all better be about repenting as God says because His judgment has been upon the church of God and that's why it's scattered. And frankly God is not going to do very much to add very much to the church of God until there's some deep repentance, until there's getting rid of all this false doctrine and things within the church. How many have given up on God and the Sabbath and the holy days and gone after Christmas and Easter and New Year and gone right back into the world? God is saying here: "I [will] take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from Me through their idols." There is no compatibility with God and idols – period. God says, "You shall have no other gods before Me." That's the first commandment. Then the second one is idols.

Now verse 6: “Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations. For every one of the house of Israel, or of the stranger that sojourneth in Israel, which separateth himself from Me, and setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to a prophet to inquire of him concerning Me; I the LORD will answer him by Myself...” (verses 6-7). That’s why in the New Testament it says, “Don’t you know that we will all come before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account of what we have done.” Yes, indeed.

Now notice: “...and I will set My face against that man, and will make him a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of My people; and ye shall know that I am the LORD. And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the LORD have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out My hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of My people Israel. And they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity: the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeketh unto him...” (verses 8-10). Isn’t it amazing how these things all the way through, false prophets start out first leading to idolatry. And that’s what happened all the way back to Adam and Eve and it’s going to happen until Christ returns. See the Bible is really very simple to understand if you’re willing to read it and see it and believe it. See, because we have gone from Genesis to the Gospels to Revelation and now back to Ezekiel and what do we find? The same exact pattern of punishment for sin beginning with false prophets and false doctrines. That’s how they come in.

Now let’s continue on here: “...that the house of Israel may go no more astray from Me, neither be polluted any more with all their transgressions; but that they may be My people, and I may be their God, saith the Lord GOD” (verse 11). The whole purpose is reconciliation to God. The whole purpose is repent. That’s why He says, “Repent and turn yourself from your idols and turn away your faces from all your abominations.” Oh yes today we have a form of godliness called the radical right-wing evangelicals by the atheists of the land. But they likewise have to turn from their idols. They likewise have to turn from their sins, don’t they? Yes, indeed.

Now let’s go on, verse 12: “The word of the LORD came again to me, saying, Son of man, when the land sinneth against Me [that means everybody who’s living in the land] by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out Mine hand upon it, and will break the staff of the bread thereof, and will send famine upon it, and will cut off man and beast from it...” God is the one who sends it. God is the one who does it because of their sins. Now remember, God judges the earth, He judges all nations.

Now notice, if you think you’re good, if you think you’re self-righteous, if you think that you are an exception to what God says, verse 14: “...though these three men, Noah [we already read about him], Daniel, and Job...” See, before Job could be included as the third one here he had to repent, didn’t he? And what was Job’s sin? That he was more righteous than God. “...Though these three men ... were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness, saith the Lord GOD.”

Now verse 15, here's what else God uses: "If I cause noisome beasts to pass through the land, and they spoil it, so that it be desolate, that no man may pass through because of the beasts: though these three men were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters; they only shall be delivered, but the land shall be desolate" (verse 15-16).

Verse 17: "Or if I bring a sword upon that land..." Let me tell you one thing: there is not one war that goes on that God does not know about. And that God, through His angels, does not have a hand in one way or the other. "...And [I] say, Sword, go through the land; so that I cut off man and beast from it: though these three men were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither sons nor daughters, but they only shall be delivered themselves" (verses 17-18).

Now verse 19: "Or if I send a pestilence into that land..." There we have it, don't we? False prophets, war, disasters, famine, disease and death. Same pattern all the way through the Bible. "...And pour out My fury upon it in blood, to cut off from it man and beast: though Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness. For thus saith the Lord GOD; How much more when I send My four sore judgments upon Jerusalem..." You go back and you read what happened to Jerusalem: "...the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence, to cut off from it man and beast?" (verses 19-21). And we're coming to a time in world history that these things are going come just like this.

Now let's finish the chapter (there are only two more verses here) because this gives us something really to ponder about doesn't it? And it also tells us this: that if we get up on our religious hoity-toity and start judging people who have gone through disasters and condemn them and judge them in our hearts, God is going to judge us. Now verse 22: "Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters: behold, they shall come forth unto you, and ye shall see their way and their doings: and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it. And they shall comfort you, when ye see their ways and their doings: and ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord GOD" (verses 22-23).

Now let's take this same principle: there are always some who will escape – a remnant. Now, on the island of Sri Lanka, on the east coast directly where the tsunami waves were coming at full force unimpeded there was this orphanage. Now it's a Methodist Sunday-keeping orphanage. Granted they don't keep the Sabbath, but at least in that pagan evil land they are preaching Christ and they are taking care of the orphans, which God honors. And those who are not against us are for us, or on our part, as Jesus said. The man who was the head of the orphanage, he got up that morning and it was on a Sunday morning, and he was ready to prepare his sermon. And he went out to look out... because they were right on the ocean. Just across the street you are right on the beach to the ocean. And he looked out and he saw the 30 foot tsunami wave coming. And he called all the staff and all the children and said, "Gather together and get out of here.

Follow me.” Now he said normally it takes 15 minutes to get them all together, but he said it was a miracle they all came together in just a short time. And they ran up the hill and they were all saved from the worst part of the worst wave of the tsunami. They were up high enough. And the wave came in and destroyed all of their buildings and everything that they had. But they saved their lives. And you cannot help but think this: even though it’s not in full understanding of the Word of God, God honors those who honor Him. You cannot explain that any other way, because in the space of three minutes they all would have died. So that’s why God has these things happen. And in the midst of all of these things there is always a remnant that God spares to glorify Him.

When I saw that on the news I could not help but think about it and be utterly amazed that God would spare those who honor Him. Just like it says here in Ezekiel 14. Now next time we’ll cover some more things because there is an awful to cover concerning this and it’s very important when you tie this together with the series that we’ve been doing in the book of Hebrews and the kind of faith we need to have to live today, and the kind of love and trust that we need to have in God and be faithful in everything that we do, brethren. It’s very important for us to realize that.

Now I know that this has been a death, doom, gloom, destruction type of sermon. But on the other hand what are we facing in the world, and what are we going to face in the future but death, doom, and gloom. And the only bright spot in it is God the Father, Jesus Christ, and those who love Him. That’s what it’s going to get down to because as we’re going to see in the next sermon, this world is on a collision course to meet God. And it’s going to be a violent collision.

(End of Tape)

**Disasters and God's Judgment #1**

Scriptural References

- 1) Luke 13:1-5
- 2) Deuteronomy 30:15-20
- 3) Psalm 53:1
- 4) Genesis 2:9, 15-17
- 5) Genesis 3:15-19
- 6) Genesis 6:5-9, 11-13
- 7) Genesis 7:11, 17-24
- 8) Genesis 8:21-22
- 9) Genesis 12:1-3
- 10) Psalm 96:13
- 11) Mark 13:4-6
- 12) Deuteronomy 12:28-32
- 13) Deuteronomy 13:1-9
- 14) Mark 13:7-8
- 15) Revelation 6:1-8
- 16) Ezekiel 14:1-23

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