

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

"And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." (MATT 7:24-27).

Jesus warned of a coming flood in the last days, bursting against the people of God! He said we can expect hurricane winds of testing, torrential rains of troubles, and an ever-rising flood of demonic attacks.

Revelation 12 says that in those days persecution, wrath and trouble will pour out of the devil's foul mouth against the church of Jesus Christ:

"Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time... he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child... and the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman [the church], that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood." (REV 12:12-15).

Isaiah warned prophetically that Satan would "come in like a flood" (ISA 59:19). And David likened his increasing problems to a rising flood from hell: "O LORD, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves." (PSA 93:3).

Don't Be Carried Away With The Flood!

David was saying, "Help me, Lord - I'm being swamped by a rising tide of devilish harassment! The waves are getting bigger - they're roaring, telling me I'm going to be overwhelmed!"

The Storm That Jesus Told Us About Is Upon Us Right Now - in All Its Fury and Power!

That storm is hitting right now, nation-wide and world-wide. And it's going to keep getting worse! Why? Because the more you love Jesus and set your heart on following Him, the more fiercely Satan will hurl a storm of trouble against you. He'll come against your home, your work, your marriage and children, your relationships, and especially your walk with the Lord.

I believe there isn't a single godly home today that hasn't experienced hurricane-force testing in one way or another. In fact, during one particular week not long ago, three of my married children told me separately that they each had experienced severe testing in their homes. A terrible flood had arisen in each of their families: unexplainable anger, foolish misunderstandings, raised voices - things that didn't normally occur.

They didn't know that in the same week, Gwen and I had experienced one of the greatest testing periods of our marriage! An oppression had fallen over us, and we took it out on each other. For two days we argued over things so insignificant it was laughable!

One young pastor recently told me a minister friend had called him in tears, crying, "I've got to talk to somebody - my wife and I are going through a literal hell! We love each other dearly, but we're always screaming at each other. We try to patch things up, but it only makes a fragile peace - and soon another outbreak comes. I just can't handle it - I feel like running away. I hang on only because I love the Lord!"

The listening pastor was silent - then he too broke down. He cried, "You're telling my story! My wife and I are going through the same thing. We hate what's happening, but we can't seem to live in peace. It's getting worse, and I don't know what to do. It's over my head!"

Many Christian couples are growing alarmed about their relationship. They think perhaps they don't love each other anymore, or that they've compromised their marriage somehow and it's falling apart. Yet they don't realize that the flood of problems they're having is beyond them - over their heads - and beyond any power they have to stop it!

You see, the storm that is taking place in Christian homes and relationships - the unexplained, unexpected hurt and trouble - is not natural. It is a supernatural flood from hell! Your battle is not between you and your spouse; it's between heaven and hell - between God and the devil, who wants to bring down your home!

You have to realize you did not conjure up this terrible storm your-

self. It didn't happen because of some great failure on your part. It's not because of some character flaw or a downward spiral in your faith. No - you are the target of a mad devil who is determined to make your house fall!

Certainly we can't blame all our problems on the devil. We all add to our problems by foolish, sinful outbursts of flesh. **But Jesus warned us we would be beaten upon by a flood and a storm from hell - and that describes what is happening in God's house right now!**

You are no match for the supernatural attack you're under. You need help beyond anything that's within yourself or any other person to give.

You've got to run to Jesus! Once you recognize that, you and your spouse can fall on your knees together and fight the battle arm-in-arm - in prayer!

Multitudes Are Hurting Because of Unemployment And Financial Terror!

Americans are growing more and more fearful about the future. Financial ruin looms ahead for many - and there is a widespread fear of losing it all!

New York City recently lost 350,000 jobs. One out of seven people is on welfare, and unemployment is up to 10 percent. Even young men in our church have told me, trembling, "For the first time in my life, I have no money whatsoever - sometimes not even a dollar. I'm terrified at not having resources for anything!"

There are "death zones" in New York City - areas where despair has caused homicides and suicides to rage out of control. These are mostly black neighborhoods where male unemployment is higher than fifty percent. Men feel lost, unneeded and unwanted - and they take out their frustration on their families, killing themselves or others out of abject hopelessness.

Beloved, the entire nation is under judgment! God is allowing the devil to be His rod of justice and judgment against a sinful

people. And because Satan is free to pour out his venom, he'll bankrupt the nation and bring down the economy just to bring fear and despair on God's people! He cares nothing about the children of darkness - and he'll bring horrible ruin on them in order to see God's people brought down!

Even pastors are not immune to financial fears - they're human like everyone else. A minister recently told me, "I don't preach about certain things because I honestly fear for my job. I dread not being able to feed my family. This is the only work I've ever known - and I can't afford to lose it!"

There Are Other Hurts Too Numerous to Name!

Recently, while in prayer, I cried out to God, "Father, I've got to be honest with You - I'm hurting!" My hurt was not for myself, but for loved ones who are going through a flood of troubles. The Lord spoke this to my spirit: "David, you're not alone in your prayers. Everybody is hurting in one way or another!"

I don't know what your trial is. But hearing about the following has troubled me deeply:

- **In Wisconsin, a minister's wife hurts so badly she doesn't want to live.** She has been battling an obsession for years, and it returns again and again: She steals!

Her last attack was overwhelming. While counting a church offering, she stole \$2,500. She didn't need the money; in fact, she put it in an envelope and hid it on a supermarket shelf.

She confessed, and the money was recovered - but she feels dirty. She doesn't see how the Lord could forgive her, because she's repented so many times before, only to return to her sin. She believes her compulsion is God's judgment on her for sinning repeatedly!

Her husband forgives her and loves her dearly - but he doesn't know how to help. They're both being flooded!

- **A pastor in the Midwest carries a double hurt.** He and his wife took in a young female graduate from a Teen Challenge

Center. As it turned out, the girl was a lesbian - and over the course of a year, she became involved with the pastor's wife. Eventually they ran off together, taking the two children with them.

The pastor was crushed! He went to court and got his children back - but then the church asked for his resignation! They said he had set a bad example because he was not master of his home.

This man has been doubly rejected! He carries the terrible pain of being left by a woman he deeply loves - and the hurt of being cast aside by his church, instead of receiving help from them to bear his burden.

- **In New York City, an elderly woman killed her own daughter - because she couldn't stand to see her ruined anymore by drugs!** The Daily News described the scene at the funeral:

"Daisy Hutson bowed her head yesterday and said a final goodbye to the crack-addicted daughter she has confessed to fatally shooting... The 68-year-old widow pulled herself away from the steel blue casket... (and) said, "That's my kid. Nobody will ever hurt her again... Now it's up to God to judge me."

"Hutson has told police that she shot her only child, Renee, 48, once in the chest on Tuesday night because she could no longer take the lies, theft and irrational violence that ravaged the woman..."

"(Hutson)... and her daughter had enjoyed a close relationship until Renee became addicted to crack when it first hit the city in 1986... Renee was hooked and immediately began withdrawing money from cash machines to support her habit... She lived in a crack house and slowly the drug consumed her. After years of violent arguments and failed tries at rehabilitation, Hutson resorted to a court order of protection against Renee.

"When Renee came to her elderly grandmother's home last week and demanded money to pay drug debts, Daisy Hutson snapped. She said she asked police to enforce the order of protection. When they didn't, she shot her daughter."

How do you describe that mother's hurt? The headline in the Daily News said it this way: "Only God Can Judge Me Now!"

You Can Know Whether Your Troubles and Hurts Are of Your Own Doing - Or of the Devil and His Flood!

There is a way to tell if your flood is caused by your own rebellion. For example, God told Moses that the Israelites would go "a-whoring" after strange gods, forsaking Jehovah:

"Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us?" (DEUT 31:17).

If you're living in outright sin, you can expect God to move in and slap your wrist - and He'll do it out of mercy! Troubles and hurts have befallen many children of God because they love their idols and won't give them up.

But a flood pours out on other believers simply because they seek after Him! One word has occurred repeatedly in my studies of godly men and women throughout history: **suffering!**

Indeed, Jesus said the rain falls on the just and the unjust alike. But He also said that if you're on the Rock, your house will stand - you won't be swept away!

The Greatest Tragedy of These Last Days Is the Forfeited Peace and the Needless Pain That God's People Are Going to Bear!

When I was a boy we sang an old song: "Oh, what peace we often forfeit, Oh, what needless pain we bear, All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer..."

In prayer recently, God whispered into my soul: "No other generation has been given such abundant provision for every need and potential crisis. And yet no other generation has so blatantly rejected My help!"

How God must grieve when His people are being flooded and yet refuse to do the one thing that's necessary: They won't run to Him! They don't hurry into God's presence, because they haven't developed the habit of fellowship with Him. They don't go to Him in prayer to find the resources and power they need to withstand the flood. They haven't built upon the rock of a relationship with Jesus!

For forty years the children of Israel needlessly lived in turmoil, despair, confusion and terrible pain. They tempted God's faithfulness ten times. But they could have lived in the greatest rest and peace possible. God said it was theirs to enter into - and yet they refused!

Instead, an entire generation of lives was wasted in bitterness, fighting, complaining, health and family problems. They never awoke a single day with peace. Instead, they had only heaviness - and they never entered into the rest that was theirs.

I find that absolutely incredible! God promised them, "I'll carry you in My arms, like a father carries a child. I'll go before you!" Israel had a cloud by day and a fire by night to lead them. They had the clearest word of any generation yet: manna falling from heaven, water coming out of a rock - and yet for forty years they continually turned away from their Source! **Yet for all of Israel's stubbornness, we today have sinned in a far greater measure!** You see, God has provided us with something even better - something that never even entered the Israelites' minds. He has given us in these last days abundant glorious promises meant to give us constant peace and joy!

Old Testament believers had only a limited vision of God's resources: *"For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O GOD, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him."* (ISA 64:4).

The apostle Paul quotes this verse in his letter to the Corinthians. And in the next verse he reveals that the greater resources belong to us:

"But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1.COR 2:9-10). "Now we have received... the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." (VERSE 12).

The apostle Peter also said that everything we need has been made available to us: *"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."* (2.PET 1:3).

Here is what God is saying: "Yes, you hurt. You suffer pain, and you are troubled. You are being swamped with things that are over your head and you don't understand. **But I have made abundant provision for you to escape. I have made a way to total victory!"**

Beloved, that victory comes not when your situation changes. Rather, it comes when God makes a great change in you and me - to make us rise above the flood. The flood remains - but it can't hurt us, because He has done something in us that will deliver us!

That way of escape is very clear and simple. God says: **"You have a place to go for relief - you have Someone to talk to!"**

A famous evangelist who was involved in deep sexual sin said after he was exposed, "In all my hurt and struggles with my problems, I had no one to talk to." Beloved, that simply is not true! I'm not putting that brother down - I love him as a servant of God. But there is no such thing as a Christian who has no one to talk to!

Millions of hurting Christians run around looking for a friend or counselor who might have all the answers they need. But how does that make the Lord feel? He stands by the whole time, saying, *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."* (MATT 11:28-29).

Christians have said to me, "You're just like so many other preachers. You're going to tell me, "Go pray about it - go talk to Jesus!" They say this mockingly, as if it's a joke - as if it were something for kids to do! What they're really saying is, "I need something more than prayer - something more than what Scripture can give me!"

Beloved, the natural man cannot comprehend the things of God - only the Holy Ghost knows the mind of the Father. And only the Father knows the root of your problem! If you sit and try to think it through, you'll never get over it.

The only help that even the godliest counselor can give you is to teach you to go to your knees, get into the Lord's presence, seek God with all your heart - and wait on His Spirit to direct you!

Do you have a place where you can go everyday and pour out your heart to the Lord? If you do, then don't neglect to pour out your hurts to Him daily - and leave your problems in the closet with Jesus.

Many who are reading this message right now have never developed a habit of taking everything to Jesus. They just go on hurting - and for every additional hour they spend carrying their grief and pain, they're saying to God: "You have no power! You don't care - You can't help me!" Eventually they will be carried away by the flood - because their faith is not built on the Rock!

There are many such Christians who once attended Times Square Church. At one time they learned about God's dealings and were beginning to grow. But now they don't come anymore - they've grown bitter and angry, and they gossip about the church and its pastors. What has happened to them?

They had a problem - and rather than pour it out to the Lord, they took it to a friend! They unburdened their heart to someone

of a wrong spirit - someone with a gossiping or critical spirit - and they got trapped in a web of spiteful spiders!

They found somebody to sympathize with them - to "side" with them - and instead of learning how to take everything to Jesus and get their minds and spirits healed, they became embittered and hardened. Now they are miserable; their days are spent focused on hurts and problems. They've grown sour and mean, only pretending to be happy - because they never learned to shut themselves in with God daily, and unload every hurt and problem on Him in faith.

"Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD." (JER 17:5). "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is." (VERSE 7). The person whose house is built on sand is the one who confides all to man, He does not lean wholly on the Lord for strength and help!

God's Greatest Testimony To the World In These Final Days of Unrest Will Be Deep-Rooted Believers Who Are a Calm in the Storm!

"He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still." (PSALM 107:29).

Every wind and wave that comes into your life is subject to our Lord! The disciples were on a ship with Jesus, who was asleep in the stern when a storm arose:

"There came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled with water, and were in jeopardy. And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging of the water: and they ceased, and there was a calm." (LK 8:23-24).

Beloved, that is the very heart of this message: A storm came upon them, they were in great trouble,

and they ran to the Master. They cried out to Him. He shut down their storm - and there was a great calm!

"O LORD God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee? Or to thy faithfulness round about thee? Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them." (PSALM 89:8-9).

Yes, many will fall! They will be carried away with the flood. But God is going to have a people in these last days with fixed hearts - not tossed about by every wind and wave of doctrine, not troubled in the storm; but always leaning On Him. Pouring out their hearts to Him. And going about with a great calm!

You see, a calm soul is a "poured out" soul - one who has cried everything out, emptying all in God's presence! David said: *"I poured out my complaint before him; I shewed before him my trouble." (PSALM 142:2).*

I thank God for street-preachers, for those who pass out tracts, and for every witness of the Lord. But the greatest witness in these last days is the man or woman who has been in the presence of Jesus and has come out to face the world with a deep-rooted peace. That person has the face of a settled, trusting soul - steadfast and unmovable!

Are you hurting right now? Go to Jesus, unburden your heart - and keep doing it until you've got it all out. The day will come when the wind dies, the rain stops, the flood vanishes, and the sun begins to shine. And you'll see that your house built on the Lord will be standing! It will not have fallen!

The king who sits Lord of the flood is already on His way. Just a little while longer, and a bright new day will come!

by David Wilkerson
September 28, 1992

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CHRISTIAN ASSEMBLIES INTERNATIONAL, P.O. BOX 888, COFFS HARBOUR NSW 2450, AUSTRALIA