

Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees, "*Ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?*" (MATT 16:3). Christ was saying these religious leaders could predict the weather -- but they couldn't recognize the signs God sent to them!

The same is true of many believers today. All around us, the Lord is pouring out His judgments on the land and yet most Christians do not discern them!

The Bible tells us God never sends judgment on a nation until He first reveals His plans to His servants, the prophets. Indeed, God always raises up men to cry out, warn, and preach repentance to let people know what He is doing. But when there is no response to His warnings, God begins to judge that nation - by sending what are known as corrective judgments!

The prophet Amos named five corrective judgments that fell upon Israel at various times (and, later, all at once). But Israel didn't acknowledge any of them! None brought repentance - none was discerned as a sign of God's displeasure.

You can know that when all five of these judgments fall upon a nation, God is giving a final warning. Five times in Amos 4, God said, "*Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord*" (verses 6, 8-11). In other words, "Time after time, I brought these things upon you, warning you - and yet you would not return to Me!"

I want to show you very clearly that America right now has fallen under five major corrective judgments from God! The Lord has sent these judgments all at

The Monster Flood of '93

What does it mean?

the same time - in hopes that America will return to Him!

Yet if a nation and its people still refuse to acknowledge God, He deems that nation unreachable - and He proceeds to what I call the "dread release." This is the point where no prophet or prayer can stop God's awful wrath!

Ezekiel describes this terrifying "dread release" that happens when a nation goes too far:

"Son of man, when the land sinneth against me by trespassing grievously, then will I stretch out my 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 Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they should deliver but their own souls by their righteousness... They shall deliver neither sons nor daughters; they only shall be delivered, but the land shall be desolate" (EZ 14:13-16).

God was saying, "Even if Noah, Daniel or Job interceded, they wouldn't be able to stop My wrath. They would deliver only themselves - but not even their own families!"

Right now, prayer groups all across America are asking God to send

repentance and revival. They stand on the promise of 2 Chronicles 7:14: "*If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*"

This is indeed a wonderful promise - if only America would heed it! But not one nation since Nineveh has ever received God's corrective judgments as signs. Israel did not repent and seek God. Even under King Josiah, repentance was not genuine, and judgment was only slightly delayed. And neither is America showing the slightest evidence of turning back to God other than a small remnant:

"Yet, behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall he brought forth... and ye shall know that I have not done without cause all that I have done in it, saith the Lord God" (EZ 14:22-23). God said, "There always will be a remnant who read the signs and understand what's happening in the land. And they will know I have a reason for doing it all!"

Let me show you the five corrective judgments that the prophet Amos

said will precede God's dread release. They are at work in our nation right now as God's last, desperate attempts to plead with this people:

1. Cleanness of Teeth - Want of Bread! (Amos 4:6)

When Bill Clinton was still governor of Arkansas, he had a sign in his office that read: "It's the Economy, Stupid!" How prophetic that was! The phrase "cleanness of teeth" means "bare, empty." And "lack of bread" signifies unemployment, inability to provide. Both speak of poverty being "in all your cities!"

In Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28, God warned all nations that **one of His first judgments on a society that turned from Him was unemployment and hard times:**

"When I have broken the staff of your bread" (LEV 26:26). This means, "I will take from you your ability to make a living!"

"You will lack all things" (see Deuteronomy 26:45).

"Thou shalt not prosper in thy ways" (verse 29).

"The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do... because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me" (verse 20).

Think of the increase of wickedness in America - the rise in murder, rape, abortion, homosexual power. Now, think of the growing unemployment: Almost every day a major corporation lays off thousands of workers. Last year IBM said it would lay off 25,000 - but today that number is 150,000!

When President Clinton took office, he promised a million new jobs. But since then we've lost more than 1.5 million jobs. Japan and Germany have had almost zero unemployment. So why is America's unemployment skyrocketing?

Beloved, it is not a Democratic or Republican problem - it is a sin problem! And no president or legislation can take care of it!

I hear people saying, "America has had hard times in the past. We've had depressions before - in 1857, 1872, 1931. Millions were

unemployed during the Great Depression. Multitudes migrated to California looking for work. But that was seventy years ago - and America came back. The economy suffers many down cycles."

No - the truth is, **all those depressions were corrective judgments! In His mercy, God has given us one chance after another, trying to wake us up.** But which corrective chastisement will be the last? Which depression will be so dreadful that our nation stumbles over the brink of collapse? Numerous economists and government leaders are warning this is now a very real possibility.

Dear saint, do you discern God in all of this - or do you see it as merely part of an economic cycle? God is warning, "You're losing your prosperity - you're decaying. Wake up!" *"Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord"* (verse 6).

2. Weather Upheavals - Unexplainable Weather Changes! (Amos 4:7)

"And also I have withholden the rain from you...and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city... one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered" (verse 7).

This verse comes straight out of today's headlines: **Too much rain in one city - no rain in another. Floods in one area - drought nearby.**

As I write this message, America is experiencing what is being called the worst flood in our nation's history. In the Midwest, the Missouri River has overflowed into the Mississippi, destroying thousands of homes, shutting down entire towns and cities. The president surveyed all the flooded areas from his helicopter, and simply shook his head in amazement. The nation's most powerful man could only shrug his shoulders - because there was nothing he could do!

Consider this news-magazine account:

"The Great Flood of '93 is already one of the all-time monsters. It might go down as the worst of all in the U.S. by many measures: (the

area inundated (is) close to 17,000 square miles..., Property damage... estimates skyrocketed in little more than a week from \$500 million to as much as \$8 billion, and the final tally might be higher still..., [As of this writing, it was estimated at \$10 billion.]

"As the Great Flood of '93 recedes, it is likely to leave in its wake a rash of health problems ranging from disease to chemical pollution. Thanks to at least 18 breached sewage plants, microbes have penetrated nearly 800 miles of piping that keeps... Des Moines... residents supplied with drinking water; it will take a month to disinfect the system....

"One Des Moines lady said she and many of her friends are angry at God for all the devastation. Thirty thousand people were displaced, some 10,000 farms swamped, more than 24,000 homes and businesses damaged or destroyed. Flood waters washed out every bridge over the Mississippi between Burlington, Iowa, and Alton, Illinois, a distance of about 250 miles. The vice president... said it was as if another Great Lake had been added to the map of the United States. People in Des Moines said, 'We are tired, worried, and we're trying simply to keep our sanity'" (Time, July 26, 1993).

A radio network reported that people are carrying plastic bottles and containers - anything they can use - to get drinking water from nearby towns. Beloved, this is Amos 4:8 being fulfilled literally! *"So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord."*

Yet while floods ravage the Midwest, the East and South are being plagued with drought. One newspaper reported:

"Farmers in the Southeast have lost an estimated \$500 million in corn, tobacco, soybeans, vegetables, fruit and hay in a crippling drought.... In western South Carolina, just three percent of normal rain-fall has fallen this summer.... Georgia's Agriculture Commissioner said, 'There's hurting in the South, and damage is increasing day by day. It's a disaster...."

"(Farmers) are watching helplessly as nature - in the form of drought and excessive heat - takes their crops. 'The intense heat is just baking them in the fields,' said a South Carolina Farm Bureau expert....

"Upper New England, too, is suffering unusual dry conditions, spark fires and farm problems. Farmers in drought areas have said, 'We'd like to have a little of their rain here, and give them a little of our sun'" (USA Today, July 19, 1993).

God has drawn a line - and you can almost see it on the map! He's saying, "I'll let it rain over here, But twenty miles away there will be total drought!" One radio report said: "A farmer near the flood area complained that half of his farm is under flood, and the other half is in drought. There has been no rain in that area, (only) flood." This is Amos 4:7 being fulfilled! **"One piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered."**

A few years ago I prophesied that drastic weather changes would come upon America as God's judgment. A well-known TV evangelist (who since has fallen) took great offense at what I said. He bellowed, "God is not behind such disasters. God is love - He would not drive people out of their homes and cause such widespread trouble. No - it's just nature having a convulsion!"

This preacher didn't know his Bible! Scripture says clearly: **"And also I have withholden the rain from you... and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city"** (Amos 4:7). Who caused it? God did! And this is by His own testimony!

What about the droughts, you ask? **"The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven it shall come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed"** (DEUT 28:24).

God has always used drastic weather changes as His rod of correction against a sinful society. He destroyed Noah's generation with flooding rains. He rained a grievous hail as judgment on Pharaoh and Egypt. He sent thunder and rain to show His displeasure over Israel's appointing a king. He held back the rain during Ahab's rule, as judgment for idolatry. And Ezekiel prophesied

that at Armageddon God will judge His enemies by sending **"upon the many people...an overflowing rain"** (EZ 38:22).

Where are the men and women of God today who will stand up and say, "God is speaking to us - this is His judgment for our national sins!" I ask you - as you see all these things happening, do you discern the times? **"Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord"** (verse 8).

3. Blasting and Mildew! (Amos 4:9).

"I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: when your gardens and your vineyards... increased the palmerworm devoured them: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord" (verse 9).

"Blasting" here speaks of blight, decay - a destructive fungus caused by a parasite. And "gardens" has the connotation of pleasure gardens and recreational parks. This corrective judgment can be seen in the scores of civic, state and federal parks that have been shut down for lack of funds. They are turning into horrible, overgrown jungles!

"When... your vineyards... increased, the palmerworm devoured them." God also has sent blight, decay and failure to our national productivity. America's once-fruitful farmland now is a pitiful sight to behold, Farmers can't make a living anymore - many are going out of business. Old, abandoned farmhouses sit decaying.

Our manufacturing base is nearly gone as well. America hardly produces anything anymore. Check the names of all your appliances - Sony, Panasonic, Sanyo. Where were they made? All overseas! All we have left in America is a service economy!

"Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord" (verse 9).

4. A Destroying Plague! (Amos 4:10).

"I have sent among you the pestilence [plague] after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain...yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord" (verse 10).

I want to speak to you straightforwardly about AIDS: It is quickly becoming the worst plague in the history of mankind. No one can comprehend how widespread AIDS will be in five or ten years, or how many people it will wipe [out].

Yet one of the saddest aspects of this plague is that the world and the church refuse to recognize AIDS for what it is - a curse from God! Many ministers say, "AIDS is not a curse. God cannot be behind it, because many innocent people are dying from it,"

Please do not misunderstand: I don't believe AIDS is a curse on homosexuals or on drug addicts. But it is a judgment of God upon wicked, godless societies! If you or someone you know is HIV-positive, it doesn't mean God has cursed you. No, it means only that you have come under a blanket curse that has fallen upon our nation and the world as a result of sin. AIDS is a destroying plague that is sweeping over all of mankind!

You might say, as many have, "Brother Wilkerson, what kind of God do you serve, if you can say He is behind AIDS?"

Let me show you from the Scriptures the kind of God I serve. Here is what the Lord says He desires:

"Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he swore unto thy fathers: and he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee... Thou shalt be blessed above all people: there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle. And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee" (DEUT 7:12-15).

This is what God wants for our nation! He desires to take away all sickness, all disease. He says, **"If you'll simply obey Me - if you'll just repent and walk in My counsel - I will prosper you. I will heal your unemployment, I will heal your sicknesses and diseases, I will bless you!"**

But God also warned what would happen if we turned from His commandments:

"If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book... then the Lord will make thy plagues... of long continuance, and sore sicknesses.... Also every sickness and every plague, which is not written in the book of this law. Them will the Lord bring upon thee, until thou be destroyed. And ye shall be left few in number... because thou wouldst not obey the voice of the Lord thy God" (DEUT 28:58-62). Read it carefully: "Every plague will the Lord bring upon thee!"

God warned, "I won't bring just these plagues. I'll also bring others, diseases not yet seen by mankind, until you are destroyed by them - because you did not obey Me!"

How many millions have to die before we'll discern AIDS as God's judgment? How long will it take before leaders and churches wake up? Research will not end AIDS - because it's a sin problem! Our cure will come only through repentance - through people turning from wicked life-styles. Nothing else will stop it! Even with a medical miracle, AIDS would break out in an even worse form. *"Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord"* (verse 10).

5. Selective Calamities, Tempered With Mercy! (Amos 4:11)

"I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning" (verse 11). God was saying, in other words, "I came suddenly and devastated certain parts of your nation, But before it could destroy you completely, I pulled you out of the fire!"

Think about how various regions of our nation have been visited with sudden calamities in recent years:

Last year, most weather bureaus were too late in reporting the violent hurricane that came suddenly upon Florida. It wiped out whole towns, causing billions of dollars in damage. There was much death and devastation.

The destructive earthquake in San Francisco crumbled buildings, leveled houses, caved in roads and bridges. People were killed, the entire city shaken.

Tornadoes have swept through the South and Southwest, leaving wide trails of destruction.

In each of these disasters and others, God plucked us out of judgment at the last moment. Thousands more people could have been killed in the Midwest's floods. Hundreds could have died in the World Trade Center's bombing. But we're like a brand that God has pulled out of the fire!

Indeed, **every such calamity has been tempered with His mercy. You see, God is saying to us, "You've seen My power and might - I even have destroyed some of you. But each time I plucked you out of the fire! I didn't want to go any farther - because I was hoping you'd get the message!"**

Each disaster was a call for repentance - because God still hopes for a people who will turn back to Him! *"Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord"* (verse 11).

Finally, God Warns of a Mysterious, Unnamed Judgment to Be Sent! (Amos 4:12)

"Therefore thus Will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel" (verse 12).

I prefer the Septuagint's translation of this verse: "Prepare to call upon thy God," God is saying, in essence, "Up to now, you have closed your eyes to these calamities, You have neither understood, nor discerned, nor heeded. **Now I must send upon you such powerful judgment that you will be forced to call on Me!**"

I do not know what this great, unnamed judgment will be. But the Bible gives us a clue: It is nearly always connected with fire. And, indeed, **fiery destruction has come to every empire that has reproached the Lord!**

Sodom burned. Rome burned. And Peter said, *"The earth (is)... kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men"* (2.PET 3:7).

Beloved, a great fire is coming. But I believe many lesser fires are coming soon, as warnings of the final holocaust!

For several years I have warned of riots sweeping across America: a thousand fires in New York City, fires burning in every major city. I still believe the worst riots are ahead of us - and a major race war is coming that will produce these fires.

In mid July, the FBI broke up a ring of skinheads who had plotted to set off a race war in Los Angeles. They had planned to burn down the oldest black church in Los Angeles, murder Rodney King and prominent civil rights leaders, and fire-bomb both black and white neighborhoods.

God is warning us: We are going to be judged by fire! Six years ago, I warned of fires burning out of control in Middle Eastern oil fields. After Desert Storm, over 600 oil wells were burning out of control, set aflame by the Iraqis. **When American cities are burning out of control, will this nation repent? No! "Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord."**

What Has All of This to Do With You and Me?

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God" (2.PET 3:11,12).

These corrective judgments on America are all signs that the end is near. I ask you - in the past year of calamities, have you become stronger in your walk with Jesus? Are you more awake, growing closer to the Lord? Does your heart long for Him more than it did a year ago?

This is no time to be asleep - no time to quit longing for His coming. And the Lord has told me to sound the warning!

Perhaps your soul is bogged down in your business, your marriage, in gaining financial security. You no longer have time for the Lord - you don't seek His face, Your heart has grown cold.

Beloved, all these signs that God is sending are not His wrath - they are His mercy! He is saying to the apathetic, "Wake up! Because if you don't, you're

going to sleep your way into hell!

What will it be like to stand before the judgment seat of Christ and face His holiness? He has said, "Prepare to call upon your God!" Are you calling upon Him in consistent prayer?

If you are a Christian and yet don't understand or discern the times, pray: "God, give me an

understanding." He is wanting to open your eyes to the times!

But if you do understand all He is saying, then you are a part of His knowing, growing remnant. You will faithfully warn your brothers and sisters to wake up and listen as He speaks. And you won't be asleep when midnight comes, Instead, you'll be ready to face all that comes - with confidence in Jesus!

A final word: WHERE ARE THE MINISTERS WHO OUGHT TO BE SHOWING THE PEOPLE THAT THESE CALAMITIES ARE GOD'S JUDGMENT UPON AMERICA'S SINS? God - send us more fearless, prophetic voices!

by David Wilkerson
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