

Christ in Prophecy

Sermon 12: “God and the Weather, Part 1”

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Opening

Dr. Reagan: Is there any relationship between natural disasters and the sins of our Nation? Or to put it another way, could natural disasters be remedial judgments from God, calling us as a Nation to repentance? For a Biblical insight on this important question, stay tuned.

Part 1

Dr. Reagan: Greetings in the name of Jesus our blessed hope. I’m Dave Reagan, Founder and Director of Lamb & Lion Ministries. In this program and the one following next week, we’re going to examine a very controversial question about whether or not God sends remedial judgments upon nations when they rebel against Him. For example, was Hurricane Katrina simply an accident of nature, a product of natural weather processes, or was it a special storm sent by God to call this Nation to repentance? I address this important question in a presentation that I made to a Steeling the Mind Conference that was held in C'oure D'Alene, Idaho in the fall of 2005. Here now is an excerpt from that presentation.

Dr. Reagan Presentation

I represent a Ministry called Lamb and Lion Ministries. It’s a Bible prophecy ministry. We call it Lamb and Lion because those are the two great prophetic images of the Messiah in the Old Testament, the Suffering Lamb – The Conquering Lion. I was on the radio for 22 years before we began our television program and you are going to find out I can talk fast. I would get to the end of the program and I would be really rolling. I’d say, “Write Lamb and Lion Ministries, Post Office Box so and so” and we would get letters addressed to the strangest places. We got letters addressed to “Land of Lions Ministries,” “Leg of

Lamb Ministries.” Almost every day, one addressed to “Lemmon and Lime Ministries.” My all time favorite was, “Lame and Blind Ministries.”

I thought, “Man that guy is really hard of hearing, but he wasn’t; he didn’t like the program. He disagreed with us and so that was his comment, “We were lame and blind.”

Well, my topic for this particular presentation is a rather unusual one: God, Judgment, and the Weather. Let’s pray. Father I come to you in the name of Jesus and I pray for Your anointing as I make this rather unusual presentation. I pray Lord that You will guide my thoughts and my words and I pray that You will give to the audience listening ears, and I pray Lord that through what I have to say that all of us will be drawn into a deeper relationship with You. We love You Lord, we dedicate this day to you and we pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Well, I want to begin with a quotation from Jesus that’s contained in Luke 21, beginning there with verse 11. “Jesus, during the last week of His life, sitting on the Mount of Olives, said to His disciples, ‘There will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines. And there will be terrors and great signs from Heaven.’” Speaking of the signs of the end times, the Bible is full of what we call, “signs of the times.” These are signs that we are told to watch for in the end times that will point to the season of the Lord’s return, so that we can know the general season.

I studied them for many, many years, and I’ve tried to get a handle on them by putting them into categories, and these are the categories that I have come up with. First are the signs of Nature. God has always worked through signs of nature. He continues to do so today. We’ll come back to this in a moment. This is the category of signs that are least respected. Second are the signs of society. The Bible says that society is going to go full circle. That it’s going to become as immoral and evil as it was in the days of Noah, and then the Lord Jesus Christ will return. There are the spiritual signs, both negative and positive. The negative ones are very, very negative. They are things like the

persecution of Christians in the end times, the Church being assaulted by heresy and apostasy. Things like doctrines of demons. People wanting to have their ears tickled. Cults, false prophets, false Christ's, it goes on and on and on.

But thank God there are also positive spiritual signs such as the preaching of the Gospel all over the world – a great pouring out of the Holy Spirit in the end times. The Bible always pictures two outpourings of the Holy Spirit – the early rains and the latter rains, using the rains of Israel as an example. The early rains at Pentecost the latter rains in the end times after the re-establishment of the Nation of Israel. And we have seen that happen as the Gospel has been proclaimed literally all over the world. So we have both the positive and negative spiritual signs.

Then there are the signs of World Politics. Before I went into the Ministry in 1980, I taught international law and politics for 20 years at the University level. And so this was an area of special interest to me. The Bible predicts that in the end times there's going to be a certain configuration of nations that will come together that, that Israel will be re-established, that the Arab nations will come against Israel, that there will be a menacing power to the far north, that the Old Roman Empire will come back together, and on and on it goes. And we are the first generation ever to live when all of those particular signs have been fulfilled.

There are also signs of technology. I refer to these because there are many prophecies in the Bible that no one has ever understood until our generation. We are the only generation that's ever lived that's understood certain prophecies, and the reason we understand them is because of technological developments. A good example is in Revelation 11, where it says two great witnesses of God are going to be the conscience of the world during the first three and a half years of the Tribulation. And then it says that when the Antichrist goes to Jerusalem and exposes himself as, and declares himself to be god in the flesh, that the first thing he will do is kill those two witnesses and it says their bodies will lie in the streets of Jerusalem for 3 ½ days and the whole world will look

upon them. And then as the whole world is watching, they will suddenly come to life and be raptured. We're the only generation that's ever understood that prophecy. No other generation has ever been able to understand how the whole world could look upon two bodies lying in the streets of Jerusalem. Today we read it and we don't even think about it. All you have to do is point a TV camera at two bodies lying in the streets of Jerusalem. Zap it up to a satellite and the whole world can watch those two bodies lying in the streets of Jerusalem.

And finally there are the signs of Israel. The signs of Israel are the most important of all. They are more important than all the rest put together. And there is a reason for that. It's because Israel is God's prophetic time clock. Israel is God's prophetic time clock. I don't know if you've ever thought about that or not, but when God talks about the future, He often uses Israel as His time clock. He will say, "I'm going to do this in the future and I'm going to do that when this happens to Israel. So watch Israel. When that happens, this will happen. When that happens, this will happen. Jesus did that in the last week of His life. Sitting on the Mount of Olives He said, "Watch the city of Jerusalem. It will fall to the Gentiles. The Jews will be scattered all over the world and the day will come when the Jews will be re-gathered to the city of Jerusalem, and when they are back in Jerusalem, you will know that I am about to return." They returned on June the 7th, 1967. He said, "Watch Israel, watch Israel." Israel is God's prophetic time clock. And so we are to watch Israel. There are four major prophecies about Israel in the end times and we are going to talk more about those this evening. One is the re-gathering of the Jewish people from the four corners of the Earth in unbelief, which occurred during the 20th Century and continues today. The second is the re-establishment of the State of Israel which occurred on May the 14th, 1948. The third is the re-occupation of Jerusalem, which occurred June the 7th, 1967 and the fourth is the re-focusing of world politics upon Israel upon on one issue. Zechariah 12 says, "The whole world will come against Israel over one issue, the control of Jerusalem, which is exactly where we are today. And the fulfillment of these four prophecies clearly indicates that we are living on

the threshold of the Tribulation, that we are living on borrowed time that Jesus is at the very gates of Heaven waiting for His Father's command to return.

Now...the category of signs that is least respected are the signs of nature. And the reason they have so little respect there's two reasons: First of all, a conceptual reason, a conceptual reason. When you start talking about signs of nature, even believing Christians will come up and say, "Oh, come on David, there have always been signs of nature, there's always been earthquakes, there's always been hurricanes, there's always been tsunamis, there's always been tornados. What else is new? Come on, let's get serious about this." Well, when they say that, they ignore something. Jesus said in Matthew 24:8, "that the signs of nature would be like birth pangs." I've never experienced those. I had to ask my wife what that was all about and she told me, "Well, dummy, the closer you get to the birth of a child, the birth pangs increase in two ways. They increase in frequency and they increase in intensity." They become more frequent and more intense. And suddenly it occurred to me that's what Jesus is saying here. There will be more earthquakes, more intense; more hurricanes, intense; more tsunamis, more intense; more tornados, more intense. As we get to the time of His return.

There's a more serious objection to the signs of nature. It's philosophical in nature. And that is that we in the western world have been brainwashed by what I would call "modern scientific rationalism." Scientific rationalism says, "If you can't see it, if you can't weigh it, if you can't dissect it, if you can't measure it, it does not exist." And we've bought that hook, line and sinker. The Bible teaches there's a whole realm of reality that cannot normally be perceived with the senses. It's the supernatural realm, the realm of demons, the realm of the angels the realm of the Holy Spirit. And yes, sometimes it is manifested and we can see it with our senses, but most of the times we cannot. But that realm is just as real as it can possibly be. You know, when you go to Asia, Africa, and Latin America and you talk about signs of nature and God working through signs of nature and signs of nature having some sort of supernatural importance or significance,

they don't have any trouble with that at all. It's only in the western world where we've been brainwashed by this scientific approach that we have difficulty believing that God really works through signs of nature.

Well folks, we need to face up to the fact that the Bible, from beginning to end teaches that God often speaks through signs of nature. Sometimes He uses signs to underline, to emphasize a particular event. For example, the birth of Jesus – a special sign was given in the Heavens, a special sign. I believe it was the Shekinah glory of God, but a special sign was put in the Heavens to emphasize, to underline the importance of this birth. When Jesus was crucified, there were three hours of darkness and a special earthquake. And we are told that when Jesus returns, there's going to be the greatest earthquake in all of history. We are told that every island will be moved, that every valley will be lifted up, that every mountain will be lowered, that the plane of the earth will be just as even as it can be and that Jerusalem will be lifted up to be the highest point on planet earth, a great, great earthquake to emphasize the importance of the return of Jesus.

Now, more often, God uses signs of nature as remedial judgments to call nations to repentance. Both the Bible and history attest to the fact that God has a pattern for working with nations. First of all, the Bible teaches beyond a shadow of a doubt that God is the one who raises up nations and He is the one who sets their boundaries, and He is the one who gives them purpose and that when a nation begins to rebel against Him, the first thing He will do is raise up prophetic voices to call the nation to repentance. And when I say prophetic voices, I'm not talking about people with supernatural knowledge of the future; I'm talking about the gift of prophecy as it operates today. And the way it operated today is that God gives to certain individuals supernatural ability to take the word of God and apply it to contemporary events. When you find a person who can take the word of God and preach about abortion or preach about the national debt, or preach about same sex marriage, that's a gift of prophecy. And there are people who have that gift. And God raises up prophetic voices to call a nation to repentance. These are people who look at the Word of God and they see the

nation is in violation of the Word of God. And they know from the Word of God what's going to happen, not because they have supernatural knowledge of the future, because they know that God deals with nations according to a certain pattern, and that He will deal with that nation if they don't repent. And so they call the nation to repentance. If the nation refuses to repent, then God sends remedial judgments. He will send one after another after another. These can take many forms. It can be economic calamity, it can be military defeat, it can be weather phenomenon. But God will send remedial judgments. And finally, if the nation sets its jaw against God and refuses to repent, God will then deliver the nation from judgment to destruction. The Bible says over and over – it uses a very special term there, it says that God does this, “when the wound becomes incurable.” That's used in nearly all the prophets. When the wound becomes incurable is when God moves a nation from judgment to destruction.

Now, there are examples of remedial judgments all through the Bible, and of course the first ones that come to mind are the plagues that God put upon Egypt. Plague after plague after plague calling Pharaoh to repentance, calling Pharaoh to bend his knee and give in to what God had ordered through Moses. And finally he did.

And then when the children of Israel got ready to enter the Promised Land, there was a “Land use covenant.” We are going to talk more about it this evening. And God said through this land use covenant, “This is your land, it's for you to use. If you are faithful to Me, I'll give you certain blessings, but if you are unfaithful, if you, for example, intermarry with the women of that land and you start worshipping idols, then here's what I'm going to do to you, I'm going to put curse after curse after curse on you.” And He lists all those curses, there's a tremendous number of curses. He talks about, “your children will become rebellious, there will be an epidemic of divorce.” He talks about economic failure. He talks about military defeat and He also talks about weather phenomenon. He said there will be crop failures, there will be pestilence and there will be drought, if you are not faithful to Me.

I think of Elijah and Ahab. Elijah confronted Ahab and said, "You are leading this nation to worship Baal. There is only one true God, Yahweh. I'm going to prove it to you! I'm going to speak and it will not rain until I speak again." And he spoke. And for three and one half years it did not rain, until he came back and spoke again. He, you know, in Texas people would just shake their heads and say, "Man that guy was a great weather forecaster, wish we had him on our station," you know. No! This was a supernatural phenomenon of God.

Or take for example Joel. Joel was the prophet about a locust invasion. You read the book of Joel it's all about the worst thing that could happen to an agricultural society, a locust invasion that stripped the place bare. I mean these locusts ate the bark off the trees, the clothes off the clothesline. They had nothing left to offer to God, nothing to feed themselves with, nothing to feed anybody else with. And they started wringing their hands, "Oh what bad luck, what bad luck." And Joel gets up and says; "I've got news for you. It has nothing to do with luck. God sent the locusts, and if you don't repent, God's going to send something worse than locusts, He's going to send an army!" And they died laughing. And you know what God did? He sent the army. And they were defeated.

Or consider Haggai, a man probably in his mid 80's, a very elderly man. I call him the Harry Truman of the Old Testament. He was a man who spit bullets, spit words like bullets. And the children of Israel had gone into Babylonian captivity, God in His grace and mercy had brought them back to the land. They immediately laid the foundation of the Temple, and then lost interest! And for 16 years the Temple foundation stood there bare, while they built their houses and paneled their houses. Finally God raised up this prophet and He came out one day and he said, "I've got news for you, listen to me, have you noticed that every time you plant your crops the root rot gets them. And notice that when you replant them a flood comes and when you replant them, the hail comes, and when you replant them a windstorm comes. He says, "Did you know that God sent every one of those disasters and He's sending them to you to call you to repentance? Get your

priorities in order. Rebuild the Temple of God.” And for once people paid attention. They dropped everything and went over there and rebuilt the Temple and God began to bless them once again.

Folks, there are examples of remedial punishments of God all through the Bible. And some people though say, “Well, you know, God just doesn’t do that.” Well, let me show you this cartoon. I forgot about this. This is very funny. I ran across this recently. That’s Haggai in the middle walking between two guys and they are walking past the empty foundation of the Temple and in the background is a lightning strike, hailstorms, tornados, and floods. And one of the guys is saying, “Well now, the way I see it Haggai, if God was really angry with us, He would let us know. I mean if He was really, really angry. And I’m sure that Haggai turned to them and said, “Duh.” You know, I mean what would he have to do? OK.

Some people protest and they say, “Oh no, no, no, no. God doesn’t judge nations any longer because we now live in the age of grace.” Well, the first problem I have with that is that term implies that there was a previous time when there was no grace. God has always been a God of grace. And there has never been any other way of salvation except by grace through faith. In Malachi 3:6 we are told, “God does not change.” In Hebrews 13:8 we are told, “God is the same yesterday, today, and forever.” Some try to counter that by blaming all disasters on Satan. They say, “Oh, no, no, this all has to do with Satan. He’s the one that brings all this...” But in doing so they overlook the fact that God is sovereign.

Here is the real description of God in Nahum, chapter 1, if you want to find a balanced description, look at verse 7, “The Lord is good. He is a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knows those who take refuge in Him.” That’s the God of grace, mercy and love. That’s the God we all love. That’s the God we all want to hear about. That’s the God we want to hear preached about. But God has another side to Him. Yes He’s a God of love, grace and mercy, but He’s also a God of perfect righteousness, justice and holiness. And

Nahum talks about that, look at verses 2 and, “A jealous and avenging God is the Lord, the Lord is avenging and wrathful. The Lord is slow to anger and great in power. And the Lord will by no means leave the guilty unpunished.” This is not somebody you fool around with. Our God is not a cosmic Teddy Bear.

Well, as I say, some people try to counter this by saying, “Well, it’s all due to Satan.” But in doing so they overlook an important fact and that is that God is sovereign folks. God is sovereign, and there are many examples of His sovereignty in the Bible. Let me mention two. One is the example of Job. When Satan got ready to touch Job, what did he have to do? He had to go and say, “God would you let me touch him? Please let me touch him?” And God said, “I’ll tell you what, I’ll let you touch him, but here’s what you can do, and here’s what you cannot do.” Even when God allowed him to touch Job He put parameters upon Satan because Satan is not sovereign.

Or, consider this I don’t know if you’ve ever thought about this, the example of temptation. In the Bible we are told point blank, “God does not tempt.” But in the Lord’s Prayer we are told to pray, “Lord, lead us not into temptation.” How do you reconcile that? How do you reconcile the point blank statement, “God does not tempt” and yet the statement that, we are to pray, “Lead us not into temptation.” Well, I know how to reconcile it. Satan is the tempter, but Satan cannot tempt you unless God allows him. Satan is the tempter, but God must allow the temptation. That’s why we pray, “Lead us not into temptation.” Again, God is sovereign and nothing happens that He does not allow either in His perfect will or His permissive will. For example, it is the perfect will of God for all people to be saved. But in His permissive will, He allows people to be lost. He has a permissive will and He has a perfect will, and nothing happens outside that. And thus in the Bible, all natural disasters are attributed to God. The Bible writers don’t even hesitate to do that, because whether Satan was the one who sent the storm or not, God was the one that allowed it.

This brings us to some difficult questions. Are all natural calamities a product of man's sin? The answer is yes, absolutely. All natural calamities are a product of man's sin. You know why I say that? Because when the creation was originally created, it was created perfect. There was no such thing as tornados, hurricanes, cyclones, tsunamis. None of that existed. It was when man sinned that God put the curse upon the creation. When He put the curse upon the creation, the perfect creation was thrown askew. And one of the things that happened were natural calamities. The Bible says that when Jesus returns, the curse will be lifted. We're going to spend eternity living in perfect bodies on a perfect earth and there will never be single hurricane, never a tornado, there will never be one natural disaster because the curse will not be here any more.

That leads us to the second question. Do all natural calamities represent remedial judgments of God? And my answer is no. Most are products of natural weather processes. This leads us then to the third question. How then can we know when a natural calamity is a remedial judgment? Well it's not always easy to know. One thing I would point to is the timing of it. How does this calamity relate to the sins of a nation in general or to a particular sin of the nation? Another would be the magnitude. When God sends remedial judgments, they are of great magnitude because He wants to keep – get people's attention. And perhaps the most important one of all would be this: God's spirit witnessing to the spirit's of those with the gift of prophecy. Romans 8 says, "God's Spirit witnesses to our spirit." And to those who have the gift of prophecy, those who have the ability to take God's Word and apply it to current events, God will witness to their spirits and suddenly when people who have that gift all over the place are saying, "Hey, this event is a remedial judgment" we had better pay attention, because God is prompting them to make those comments.

Our own Nation is a good example of what I am talking about. We have been blessed as no other nation that has ever existed, except the Nation of Judah. That's the only other nation that's ever been blessed like this nation. And yet in the 1960's, this Nation began to thumb its nose at God as a cultural revolution was launched and very quickly we

descended into a cesspool, a cesspool of sexual promiscuity, a cesspool of drug abuse, abortion on demand, legalized gambling, rampant blasphemy, and a flood of pornography. The lifestyle of hedonism swept our Nation and we ended up calling good evil, and evil good. And God responded by raising up prophetic voices all across this Nation to call this nation to repentance.

One of the most important was the voice of Dave Wilkerson, the pastor of Times Square Church in New York City, who in the early 70's began to speak out very forcibly about the sins of this Nation and warning that if we did not repent, God was going to send judgment after judgment, after judgment. He didn't have any supernatural knowledge of the future; he just knew the Word of God. And he knew that when a Nation was blessed like ours and rebelled against God, that God was going to put judgments upon it. But when we ignored the prophetic voices, God responded by putting remedial judgments like the Vietnam War, like the AIDs epidemic, like the plague of sexually transmitted diseases, like the outbreak of homosexuality, and also natural disasters – quakes, floods, tornados, even an incredible volcanic eruption that you know of well in this area, all of which culminated, I believe in the attacks of 9/11. I believe this was God's major wakeup call to this Nation, to call this Nation to wake up, to call this Nation to repent of its immorality.

Have you ever stopped to think that we are a far greater threat to the world than the Soviet Union has ever been, because we are the moral polluter of planet Earth? Everywhere I go on this planet, I just got back from China, everywhere I go, if you turn on the TV set in the room where you are, anywhere in the world, you know what you are going to see? You are going to see the most immoral and the most violent American movies and American television shows. We are the moral polluter of planet Earth, and God is going to hold us responsible for it. I don't think it was any accident that on 9/11 what was attacked were two symbols of American pride. What is it America takes pride in? Its money and its power. And the two symbols of money and power were attacked. God sent us a wakeup call and unfortunately, we are like the guy who's very sleepy and

when the alarm goes off, we roll over and hit the snooze alarm, and I think we went right back to sleep.

Closing

Dr. Reagan: Next week, the Lord willing, we will continue with this presentation, and at that time, I will look specifically at hurricane Katrina and I will try to show that it was a remedial judgment of God, placed upon this Nation because of our mistreatment of Israel. Here now are some resources to help you better understand how God deals with Nations.

Well folks, that's our program for this week. I hope it's been a blessing to you and I hope you'll be back with us a week from now when we continue this presentation about God and the Weather. At that time we'll look specifically at the prophetic significance of Hurricane Katrina. In the meantime, I'd like you to invite you to visit our website at lamblion.com. You'll find a great variety of articles about all aspects of Bible prophecy. The site also contains some of our video programs that you can watch on line. Until next week, this is Dave Reagan speaking for Lamb and Lion Ministries, saying, "Look up, be watchful, for our redemption is drawing near."

End of Program