

*Tomorrow's News  
Today*

**TRANSCRIPT (12-11)  
January 18, 2012  
WHY NATURAL DISASTERS?**

**VOICEOVER:**

The following is a paid presentation of *The Key of David* brought to you by *The Philadelphia Church of God*.

*The Key of David* with Gerald Flurry.

**GERALD FLURRY:**

Greetings, everyone. Why all these natural disasters? Or are they really natural disasters? And why all of these terrible weather upsets that we have to endure? What is behind all of these disasters like this? The Associated Press said that “2010 was the year that the Earth struck back.” The Earth struck back, and then came 2011, and in many ways it was even worse, and we have the statistics to prove that to you. Do you remember the 9.0 earthquake in Japan that wrecked nuclear facilities, and did such great damage to that land and really shocked the world in many ways? It seems like that every few weeks we have some kind of a release from the Earth in the form of violent earthquakes or tornados or tsunamis or droughts or flooding. Massive weather upsets, wildfires, all kinds of things like that, and that brings enormous human suffering. It wrecks property and homes and lives, and just causes a great amount of suffering. And why does God allow all that suffering? If He is a God of love, well, then why does God allow that? And it’s even getting more intense all the time so we do need to be concerned about it.

Jesus Christ came to this Earth about two thousand years ago, and talked about these disasters that we see in our news almost every week, it seems. He had a lot to say about that, but He didn’t call them natural disasters. He had a different name for them, and I think all Christians should have. We have a booklet that’s almost a new booklet on “Why Natural Disasters?”, and we’ll offer that to you at the end of this program, and it will really fill in all the details that I don’t have time to talk about today.

But let me take you first of all to Matthew 24 and verse 6 and 7. “**And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: (7) For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in [different] places.**”

Now, this is Christ, Himself talking, and those famines and pestilences come as a result of droughts and floods, and there are ferocious earthquakes, He says, that would be coming on the scene and intensifying in this end time, the time that we're living in today.

Verse 8 says, "**All these are the beginning of sorrows.**"

The beginning of sorrows. I believe we're past most of those, and we're now in the end segment of sorrows, and certainly I think we'll see that in 2012, but there's a reason for all that, and there's a solution to these things. If we will just look into the scriptures we can see why there are massive disasters like this that just keep coming and coming and intensifying all the time.

But I want to read you something here that I think most people do not understand, and it really gives meaning to all of this if you have the big overview. It just makes it really clear. "The phrase 'the beginning of sorrows,'" the Anchor Bible says "literally means the beginnings of birth pangs." It says, "an almost technical term for the sufferings which would immediately precede a new age, the age of the Messiah's reign."

So Matthew drew us a picture here, and he said, well, really when you think about these beginning of sorrows and the end segment of those sorrows, it's really, literally birth pangs. It's bringing about the birth of a new age full of prosperity, and joy, and happiness because the Messiah IS going to be ruling this Earth. Now, Matthew sort of compared that, the Earth, to a mother giving birth to a child. But here all these bad events that are happening and intensifying are actually a sign of a new world that is about to come upon this Earth that is going to be a totally different world, and there will be peace all over the Earth, and there will be joy in the lives of everybody and prosperity galore. That's what this is all about, and even the bad news, in that sense, is a sign of the greatest possible news that we could hear.

Let me just give you a few statistics if you think, well, as some scoffers would say, that it's always been this way, but it has not. That's not true and you can prove that to yourself, and let me read this to you, just a little bit of information about what has happened in the last couple of years. "Within the United States, for example, the Federal Emergency Management Agency reports that in the thirty-seven years between 1953 and 1989 an average of twenty-three MAJOR disasters were declared per year. In the 1990s that average nearly DOUBLED to forty-two major disasters. Almost fifty percent more. Then the decade that followed, from 2000 to 2009, besides seeing that annual figure leap up yet again to fifty-six, brought some of the most destructive natural disasters in recorded history across the globe. Earthquakes alone killed more than 780,000 people," and then it goes on to talk about all the other destruction. But then there was another increase of twenty-five percent more.

Is it the same today as it's always been? Well, no, it isn't, and these statistics clearly make that understandable. "The year 2010 began in horrifying fashion with a catastrophic earthquake in Haiti on January 12 that killed hundreds of thousands of people and left over a million homeless. Deadly quakes also hit China, Indonesia, Chile, and Turkey. A typical year sees sixteen earthquakes of at least 7.0 magnitude, but 2010, one of the most seismically violent in decades, saw twenty-two, increased from sixteen," which was the average, "up to twenty-two in 2010."

And then, "In the United States, the Federal Emergency and Management Agency (FEMA) declared more disasters in 2010 than ever, nearly two-and-one-half times the annual average." Nearly two-and-one-half times the annual average. Now, something is going on in this world, something that we ought to be concerned about. And Jesus Christ prophesied every bit of it. He prophesied it, and I read to you one of those prophecies in Matthew 24.

They talk here about "The peaceful years of the twenty-three major disaster declarations in the U.S. looked to be over. 2010 saw eighty-one of them, a major disaster every four-and-one-half days. The world's biggest reinsurer, Swiss Re, estimated that worldwide disasters in 2010 cost three times more than the year before totaling nearly a quarter of a million dollars. 'This was the year the Earth struck back,' wrote the Associated Press."

So you can't really deny these statistics, and if you want to prove this to yourself not only from the Bible, using the Bible, but also using these statistics that are there for all of us to see. People can scoff all they want, but these are stats that we can prove to ourselves and that really do reveal quite a story. I mean, these grisly disasters got even worse in 2011; that's certainly the statistic we need to be very much concerned about as well.

Christchurch, New Zealand, had a terrible earthquake that destroyed a big part of that city, and in April in the U.S., "There were more than 600 tornadoes shredded the U.S., shattering the previous April record of 267." So you can see we're just having records shattered time and time and time again. We hear them say it all the time, that record was shattered or broken. What does it all mean? We saw Texas suffer its worst drought in over a hundred years, and that caused a lot of suffering and still is. It's never really ended. At the same time farms in Missouri were being flooded and drowned.

Does that have anything to do with Bible prophecy? Oh, it does, and I'll show you in a moment just how much it does have to do with that, but you see again, this is not commonplace; these are history-making events, and we hear expressions like "once in a lifetime," or "never happened before," and on and on it goes. What does it all mean?

Well, let's turn to a scripture over in II Chronicles 7, verses 13 and 14, and I just talked to you about a new booklet last week that shows this is ALSO an end-time prophetic book, believe it or not, and you can prove that as well. But God says here that, "If I shut up heaven that there be no rain," God does that, Himself. Why? "or if I command the locusts

to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; (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.”

What a beautiful scripture that is! And what a beautiful PROMISE that is from God! He says, “Look, if you’ll do this I’ll heal your land.”

Let me read to you an example where that really happened, and very recently. “In 2007, Southeastern Australia was suffering from a crushing decade-long drought. The region’s agriculture was particularly hard hit. What did Prime Minister John Howard do about it?” Notice this, “‘It’s very serious. It’s unprecedented in my lifetime, and I really feel very deeply for the people affected,’ he said. ‘So we should all literally and without any irony pray for rain over the next six to eight weeks.’” So he directed them to pray in this secularist world, and the following week the ten-year drought was broken. The following week after he asked all of his people to pray. One third-generation sheep and grain farmer said, “This is the best opening autumn break rain we have had for ten to twelve years.”

So that was a MIGHTY MIRACLE in this modern age, but do we have leaders today that will stand up in America and Britain and Jerusalem, and ask their people to pray about very serious problems like that? Do we have that kind of leadership in our land today? Well, those kind of heartfelt prayers really do get results if we’re trusting God and taking these things seriously.

But has Australia already forgotten that great miracle? In 2010 Australia suffered under the worst flooding EVER. Three years later, the worst flooding ever! Well, maybe they stopped praying. Maybe they stopped taking God seriously. That’s the way it usually happens. We’ll get excited for a little while, and then we get back to our old ways and often sinful ways, and then the problems come again—the massive weather upsets or disasters of some kind that we call “natural” disasters, and they’re anything BUT natural, usually.

We need to be learning lessons. Australia and those people should have learned from that mighty miracle. When they had a strong leader that had the courage to ask the people to pray before God and without any irony or any nonsense and trust God, and God responded and broke the drought, and they had the greatest rain they’d had in ten to twelve years, according to this one person.

Does God really work through these disasters? Notice Amos 4 and verse 7, “And also I have withholden the rain from you, when *there were* yet three months to the harvest: 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.”

See, there it is—raining in one city, drought in another. Now, that’s an end-time prophecy,

I'm telling you. We can prove it to you if you want to look into it. Just ask us for the Amos booklet and it will certainly prove that to you.

But verse 8 talks about God causes it because we have not returned to Him; that's why these things happen, He says, because we haven't returned to Him. We've forgotten, let's say, what happened in 2007, or forgotten all these other catastrophes. And then we'll kind of slip back into that reasoning, perhaps, that, "Well, I guess it's always been this way." No, it has not! It has not! Everything proves that. Certainly Bible prophecy does. That's the truth! And look, this rain in one city and drought in another is right out of the book of Amos—an end-time prophecy for this world, and especially the nations of Israel. The nations of Israel.

You can read Revelation 11, verses 3 through 6, where God's two witnesses actually have control or power to control the weather, to make it rain or not rain. Well, God certainly controls the weather if He wants to, and He uses it to punish people for their sins. There are many prophecies in the Bible that tell you that. But these men had power that God gave them.

After the Asian tsunami in December 2004, which killed 225,000 people, the Sunday Telegraph printed this headline: "Archbishop of Canterbury admits 'that makes me doubt the existence of God.'" Here's a man that leads some seventy million people, or did at that time, and he said, they're paraphrasing him, "The Asian tsunami disaster should make all Christians question the existence of God." Well, it doesn't make ME question the existence of God. When I look at the prophecies it makes me realize God really does exist! And everything is coming to pass EXACTLY as He said. I wonder if he's read his Bible. I wonder if he really KNOWS what's in the Bible. And he does have the responsibility, whether he realizes it or not, to tell the people what is in the Bible; that's why Christian ministers are here, isn't it? What other purpose would they serve as far as the vanguard of their work? What else?

We ought to know about the existence of God because all this is happening PRECISELY as Jesus Christ said it would, and a Christian is one who is supposed to follow Christ. If he doesn't, well, then he's in a different category. Jesus Christ is the one that we look to and the one that we must follow. But there are times, too, that people have these catastrophes come upon them when they don't have God's protection, they don't go to God, they don't obey God, they don't look to God, and God doesn't protect them. But He wants to, and He will do it even to you individually and for you individually. If you will turn your life to God when He afflicts and learn some lessons, God will protect you. That, too, is a promise from the Bible. Even when others are not protected, He will do that.

The archbishop said that "Prayer,' the archbishop admits, 'provides no magical solutions.'" Oh, it doesn't? It doesn't provide any magical solutions? Oh, yes, it does! It provides some MIRACULOUS blessings that come upon us.

Let me refute that statement by the Bible, from a book that was written only for this end time. Daniel 12 and verse 4 and verse 9 says it's only for the end time, and no other time. Notice what Daniel said in Daniel 9, verses 13 and 14, "[A]ll this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God," oh, we made not our PRAYER before the Lord our God, "that we might TURN from our iniquities, and understand thy truth. (14) Therefore hath the LORD watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us:" Wow! God watched upon it and brought it upon us? Well, that's a strong statement! That's what God said He would do and has done, "for the LORD our God *is* righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice."

Well, that's a prophecy for today. We didn't obey His voice. THAT'S the problem! THAT is the problem! We didn't obey His voice!

Well, Job talked about God causing it to come whether for correction or for his land or for mercy, that is these disasters. That's Job 37, verses 11 through 13.

Another scripture in II Chronicles 6 and verse 26—let me read that to you. "When the heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; *yet* if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou dost afflict them; (27) Then hear thou from heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants," in other words, God hears the prayers! And heals the land! And heals His servants, or protects His servants. That is what God says, and these books are actually material from the former prophets, which means they're prophecy for this end time as well. Why won't people believe that?

Here's another question that the Archbishop of Canterbury had. He said, "How can you believe in a God who permits suffering on this scale," all right, "and is therefore very much around at the moment," this continues his thought, "and it would be surprising if it weren't. Indeed, it would be wrong if it weren't." So does that build people's faith? No, it doesn't. Quite the contrary.

He goes on to say, "If some religious genius did come up with an explanation of exactly why all these deaths made sense, would we feel happier or safer or more confident in God?" Well, let me tell you there is some genius, if you want to call Him that—Jesus Christ, Himself DID tell us exactly why all these deaths and why all these things occur. Christ, Himself told us why these things occur!

I think those are dangerous questions and dangerous statements to make.

What does the Bible say? What does God say? Christ said live by every word of God, the Old and the New Testament. What does God say?

Notice one more quote here. “Most of the stock Christian answers to human suffering do not go very far in helping us.” Well, maybe they don’t. Because—you know why? They don’t get them out of the Bible! That’s why they don’t work!

Nahum said in Nahum 1 and verse 3, he says this, “The LORD *is* slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit *the wicked*: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm,” God wants this world to see that He controls nature. He CONTROLS this world in any way He wants to, and even the nations, He says, are just a drop in the bucket to Him. Of course He controls all this, and there is a connection between the inclement weather and the disasters that we see and the way we live. Yes, there is.

Well, He even says in Isaiah 3 and verse 1, God takes away the whole supply of bread and the whole supply of water. Now, God does that but He also says in Hosea 2 and verse 8, “For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil,” we don’t really KNOW that all of this abundance and these blessings we’ve had for so many years were given to us by God. God gives us corn! God gives us crops, good, beautiful crops, productive crops, if we don’t have drought and are not flooded. But you see, that means that we need to look to Him. That’s what that means.

We’ve had some terrible, terrible disasters like Katrina, where you saw all kinds of violence and riots and racial problems, and the federal government was slow in getting there, but it still got there. What’s going to happen when the federal government can’t even help? Then what’s going to happen? Do we need God? Do we see the need for God in our lives? There are some future problems that are coming and we need to be ready for that. Are you going to be ready when these disasters come? Because we shouldn’t worry about it; we don’t need to worry about it. God doesn’t want us to do that, and certainly we should not.

But there are the deceivers, and there are the scoffers, and it says in II Timothy 3 and verse 13 that these scoffers are just going to wax worse and worse and worse, but so are the natural disasters, as they are called.

But God can solve all of that and He WILL solve it for you, individually. That’s what we need to understand.

Until next week, this is Gerald Flurry, goodbye, friends.

#

PAGE

PAGE 7