

Disasters—Who is to Blame? I

Fred Coulter—April 30, 2011

Greetings, everyone! Welcome to Sabbath services. Some of these things come in cycles: doctrinal questions or doctrinal beliefs or things like this. And we have to understand something very important, which is this: *What we personally believe that is at variance with the Word of God is of no consequence.* It doesn't matter if you're sincere, because everybody is sincere. It's the question of *truth* and it's the question of *judgment*.

We've had some difficulties with some false doctrines beginning to circulate around. One of them was Melchisedec not being Christ, so we have two messages on that—*Who is-was Melchisedec?* Another one is *Tithes and Offerings in the New Testament*, because it does not say 'you shall tithe.' I gave a sermon on tithing and what it should be. Those who are retired and do not have an increase from labor, of course, you don't tithe.

But the thing that's important to realize is this. We have examples of the widow who put in the two mites, which was all she had. We have examples of people who give everything that they have. Those who don't believe in tithing I have learned through the years that say, 'Well, we ought to give more than the tithe.' Do they? *Never happen!*

So I just want to review part of a sermon that I gave. It's always a hang-up, why didn't Paul take tithes from the Corinthians. They don't ask whether he took them from the other congregations. But he let the congregations handle it locally and they took care of Paul. He said he 'took wages,' meaning that the rest was for the benefit of the brethren.

Today we have an opportunity to do more with what we have because of all the technology that's available to us. God would certainly expect us to do it. Would the Apostle Paul fly if there were airplanes in his day? *I do believe he would!* Do you think he would do recordings like we're doing now? *I believe he would!* That way all of those renegade churches in Galatia could see them, and that way he could personally stand down some of these false apostles.

1-Corinthians 9:11: He says: "If we have sown to you spiritual things, *is it* a great thing if we shall reap your physical things? If others participate in this authority over you, much more surely *should* not we?...?" (vs 11-12). Paul and Timothy and Titus were the ones who established the Church at Corinth.

As you get to 2-Cor. you have false apostles. They were the ones who were taking them and they said they were Israelites and they said they were

Hebrews, so they were probably also Levites. They were probably saying, 'You're to give to the Levites.'

Verse 12: "...Nevertheless, we have not used this authority..." It's like this. If you have a car in your garage, do you have a car? Do you own it? *Yes, indeed!* But what if you never use it? Does that mean the car no longer exists? *No!* He just didn't use it because he wanted to prove a point to the Corinthians and he wanted them to grow to a spiritual point of understanding the Scriptures so that they would freely choose to *give* rather than tell them directly. So, here in 1-Cor. 9 we see that he tells them very directly.

He says: "...Nevertheless, we have not used this authority; but we have endured all things, so that we might not hinder the Gospel of Christ. Don't you know that those who are laboring *in* the sacred things of the temple live *of the things* of the temple... [What is that? *Tithes! Offerings!* Is that not true? *Yes, indeed!*] ...*and* those who are ministering at the altar are partakers with the altar?" (vs 12-13). So they would share in the sacrifices.

I had to repeat this three or four times, because we took a break in the sermon right here at this point and then some came up and we had some discussions of it. So they had to go back and read v 14: "In the same way also, the Lord did command that those who preach the Gospel are to live of the Gospel." Notice it is "In the same way..."—as what? *Those at the temple and the altar!* What did that include?

I hope you pay attention to the sermon that I gave on it: *Tithes and Offerings in the New Testament*; also if you want the series on *Tithing—Old Testament/New Testament*. If tithes were given to Melchisedec, does that not precede what was given to the Levites? Is that not the primary emphasis to begin with? And who is our High Priest? *Jesus Christ after the order of Melchisedec!* And He's delegated those things to men because He's chosen to use men.

We've had record tornados. The last time it came close to this, very interesting, was in the first year of Jimmy Carter's presidency. With all the things that have happened and are happening, who does God hold responsible? or Who is at fault? I'm sure a lot of people would like to say, 'Well, it's Obama's fault.' *No, it's not his fault!*

But think of it, right here while we're sitting here, we've have earthquakes—haven't we? We had the big one in Indonesia with the tsunami, then we

had Haiti and Chili and New Zealand, now Japan. Of course, living here on the ‘left coast,’ someone said what happened to California was, it’s on the ‘left coast’ and they tip the country up and all the fruits and nuts came down here. That’s not quite exactly so.

The power of that earthquake was something that moved the whole island eight feet northeast and that sits right on the deepest part of the ocean where there is the fault line. So who’s to know where it’s going to hit next. And another little by-product here that came out just yesterday, a news report saying that the sun is now sending out particles which are neutralizing the radiation in the air.

The scientists are all going crazy, e-mailing back and forth to each other, because this destroys the theory of the gradual decline of radio-activity in carbon-14. Which means that their whole theory of evolution and everything is caput. Their whole theory on how old everything is no longer works. So God is taking care of the radioactivity.

We also have volcanoes, tornados, floods and rain, drought. In Oklahoma and Texas they’re in a drought. In North Dakota and Wisconsin and Minnesota they have floods. Down south they have tornados. Who knows what’s going to happen when the hurricane season comes. Last year, what happened? They were expecting 17 to make landfall. I think one or two came close and that was it. So even the scientists can’t predict what’s going on.

Then we’ve covered ‘like the roaring of the nations.’ How many times have we covered that? It’s still going on. Then look at the problems with drugs—illegal and legal. Crime. Look at the banking system or financial system. Look at the lying, cheating, stealing and murdering that’s going on here in America and every place else in the world.

Then look at the governments. They’re corrupt. They have stupid leaders and we’re not exempt. Look at the religions. Wow! That’s something. We’ll look at some of those. We have idolatry. And right now, with the marriage of William and Catherine Middleton for king and queen of England—and he’s been privately tutored by Queen Elizabeth—we have this big celebration of this wedding with all of these things going on. And it’s kind of surreal. When you look at the world and see what’s going on and yet to understand how many people are still able to work and function and get along and do different things like that. That’s not to say that the unemployment things are not true; they’re bad.

Then you have the Churches of God. We need to also consider this in finding out because we’re going to examine who’s at fault. Do the Churches of God have their fault in it? Look at the

false doctrines. Look at the way they treat each other. I also gave a sermon on *The Love of God in the Church*—among the brethren, because that’s the greatest thing that’s missing. And a lot of people have been so hurt by the hierarchy that they have not yet recovered emotionally. And part of the problem is that they haven’t put the full burden on Christ, and accepted the fact that they also were participating in this. So how much fault comes down on the Churches of God? God looks at the whole world and He looks at every little thing individually as well.

Then, we’ve got Satan the devil running around ‘as a roaring lion’—right?—‘seeking whom he may devour.’

- What are we supposed to do?
- Who’s at fault?
- Why are we being judged this way?

Let’s first of all come to Matthew 24, because as I’ve mentioned before, it’s very interesting that yes, nearly all of these things took place with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70_{A.D.} As a matter of fact Bob Ellsworth, who is continuing to sell the Bibles—and they’re selling them at a steady pace—not like when he first started because of economic things. So he came up to get a supply of Bibles and everything and he gave me a little book written by a man in 1814, *The Destruction of Jerusalem*. And I didn’t know it, they were believing in the ‘rapture’ in 1814. Did you know that?

He showed that everything in Matt. 24 happened to that generation, which is true. Everything did but what? *The sign of the Son of man!* Down through time everyone has expected Christ to return in their lifetime—right? *Yes! Why? These same things keep happening over and over and over again!* We focus on what is going on rather than looking at the *big picture* and realizing that certain things have got to happen before *the end* can really come. What are the two things that must happen before the last week or seven years of Dan. 9?

1. there has to be the rise of the beast power, king of the north
2. there has to be the covenant made between Israel and the beast power

That begins the last seven years. All these other things build up toward the end. Some of them are just types and they will repeat themselves because it comes to a certain point and then stops, then goes back and repeats itself.

Let’s view Matthew 24 from this point of view. It has to do with modern communications that everybody on earth is going to *know* that these things are taking place. He says, Matthew 24:32: “Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its

branches have already become tender, and it puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near. In like manner also, **when you see all these things, know that it is near...**” (vs 32-33). Then you have to add other Scriptures in to do it.

The Great Tribulation cannot take place until the ‘*abomination of desolation* stands in the Holy place,’ which means there must be a temple built, although they could offer some sacrifices before a temple is built. But do you think that after all that the Jews have gone through in history that today they would be satisfied with an earth altar made of whole stones and that’s a sacred place to offer some kind of sacrifice? *No way possible!* So there has to be a temple.

Yu can start backing up all of these things, v 3: “And as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, His disciples came to Him alone, saying, ‘Tell us, when shall these things be? And what *shall be* the sign of Your coming, and of the completion of the age?’ Then Jesus answered *and* said to them, ‘Be on guard, so that no one deceives you.... [That has to be on an ongoing basis—doesn’t it? *Yes!*] ...For many shall come in My name, saying, “I am the Christ”; and they shall deceive many”’ (vs 3-5). And the many means the majority of people. Look at it today. Let’s look at it through the lens of what is happening today. This time not the historical lens; his time the current lens. It talks about false prophets down here a little later, so we’ll add that in here.

- Do we have a lot of false prophets? *More than ever before*—don’t we?
- Do we have false prophets within the Churches of God? *More than ever before!*
- Do we have false doctrines within the Churches of God? *I couldn’t say more than ever before, but we still have!*

People still, even though they’re in the Church of God, many have really not made up their minds that they want the Truth, the whole Truth, and nothing but the Truth, and to love God the way that they should.

Verse 6: “And you shall hear of wars and rumors of wars...” We know instantly when any of those things take place—don’t we? We have them today. The strangest alliance that looks like it may come to pass is Saudi Arabia and Israel and Jordan against Iran. That would be strange bedfellows—wouldn’t it? Have enemies come together for convenience in the past? *Yes, indeed!* How about Germany and Russia 1939?] ...wars and rumors of wars. See *that* you do not let *these things* disturb you. For it is necessary *that* all *these things* take place, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be famines and pestilences and

earthquakes in *different places*” (vs 6-7). That’s what’s going on everywhere as you look around the world. And famine can hit really quickly today. Many people don’t know how vulnerable that modern cities are. Here in America, you could have all the motorcycle gangs go out there, work with M-13, work with other groups, cut off water supplies, cut off trucking routes to the cities, and you could have instant famine within days. Everything that is in the city that you buy at the store must be transported. They could also blow up main rail lines. So those things could happen.

Verse 8: “Now, all these *things* are the beginning of sorrows.” I’ve said in the past, I don’t know if we’re quite yet there, but I would have to say with all the things going on, where in 60 seconds you can come from prosperity to poverty

- through earthquakes
- through fire
- through tornados
- through hurricanes
- through volcanoes
- through war

Look at those poor people down there in the areas where the tornados came. All of a sudden, BAM! there’s nothing left and everything is just twisted all up and piles of junk. Not too much different than what happened over there in Japan with the earthquake and then the tsunami. Everybody lost everything that they’ve had.

Don’t look at the physical things as if you have it made because you have physical things, because those can go—WHOOSH! That’s why the one to trust is God, not other human beings, not what you have. You could even have a protective bomb shelter in the basement of your home and there could be a disaster, which would bury you there. Now you were safely buried—correct? You may have an earthquake that while you’re sitting there crushes you like so much hamburger. And you know, that’s why I want to cover who’s at fault. We’ll talk about that in a little bit. Jesus said be careful, don’t do that.

Verse 9: “Then shall they deliver you up to affliction... [That’s happened in the past. It’s going to happen in the future.] ...and shall kill you... [Happened in the past, is happening today. It’ll happen in the future.] ...and you shall be hated by all nations for My name’s sake.” How can we be hated by all nations for Jesus’ sake unless this would be able to be communicated worldwide? How could that be?

“And then shall many be led into sin, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another... [What do we have? Secret hot lines you can call and report on anyone on anything.] ...And

many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many; and because lawlessness shall be multiplied, the love of many shall grow cold.... [even within the Churches of God] ...But the one who endures to *the* end, that one shall be saved. And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed in all the world for a witness to all nations..." (vs 10-14). That has to be at the end-time with modern communication. Can't come any other way, plus the distribution of Bibles. We've got the real thing. We've got many, many Bibles—don't we? We have digital Bibles.

I was sitting next to a man on the plane coming home and he had his iPad. I sat there and watched him do it off and on for maybe an hour. So I asked him, 'How do you like your iPad?' He says, 'Oh, I love it! It's almost replaced my laptop.' I said, 'Really. Is it heavy?' He said, 'No.' He pulled it up and let me lift it. It was very light. If the plane would have had wi-fi on it, he could have downloaded Church at Home right there.

And Church at Home we have in half hour segments, which is exactly what you need to download into a computer or to a Blackberry or to a cell phone or to an iPhone. And be careful, you don't put your whole life on your iPhone, because if you lose it, whoopee-do! Now there are some developments happening with the preparing for the *mark of the beast*. And I said in one of the sermons that it's way, way down the road. And I didn't mean a long way off. I meant the development is way, way down the road for its application.

They have selected the city of Salt Lake City, Utah, to be the city that is going to develop the prototype of wave technology. Have you heard of wave technology? Wave technology is that you have sensors that you can take your iPhone or your Blackberry and it has your bank account on it, has all the things that you need for being able to buy and sell. So you get on the bus and you wave your phone, no more collecting fares. Go to a restaurant, wave it by that, that's what is the wave technology. Rings it up. They're going to set it up so the whole city is going to operate that way: department stores, restaurants, banks, all businesses, even individuals. You can now conduct individual business from iPhone to iPhone. We also have the little portable card-swipers. They will have that converted to wave technology. That would be the last step before the *mark of the beast*.

This is on a five-year plan in Salt Lake City. So we'll see what happens. And it's interesting that they chose Salt Lake City, because it's a very religious state, the whole thing. If they can get people up there to accept this technology and tell us how wonderful that it is, the next step is identity theft is going to be so rampant when that comes in that they're going to have to say, 'Well, we now

have to put it on the right hand or on the forehead.' And it's going to be just like I heard today on the news. In a few weeks all Social Security recipients will have *mandatory* direct deposit—no more paper checks. So that's how it's going to come.

So I don't know how the Gospel's going to 'be proclaimed in all the world for a witness to all nations and then the end shall come.' I look at the Churches of God and they're pitiful, absolutely pitiful. Brings tears to your eyes. I pray for all of them every day and I pray for repentance for the people of God and the ministers of God that they stop their silliness and their vanity things. *Yield to Christ! Be led of the Holy Spirit*, not your own devices. That's what it has to be.

Anyone who tries to do that, you're labeled as some terrible, terrible thing. I know what that's like. I've gone through it. So we don't know what's going to happen to the Churches of God. But I can tell you this much right now, *we're in pitiful shape*. Be thankful for the Internet. We can reach a lot of people with the Internet at a very low cost. But look at all that's on there. So God has to draw the people. So we'll have to see what's going to happen here.

Let's look at one more prophecy here in Matthew 7, and then we'll see if we can find out who does God hold responsible for all these things taking place, because they're all the result of sin, every single one of them.

Matthew 7:12: "Therefore, everything that you would have men do to you, so also do to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets." And yet the very religious leaders who are supposed to teach the Truth and the Law and the Prophets say it's been abolished. But they want to be treated rightly.

Verse 13: "Enter in through the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter through it." People want it easy. They want it smooth. Today we have it easy and we have it smooth—don't we?

- What are we doing in the good days?
- Are we yielding to God and growing and overcoming?
- Are we working?
- Are we producing?

We better! God has given us all these things. What's going to happen when the good days are gone?

Verse 14: "For narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way that leads to life, and few are those who find it.... [it's a conundrum] ...But beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, for within *they* are ravening wolves" (vs 14-15). We're at the height of the full-blossomed development of the major religions of the world and their false prophets. It's interesting—isn't it? That

right while the wedding was going on in London and everyone was happy and cheerful, they had something else going on in Rome. They were digging up the casket of John Paul II so that they can make him a saint, so that people can worship him. False prophets everywhere, even in the Churches of God. So it's difficult.

Verse 16: "You shall know them by their fruits. They do not gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles, do they? In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a corrupt tree produces evil fruit" (vs 16-17).

Let's see how a corrupt religion works. Here's a prophecy for our day and we can see how true this is, Isaiah 30:8: "Now go, write it before them in a tablet, and note it in a book, so that it may be for the time to come forever and ever.... [That is the time of the end.] ...That this *is* a rebellious people, lying children... [deceived and being deceived] ...They are children who will not hear the law of the LORD... [Try the Sabbath. When you get done with that, try the Passover and Holy Days and then you will see the numbers drop.] ...who say to the seers, 'See not,' and to the prophets, 'Do not prophesy to us right things, speak to us smooth things, prophesy illusions... [Try the Sunday morning Trinity Channel, see what you see.] ...go out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us'" (vs 8-11).

That's what they say when they're confronted with the Truth. Don't go in the Truth! And why is it when disaster's at hand, people believe false prophets that it's not going to happen. I remember the first time I started preaching on, hey, there's too much debt around here—in the government, in personal lives—and it's all going to come down one day and guess what? We're weeks away from a major confrontation with it—right? *Yes, we are!*

At that time I said if you've got money in the bank buy some gold, buy some silver. That was in 1995. 'Oh, well, I can't do that. I don't know what's going to happen. I've got my money in the bank.' They never think the bank is going to fail. But money in the bank can go to money heaven. Gold and silver you have. But still to this day, I talk to those who buy and sell gold and there are people today sitting on hundreds of thousands of dollars in banks. They're afraid to buy gold. They're afraid to buy silver. They watch the price go up and up and say, 'Well, I should do that.' Yes, but it's like standing there at the train station and here comes a train and it's going to where you want to go. And say, 'Oh, well, no I'll catch the next train.' So here comes the next train, it's going to where you want to go. They say, 'Oh, no, I'll wait till the next time.'

You wait for the next train, it comes, you stand there, you say, 'Well, I'm not ready yet.' You wait a little longer and you say, 'I'll wait for the next train.' While you're standing there looking and looking, so you ask the conductor, 'Where is the train coming that's going to go to such-and-such a place?' He said, 'There aren't any more.' Some people are that way. They don't believe the disaster until it's upon them.

Verse 12: "Therefore, thus says the Holy One of Israel, 'Because you have despised this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and rely on them; therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking comes suddenly, in an instant.... [Instead of the train arriving, now the disaster comes.] ...And He shall break it as the breaking of the potters' vessel that *is* smashed in pieces. He shall not spare, so that there shall not be found in the fragments a shard to take fire from the hearth, or to take water out of the pit'" (vs 12-14).

So there we are, we're standing right on the brink. Have you heard them say those who are truthful enough to say, we are facing a great catastrophe because of the debt. Can you cut enough to make it work? *Only temporary!* That's why the Kingdom of God has to come. We better learn the lesson that only the Kingdom of God and Christ returning is going to save us from those things.

(go to the next track)

During the break Bob gave me a credit card from Chase and it's called Chase Slate. I don't know what that means, but on the backside it says Blueprint By-Pass and there's a chip right here. This is swipe-technology. All you have to do is just swipe it by the reader and it takes the money right out of your bank account. Let me re-phrase that. It deducts the digital indication of your funds from your bank account, because you do not have any money. You only have evidence of a digital amount that is called 'money.'

Let's see who's at fault. How do these things take place? Why do we have so much trouble? Remember what Jesus said, 'Lawlessness shall multiply and the love of many shall grow cold.' All right, let's come to the book of Micah and we will see as we go through

- God holds the people responsible
- God holds the politicians responsible
- God holds the religious leaders responsible
- God holds the business people responsible

Everybody is at fault because of sin!

We can also add in there the Churches of God. Instead of proclaiming the Truth and preaching righteousness and a warning, they're all fighting

among themselves and condemning one another. Why? What purpose is that going to serve? What judgment is God going to bring? *Just wait and see, it's coming!*

Micah 1:1: “The Word of the LORD that came to Micah the Morasthite in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem.... [Samaria refers to the ten tribes and Jerusalem refers to the Jews.] ...Hear, all you people! [everyone] Hearken, O earth, and *all its fullness...*” (vs 1-2). Why? Why does God do it that way? Remember what He said? You go back and read Deut. 30 and God says, ‘I’ve set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore choose life that you may live.’ Then He also says, ‘I call heaven and earth against you this day.’

Verse 2: “...And let the Lord GOD be witness against you, even the LORD from His Holy temple.... [that’s from heaven down to here] ...for behold, the LORD *is* coming out of His place, and will come down and tread on the high places of the earth.... [talking about the return of Christ] ...And the mountains shall melt under Him, and the valleys shall split open, as wax before the fire, and as waters that are poured down a steep place. All this *is* for the transgression of Jacob, and for the sins of the house of Israel....” (vs 2-5)—all the people.

God also singles out leaders, v 5: “...What *is* the transgression of Jacob? *Is it* not Samaria? And what *are* the high places of Judah? *Are they* not Jerusalem?... [Notice what He’s going to do; the cause of why God is angry.] ...‘And I will make Samaria as a heap of ruins in the field... [Isn’t that what we’re seeing with the tornados, with hurricanes, with floods?] ...and I will hurl down her stones into the valley, and I will uncover her foundations. And all her graven images shall be smashed to pieces, and all her gifts shall be burned with the fire, and I will destroy all *her* idols, for she gathered them as the hire of a harlot, and they shall return as the hire of a harlot’” (vs 5-7). Those are pretty strong words. Look what we’re doing. Read Ezek. 23 about Oholibah and Oholah. See what they did. Then He says declare it and so forth.

Micah 2:1: “Woe to those who plot wickedness and prepare evil on their beds!....” Whatever it may be. Have you ever seen a special on the financial things that people do on CNBC. It’s called *Greed*. There are many series on it. Have you ever seen the special they have done on thievery, shoplifting? That’s an everyday thing that people plot. Have you ever seen a special on what people do to rip off casinos? That’s also on *Greed*. Watch it! Remember the movie where Michael Douglas, he played the lead part. He’s talking to all of his investors and he said, ‘Greed is good.’

Verse 1: “...When the morning is light they practice it because it is in the power of their hand. And they covet and seize fields, and houses, and take them away. And they oppress a man and his household, even a man and his inheritance.... [That’s what they’ve done with the real estate market—haven’t they?] ...Therefore, thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, against this family I *am* plotting an evil from which you shall not remove your necks; nor shall you go proudly, for it *is* an evil time’” (vs 1-3). The time has come.

A comment was made, with the analogy of the train. Each time the train came by the price got higher and the price got higher and then the train didn’t come.

Verse 4: ““In that day one shall take up a parable against you and mourn a bitter lamentation, saying, “We shall be completely laid waste... [Look at where the tornados have come, record number of people died. In seconds—from prosperity to poverty—total destitution! Are we going to be wise enough to listen? Do we have ‘eyes to see and ears to hear’? *We need to!*] ...He has exchanged the portion of my people. How He has removed *it* from me! To the apostate He has divided our fields.”.... [Going to happen. Our land is going to be taken up by other people.] ...Therefore, there shall not be for you anyone casting a line by lot in the congregation of the LORD” (vs 4-5). In other words, He’s going to take away the temple, that’s what He’s saying.

Come here to chapter three, let’s see who else is to blame, because we read in Matt. 24 that many shall be lead into sin. Who leads them into sin? *Their leaders!*

Micah 3:1: “And I said, ‘Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob and magistrates of the house of Israel.... [All the government leaders and judges. He holds all of them responsible.] ...Is it not for you to know justice? You who hate the good and love the evil; who tear the skin off *My people* and strip the flesh from their bones’” (vs 1-2). You leave nothing for them. God is going to judge you and it’s coming upon all the nations, not only here, but also everywhere in the world. It’ll come like a wave, pass by, things will come back for a while, and then if there’s no repentance, it’s going to come again.

Verse 3: ““Who also eat the flesh of My people, and tear their skin off of them—and break their bones and chop them into pieces, like meat for the pot, and like flesh for the caldron.” Isn’t that the way they treat people? Have you ever read what’s going to happen if Medicare comes through, all of Obama—seventy-six. No more cancer operations for you. They’re doing it here. Why? *Because we need the money to pay for the debt!*

Verse 4: “Then they shall cry to the LORD, but He will not answer them... [Those are going to be desperate times—aren’t they? Notice how desperate they’re going to be:] ...He will even hide His face from them at that time, as they have done evil in their doings.... [Who else does God hold responsible?] ...Thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who mislead *the* people, who bite with their teeth and cry, ‘Peace!’—and even prepare war against those who do not put something in their mouths; ‘Therefore night shall be to you *without* a vision; and darkness and not divination. And the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be darkness over them. And the seers shall be ashamed, and the diviners confounded; yea, they shall all cover their mouths, for *there is* no answer *from* God’” (v 4-7).

They’re going to try and find God, but He’s not going to be there. While there’s yet time, we need to really, really take all of these things and have some repentance and change in our lives as well.

So Micah says, v 8: “But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare to Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin. Hear this, I pray you, you heads of the house of Jacob, and magistrates of the house of Israel, who hate judgment and pervert all equity. They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. Her heads judge for a bribe, and her priests teach for pay, and her prophets divine for silver, yet they will lean on the LORD and say, ‘*Is* not the LORD among us? No evil can come on us!’” (vs 8-11).

Isn’t that the way it is? You watch the Sunday channel. Maybe there’ll be someone there who will be bold enough to tell the truth. But what happens when they’re bold enough to tell the truth? Call they’re nuts, they’re quacks, they discredit them or that ‘you don’t belong to our elite club.’ So if you don’t belong to ‘our elite club, we count you as non-existent.’

Let’s see how leaders affect the people—I think you’ll be really surprised when you read this. What happens?—the leaders, the kings, the heads, the government, the elders, because Satan is also involved in this world. And the world is being given over to Satan the devil, because men want it that way. They don’t want God’s way; they want it their way—the people.

What would happen if we had this: Let’s have one day with no lies! A national day of no lies, no lie day. Make it on a Wednesday, in the middle of the week. Nobody tell any lies—from the President on down. I think he’d have a difficult time, because I don’t think there’s any way that he knows how to

really tell the truth. Then the next week let’s have this: No murder week; no murders. All of you plotting murders, delay it. Then take one week the next month and say: no adultery, no homosexuality, only marriage. Then take the next week: no-stealing week, no shoplifting, bankers—full disclosure. How would that go over? Let’s have no-idol week. Let’s have one week of idol-smashing and we’ll start at St. Peter’s Basilica. Wouldn’t that be lovely! *NO! They hate the law! They hate God!*

Here’s David. He loved God, but notice how on guard that we need to be, 1-Chronicles 21:1: “And Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel.... [‘Let’s number them. Let’s see how many soldiers we have.’] ...And David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people, ‘Go number Israel from Beersheba to Dan. And bring the number of them to me so that I may know.’ And Joab answered, ‘May the LORD add to His people a hundred times, but my lord the king, *are* they not all my lord’s servants?.... [He gave him good advice. When you’re set to do evil, will you listen to good advice? Let’s apply that to the government of any country of this world. Do they really listen to good advice? *No!*] ...Why then does my lord required this thing? Why will he be a cause of trespass to Israel?’” (v 1-3). He knew, but he forced his way.

Verse 4: “But the king’s word prevailed against Joab. And Joab departed and went up and down all Israel, and came again to Jerusalem. And Joab gave the sum of the number of the people to David. And in all Israel there were one million and a hundred thousand men who drew the sword. And in Judah *were* four hundred and seventy thousand men who drew the sword” (vs 4-5). Then it listed all of them.

Because of the acts of the head of state, since today we have presidents and things like this, v 7: “And God was displeased with this thing; therefore He struck Israel.” ***Because of the acts of the leaders, the people suffer!*** The leaders can be

- government
- business men
- bankers
- stockbrokers
- dealers in goods and services

They cause people to suffer the judgment of God!

Verse 8: “And David said to God, ‘I have sinned greatly because I have done this thing. But now, I beseech You, remove the iniquity of Your servant for I have done very foolishly.’ And the LORD spoke to Gad, David’s seer, saying, ‘Go and tell David, saying, “Thus says the LORD...”’” (vs 8-10). Punishment’s still going to come.

This is kind of like the alternatives. What are we going to do with the budget in Washington? Do

we want to push the collapse out five years, seven years, or only three years, or only two years, or only one year, or only six months? What do you want?

Verse 10: “...“Thus says the LORD: ‘I offer you three *things*. Choose one of them so that I may do it to you.’” And Gad came to David and said to him, ‘Thus says the LORD, “Choose for yourself: Either three years of famine, or three months to be swept away before your foes, while the sword of your enemies overtakes you, or else three days of the sword of the LORD, even the plague in the land, and the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the border of Israel.” And now say what word I shall bring again to Him Who sent me” (vs 10-12).

They never count the cost. They never look at the end. They never understand how it’s going to affect the people and they never understand how their actions are judged from God in what they are doing. It seems like every government in the world has a satanic dome over the top of it that within that dome there are some people who want to do truth and right, some people who want to be responsible, and they are ridiculed. They are put down; they are pushed aside. And so that aggravates the judgment of God against us. Listen! Unless there is an immediate, in America, 20% cut of all salaries, 20% cut in the personnel working for the government, *the collapse is going to come*. And when you cut the 20%, you’re going to increase unemployment. But that’s not going to stave it off. ***We have reached a point of no return, because of sin!***

Just like David here. He reached the point of no return when he did what God did not want him to do and was advised by Joab, ‘Don’t do it! God is for you, why would you do this?’ Gad said, ‘Give me the word and I’ll take it back to God.’

Verse 13: “And David said to Gad, ‘I am in great distress. Let me fall now into the hand of the LORD, for His mercies are very great. But do not let me fall into the hand of man.’ So the LORD sent a plague upon Israel. And there fell seventy thousand men of Israel” (vs 13-14). 70,000 perished because of his policy against God. How are the sins stacking up against God with all the leaders in all the nations?

What happened? God sent the angel and as he was destroying God looked and He repented of the evil and He told the angel enough. Then God to show His mercy, the place where it stopped was the place where the temple was built.

Let’s look at the Emperor Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel 4. Everybody gets all lifted up, how great they are, how tremendous they are. God raised up the whole Babylonian empire, not because they were righteous, but because the Jews were sinful. Is God raising up a mighty nation on earth today that’s going to figure big-time in the end? *Yes, He is!* Not

because they’re righteous. What’s the name of that nation? *It’s called China!* Just like He raised up Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar thought, ‘Oh, boy, look at the things that I have done. How great I am.’ This is actually Nebuchadnezzar’s epistle in the Bible, this was written by Nebuchadnezzar. That’s how important this lesson is. He told Daniel the vision, Daniel told him what it would be.

Daniel 4:13, here’s the vision: “I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and behold, a watcher and a holy one came down from heaven. He cried aloud and said this, ‘Cut down the tree, and cut off its branches; shake off its leaves and scatter its fruit. Let the animals get away from under it, and the birds from its branches. Nevertheless, leave the stump of its roots in the earth, even with a band of iron and bronze, in the tender grass of the field. And let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and let his portion *be* with the animals in the grass of the earth. Let his heart be changed from a man’s and a beast’s heart be given to him. And let seven times pass over him” (vs 13-16). That’s seven years. That’s the vision. When the judgment comes from God, there’s always a warning—is there not? *Yes, indeed!*

So here was the warning. He told this to Daniel, v 17: “This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones... [Those are the angels who are running the world today behind the scenes. There is also a mixture of demons and Satan behind the scenes, running the things in the world.] ...so that the living may know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men...” Just like it was with David. Made a wrong choice, the whole nation suffered. Are we suffering from wrong choices by government today? *Yes, indeed!* Are other nations suffering from the same thing? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 17: “...that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He will, and sets up over it the basest of men.” We’re going learn the lesson: don’t trust in men and don’t trust in the government to solve our problems—right? Is that not a good description of most of the leaders of the world? Not just the one we have here in America.

Verse 18: “This dream, I, King Nebuchadnezzar, have seen. Now you, O Belteshazzar... [Babylonian name of Daniel] ...declare the interpretation because all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make the meaning known to me. But you are able for the spirit of the holy gods *is* in you.”

Then he explained it to him; that tree and the image, he says, v 22: “It *is* you, O king, for you have become great and strong, for your greatness has grown and reached into heaven, and your dominion to the end of the earth. And as the king saw a

watcher and a holy one coming down from heaven, and saying, “Cut the tree down and destroy it; yet leave the stump of the roots of it in the earth, even with a band of iron and bronze, in the tender grass of the field; and let it be wet with the dew of heaven, and *let* his portion *be* with the animals of the field until seven times pass over him.” This *is* the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which has come upon my lord the king” (vs 22-24). That’s something! You think about the decree that has come upon this nation because of our sins from God. It has.

Verse 25: “That you shall be driven from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field and you shall be made to eat grass like oxen. And you shall be wet with the dew of heaven, and seven times pass over **you until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomever He will**” (vs 24-25).

The lesson is *no one, no government*, is going to defy God. There is always a time of judgment! Like we read in Micah, the judgment is coming. It is happening! We can see it! What is the pride of our power that’s going to be broken?

- our dollar
- our government
- our way of life
- our military
- our land

All those come from God. We’re not going to defy God and get away with it.

Verse 26: “And whereas they commanded to leave the stump of the tree roots, your kingdom *shall be* sure to you after you shall have known that the heavens do rule.... [That’s what he said. That was the conclusion of it.] ...Therefore, O king, let my advice be pleasing to you, and break off your sins by righteousness, and your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor, so there may be lengthening of your prosperity.’ All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar” (vs 26-28).

Notice what happened. When people are given good advice of what they should do, do they listen? Did David listen? *No!* Did Nebuchadnezzar listen? *No!*

Verse 29: “At the end of twelve months he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of the kingdom of Babylon. The king spoke and said, ‘Is this not great Babylon that I have built for a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty?’” (vs 29-30). Lifted up in pride. Same as Lucifer—right? *Yes!* Have you seen this happen to religious leaders, even within the Churches of God, that lifted themselves up and said, ‘Look what I have done.’ *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 31: “While the word was yet in the king’s mouth, a voice fell from heaven, saying, ‘O King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken. The kingdom has departed from you.’” Just like it said, he went out and ate grass for seven years. Didn’t cut his nails, didn’t cut his hair, lived with the oxen. I don’t know if he mooed like a cow or whatever it may be, but there he was. But afterwards he repented and blessed and honored God. You can read the rest of it.

Verse 37: “Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise the exalt and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are truth and His ways justice. And **those who walk in pride He is able to abase.**” That applies to leaders; that applies to individuals; that applies also to the people. Applies to athletes, too—doesn’t it? *Yes, indeed!* How many championships has Tiger Woods won since he got abased? *Zero!*

Let’s come to 1-Kings 11. We’re going to learn something here, because this will be very good. It’s all about Solomon, the one who was chosen to build the temple by God. Appeared to him twice in vision and dreams. Gave him wealth, gave him wisdom, gave him understanding—and what did he do? He got carried away: had 700 wives and 300 concubines. Over across the valley on the west from the temple, there was mount of abominations where he built all of the little temples and incense memorials for all his wives to burn incense to their gods. He worshiped Ashtoreth and Milcom (v 5).

1-Kings 11:6: “And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD and did not *go* fully after the LORD like his father David. Then Solomon built a high place...” (vs 6-7). Did for all of his wives.

Verse 9: “And the LORD was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel Who had appeared to him twice.” And He told him, ‘Don’t do these things.’ So He says, ‘I’m going to take it away from you. I’m not going to do it your day, for David’s sake, I will not do it in your day. Put it into the hand of your son.’ Then He also split off the ten tribes of Israel.

Notice what happened, v 14: “And it came to pass the LORD stirred up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite. He *was* of the king’s seed in Edom.” Edom is Esau, the descendants of Esau—right? Does this sound a little like what’s going on today with the war on terror?

Verse 15: “For it came to pass when David was in Edom... [it gives a little history of it] ...and Joab the commander of the army had gone up to bury the slain after he had stricken every male in Edom—for Joab remained there six months with all Israel, until he had cut off every male in Edom—However Hadad fled, he and certain Edomites of his father’s servants with him, to go to Egypt... [Sound

familiar?] ...when Hadad was still a little child. And they arose out of Midian and came to Paran. And they took men with them out of Paran and they came to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave him a house and appointed food for him and gave him land” (vs 15-18). In other words, he had asylum. Hadad found great favor, and so forth. Then after David died, he left (v 21) Then God stirred up another adversary, Rezon who had fled (v 23).

Verse 24: “And he gathered men to himself and became head over a marauding band after the slaughter by David. And they went to Damascus and dwelt there and reigned in Damascus.” Sound a little bit like what’s going on today?

Listen! What we need to understand is this. *Do not ever say ‘God allows’—God causes!* Whenever there is sin, God raises up the enemy. God does it! *He doesn’t allow it, He causes it!* Here we have terrorists against Israel—don’t we? *Because we become sinful, fat, and sassy, and reject God!* God raised up all of these terrorists. Oh, yes, we fight back. Oh, we protected ourselves. We haven’t had a major incident in ten years—aren’t we wonderful? Really? Is God with you? *No, it’s getting worse!*

Verse 25: “Now, he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, besides the mischief which Hadad *did*. And he hated Israel and reigned over Syria.... [Isn’t that something! Also then within, what took place? *Jeroboam, the son of Nebat!*] ...And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephrathite of Zereda...” (vs 25-26). That’s from Ephraim. What happened? *God sent a prophet to him at Shiloh* and said, ‘All right, I will give you a kingdom like I gave David if you’ll keep My commandments, if you will hearken unto God.’ But did he do it? *No!* Did he have a chance? *Yes!* So what happened? *Because the people wanted their way*, he re-instituted the whole calf-worship system in the northern ten tribes. That became great sin before God. Here’s the lesson: ***You cannot go against God and prosper!***

- God will raise up enemies
- God will send correction
- God will give warnings

If we do not hear, then God takes action!

The solution to the war on terror is complete repentance beginning at the White House and Congress, all the judges, all the governors, and all the people, and all the churches. That’s the solution. God holds **ALL** of them responsible, likewise with the Churches of God.

- Do we love God?
- Do we do things the way that God wants us to?

- Or do we get lifted up in pride and vanity and want our own way?

If we do that, God will let us have it, but He’s going to punish us. Has He punished us? *Yes, He has!* So all the Churches of God need to remember the same thing. ***You can’t fight against God! You can’t go against God!*** If you have faith in God and believe in God, you know that these things are going to have to happen.

Just like the counsel that was given to David by Joab. He said, ‘Don’t do this thing.’ *No, I’ve got to do it!* Just like the counsel given to Solomon, ‘Don’t do this thing.’ *I’ve got to have all these wives.* So then God raises up—He didn’t allow—He raised up the enemy. I don’t know what’s going to happen in the nations of Israel, but it’s going to repeat itself. There is no way it is going to change. *God holds everybody responsible!* Those of us in the Church of God, we need to realize ***we are held doubly responsible because we know!***

We’ll talk in the next segment concerning false prophets, false religion, and what God is saying to all of worldly Christianity, because they are also responsible for all the things that are coming.

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-Corinthians 9:11-14
- 2) Matthew 24:32-33, 3-14
- 3) Matthew 7:12-17
- 4) Isaiah 30:8-14
- 5) Micah 1:1-7
- 6) Micah 2:1-5
- 7) Micah 3:1-11
- 8) 1-Chronicles 21: 1-5, 7-14
- 9) Daniel 4:13-18, 22-31, 37
- 10) 1-Kings 11: 6-7, 9, 14-18, 24-26

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Daniel 9
- Deuteronomy 30
- Ezekiel 23
- 1 Kings 11:5, 21, 23

Also referenced:

Sermons:

- *Tithes and Offerings in the New Testament*
- *Love of God in the Church*

Sermon Series:

- *Who is-was Melchisedec?*
- *Tithing*

Book: *The Destruction of Jerusalem* by George Holford

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