

With God There Are No Unintended Tragedies, No Uncaused Calamities, and No Undisciplined Disasters

By Wayne Camp

TEXT: **Isaiah 24:17-21** Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth.

Amos 3:6 Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?

Isaiah 14:24-27 The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?

Daniel 4:35 And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

Psalms 115:3 But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.

INTRODUCTION

In the first three passages that I have presented there are clear declarations from God's Word that show us that his hand is involved in tragedies, calamities, and disasters when they come upon the earth. The last two verses that I used show that God does according to his will where he pleases, when he pleases, always as he pleases, and only as he pleases. When Hurricane Katrina hit some of our southern states, especially in New Orleans, Louisiana, a well-known religious commentator made the statement that it was a judgment of God upon the wicked city of New Orleans and upon this nation generally. The main stream media jumped on him as did even some TV preachers. If I remember correctly he walked backwards a little bit from what he had said. I don't suppose there are any media persons reading this but if there are some of whom I am not aware let me tell you in advance that I will not take back the things that I am about to say because, with God's help, I intend to substantiate everything that I say by his infallible, inspired word. My subject is With God There Are No Unintended Tragedies, No Uncaused Calamities, And No Undisciplined Disasters.

LET ME FIRST ESTABLISH THAT GOD'S HAND IS INVOLVED IN ALL SUCH TRAGEDIES AS HAVE OCCURRED RECENTLY.

The Psalmist David repeatedly called attention to this fact. The psalmist called desolations the works of the Lord. Psalms 46:8 Come, behold the works of the LORD, what desolations he hath made in the earth. The psalmist called some of God's work toward man terrible works. Psalms 66:5 Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men.

When God was bringing plagues upon the nation of Egypt even the people of Egypt seemed to realize that it was the hand of the God of Israel in those plagues. Exodus 10:7 And Pharaoh's servants said unto him, How long shall this man be a snare unto us? let the men go, that they may serve the LORD their God: knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed? When God brought the last plague upon Egypt even Pharaoh apparently realized that it was the hand of God in the death of the firstborn in Egypt. Pharaoh had originally said who is Lord that I should obey him? Exodus 5:2 And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the LORD, neither will I let Israel go. But after all 10 plagues have hit Pharaoh is singing a different tune. Exodus 12:30-32 And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead. And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel; and go, serve the LORD, as ye have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also.

When Pharaoh sent his warriors after Israel God drowned them in the Red Sea—consider the divine record. Exodus 14:30-31 Thus the LORD saved

Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses.

Thomas Brooks wrote, "God is the great agent in all those dreadful judgments which befall people, cities, and kingdoms. Whoever or whatever be the rod—it is God's hand which gives the stroke! The power of bringing judgments upon cities, God takes to himself: Amos 3:6-'When disaster comes to a city, has not the Lord caused it?'"

WHY GOD SENDS TRAGEDIES, CALAMITIES, AND DISASTERS UPON THE EARTH.

Excessive sin is the root cause of all these terrible things that happen. The great deluge that covered the earth and brought the destruction of the entire human race except for eight people was because of their great sin. Genesis 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Except for Noah and his three sons every man on earth was destroyed in that terrible flood. Except for Noah's wife and the wives of his three sons every woman on Earth was destroyed. Every child regardless of their age was destroyed in that terrible flood. Luke 17:27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Let me remind you again that the reason for this terrible destruction, this divinely intentioned tragedy, this divinely disciplined disaster, this divinely caused calamity was the great sin of mankind at that time. Genesis 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

The reason that God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah was because their sin was great. Genesis 13:13 But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly. Genesis 18:20-21 And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. Need I remind you that only Lot, his wife, and two unmarried daughters were taken out of Sodom before God destroyed it. Lot's wife was turned into a pillar of salt because she disobeyed and looked back toward the city. Other members of Lot's family were destroyed in the great destruction as were all the other inhabitants of Sodom, Gomorrah, and the cities of the plains where they were located. The reason for this destruction was "their sin was very grievous."

Let me remind you of one of our texts for this message. Those who flee in terror will fall into a trap, and those who escape the trap will step into a snare. Destruction falls on you from the heavens. The earth is shaken beneath you. The earth has broken down and has utterly collapsed. Everything is lost, abandoned, and confused. The earth staggers like a drunkard. It trembles like a tent in a storm. It falls and will not rise again, for its sins are very great! Isaiah 24:18-20. This doubtless describes an earthquake such as recently happened in Japan. God himself declared that he would bring such severe judgment upon Jerusalem and Judah that it would cause the ears of those who heard of it to tingle. 2 Kings 21:12 "Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Behold, I am bringing such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle."

This is a description of the destruction that was brought upon the nation of Israel through God's instrument of judgment, Nebuchadnezzar. Jeremiah 51:20-24 Thou art my battle axe and weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms; And with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider; and with thee will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider; With thee also will I break in pieces man and woman; and with thee will I break in pieces old and young; and with thee will I break in pieces the young man and the maid; I will also break in pieces with thee the shepherd and his flock; and with thee will I break in pieces the husbandman and his yoke of oxen; and with thee will I break in pieces captains and rulers. And I will render unto Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their evil that they have done in Zion in your sight, saith the LORD. Notice the reason for this great judgment. "for its sins are very great."

On more than one occasion during the wilderness journey of Israel God brought severe judgment upon them. Paul reminded the church at Corinth of some of these plagues and chastisements which God sent upon Israel because of their sins. 1 Corinthians 10:5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. A few verses later, Paul again warned the Corinthians by using the examples of what happened to Israel. 1 Corinthians 10:8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Notice also, 1 Corinthians 10:9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Once more, 1 Corinthians 10:10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Many Israelites were slain in the wilderness in plagues of serpents and other things that came upon them because of their sins.

When Moses was on the mount receiving the law the children of Israel persuaded Aaron to make them a golden calf that they could worship. When Moses came down from the mountain the people were dancing and singing and worshipping the golden calf. According to God's commandment Moses called out to those who were on the Lord's side to strap their swords on their side and slay some of the people.

Exodus 32:26-28 Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the LORD'S side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. (27) And he said unto them, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour. (28) And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.

On one occasion when Israel fell into idolatry and was worshipping Baalpeor a total of 24,000 people were killed. Paul only mentions 23,000. The explanation is simple. Moses includes in the 24,000 the names of the 1,000 men who were slain in consequence of the judicial examination (Num 25:4), as well as the 23,000 who died of the plague; while Paul only refers to the latter.

One of the greatest famines that ever came upon Israel was brought by God. It was a famine of not hearing the word of God. Amos describes it in the Lord's own words. Amos 8:11-12 Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it.

Micah also described such a time in Israel. Micah 3:5-7 Thus saith the LORD concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth, and cry, Peace; and he that putteth not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him. Therefore night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them. Then shall the seers be ashamed, and the diviners confounded: yea, they shall all cover their lips; for there is no answer of God.

SOME POSSIBLE REASONS FOR THIS GREAT TRAGEDY COMING UPON JAPAN.

I will not declare emphatically why this judgment came upon that nation, God knows. Deuteronomy 29:29 The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.

I do know of some possible reasons for this judgment.

Japan is very materialistic and there are not very many who are dedicated to any religion.

84% to 96% of the Japanese people adhere to Shintoism (worship of one's ancestors) or Buddhism or a combination of the two but much of this is simply out of tradition because of long family practice. 64% of the Japanese people claim that they really do not believe in any god.

Less than 1% of the Japanese are aligned with any "Christian" religion; some say it may be even less than one-half of 1%. This includes Roman Catholic, Protestant, and a few more fundamental churches.

Immorality is rampant in Japan. Groups of businessmen regularly go to Thailand where they engage in homosexual activities for a week or two. Others go for the prostitution that is rampant in Bangkok and other cities.

From a report I read on the Internet I take this quotation, "Japan is a destination country for women and children who are trafficked from China, Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, and to a lesser extent Latin America for sexual and labor exploitation."

Another quotation from the same report is as follows, "Women also voluntarily migrate to work in Japan but are later coerced into exploitative conditions. Women are usually held in debt bondage for \$26,000 to \$43,000 for their living expenses, medical care, and other necessities."

The pornography industry flourishes in Japan—the adult video business is approximately \$1 billion per year. Pornography which involves older people is rapidly increasing. One of the leading stars of the elder pornographic video industry is a 73-year-old man.

The number of Muslims in Japan is on the increase.

When you consider God's judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah and the reason for it you can understand why this judgment may very well have come upon Japan.

According to Conservative Alerts (3/28/2011) "... the governor of Tokyo, Shintaro Ishihara, says he fears the Japanese people were being „punished.“” He is probably right. According to Lee Jay Walker, writer for the Modern Tokyo Times (who is no fan of the governor) the governor “linked the earthquake and tsunami with „divine punishment” because of the egoism of Japanese people.” The governor said, “Japanese politics is tainted with egoism (egotism?) and populism. We need to use tsunami to wipe out egoism, which has rusted onto the mentality of Japanese over a long period of time. I think (the disaster) is tembatsu (divine punishment), although I feel sorry for disaster victims.” David was clear on this matter of divine judgment on wicked. Psalms 75:8

For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture; and he poureth out of the same: but the dregs thereof, all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them

“... the governor of Tokyo, Shintaro Ishihara, says he fears the Japanese people were being `punished.”

I should also point out that such judgments as the earthquake and tsunami that recently occurred may also be intended to serve as a warning to other nations such as our own nation.

Our nation would be wise to heed the warning and repent. Job 28:28
And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

Remember Sumatra: Dec. 26, 2004. An earthquake of the magnitude 9.1 is remembered for the deadly tsunami that the undersea quake let loose. The earthquake was felt in Sumatra, parts of Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Thailand, and the ensuing tsunami hit 14 countries as far away as South Africa. The death toll was over 225,000 people.

When God keeps silent and does not rain severe judgment anywhere men begin to think that HE is all together as we are. Psalms 50:21-22
These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. (22) Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. When God stretches out his arm to bring judgment upon a nation or region or a city none can stay his hand or say under him what doest thou?

Let us remember the questions of the Psalmist. Psalms 94:10 He that chastiseth the heathen, shall not he correct? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know?

God is to be praised for his mighty power, his wonderful justice, and righteous judgment upon these heathen nations.

If God wills to do so he can bring terrible judgment without earthquakes, without pestilence, and without famine. He can simply send his angel while men sleep and kill them in their sleep. He did this when Sennacherib king of Assyria came against Jerusalem. Isaiah 37:36 Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the

morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. Imagine this judgment! In one single night while the camp of the Assyrians slept an Angel of the Lord silently slays 185,000 men. God's arm is not shortened that he cannot save. Neither is his arm shortened that he cannot slightly a multitude in one night. Our great God is terrible in judgment when he lifts up his sword against men.

God sometimes brings severe judgment upon his own people to bring about repentance. Hosea 5:14-15 For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue him. I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early. Hosea 13:8 I will meet them as a bear that is bereaved of her whelps, and will rend the caul of their heart, and there will I devour them like a lion: the wild beast shall tear them.

CONCLUSION:

God has more weapons in his arsenal than we could even consider in any one message. He uses earthquakes, hurricanes, famine, pestilence, wicked kings and rulers with their armies, floods and sometimes a combination of these to execute his fierce wrath and justice for sinful cities and sinful nations. I pray that God may awaken us if we are still asleep as a nation. From time to time in history God has stepped out with special judgments upon cities and nations of the world. It is no accident when these things come. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God! Hebrews 10:31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Luke 21:11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.

Hebrews 12:29 For our God is a consuming fire.

Let me reiterate, With God There Are No Unintended Tragedies, No Uncaused Calamities, And No Undisciplined Disasters. To everything there is a purpose. While we may not know all the reasons that such judgments happen, we can know that God is on the throne working all things after the counsel of his own will. Job 34:29 When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only.

Isaiah 24:17-21 Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit; and he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare: for the windows from on high are open, and the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.

Psalms 33:12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

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