

Does God Still Speak Through Signs of Nature? The End Time Signs of Nature

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From Lamb and Lion Ministries

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These headlines are enough to make you think that all of nature is spiraling out of control. And that, in fact, is exactly what is happening from a human viewpoint. But spiritually, the Bible assures us that God is in control, and what we are witnessing is the fulfillment of end time prophecies.

Even secular writers have recognized the phenomenon. Take, for example, Michael Snyder who maintains a blog called The Economic Collapse. He recently wrote:

Over the last several decades, have we ever seen a year start as strangely as 2020 has? Global weather patterns have gone completely nuts, large earthquakes are popping off like firecrackers, it looks like the plague of locusts in Africa could soon develop into the worst in modern history, and a massive plague of bats is severely terrorizing parts of Australia. On top of all that, African Swine Fever is wiping out millions upon millions of pigs around the globe, the H1N1 Swine Flu is killing people in Taiwan, there have been H5N1 Bird Flu outbreaks in China and in India, and the H5N8 Bird Flu has made an appearance at a poultry facility in Saudi Arabia. And then, of course, there is the coronavirus outbreak...

Those of us who specialize in the teaching of Bible prophecy, refer to all these natural disasters as “Signs of Nature.” They constitute one of six categories of signs that the Bible tells us to watch for in the end times. This category of end time signs is a very important one, and yet, it is the category that receives the least respect. There are two reasons for this — one that is conceptual, and the other that is philosophical.

Problems with the Signs of Nature

The conceptual problem resides in the fact that there have always been signs of nature. So, when confronted with the prophesied signs of nature, many people shrug their shoulders and ask, “What else is new? There have always been tornados, hurricanes, and earthquakes.”

What they overlook is that Jesus said these signs would be like “*birth pangs*” ([Matthew 24:8](#)). That means they will increase in frequency and intensity the closer we get to the Lord’s return. And that is exactly what appears to be happening today.

The philosophical problem many people have with the signs of nature is due to the fact that we have been brainwashed by Western scientific rationalism into believing that for something to exist, you must be able to see it, measure it, weigh it and dissect it.

In contrast, the Bible teaches there is a whole realm of the supernatural that cannot normally be perceived by the senses. This realm includes angels, demons, and the operation of the Holy Spirit. It also includes God's intervention into history from time to time through supernatural manifestations and natural disasters.

God and Signs of Nature

Sometimes God uses signs of nature to underline the importance of major events. Thus, at the birth of Jesus, God placed a special light in the heavens, probably a manifestation of His Shekinah glory. When Jesus was crucified, the earth experienced three hours of darkness and a major earthquake. And the Bible says that when Jesus returns, the world will experience the greatest earthquake in its history. Every island will be moved, valleys will be lifted, mountains will be lowered, and the city of Jerusalem will be lifted up like a jewel, possibly becoming the highest place on earth ([Revelation 16:18-21](#) and [Isaiah 40:3-5](#)).

More often, God uses signs of nature as remedial judgments to call nations to repentance. Both the Bible and history attest to the fact that God has a pattern of dealing with nations. When a nation rebels against God, He responds first by raising up prophetic voices to call the nation to repentance. These are not necessarily people with supernatural knowledge of the future. They simply have the gift of discernment to see where a nation is missing God's mark. To put it another way, they know how to apply the Scriptures to contemporary events.

If a nation refuses to listen to the prophetic voices, God will then send remedial judgments. These can take many forms. Deuteronomy 28 mentions economic failure, rebellion of youth, an epidemic of divorce, confusion in government, foreign domination and military defeat. The chapter also mentions natural disasters like drought, crop failure and pestilence.

Finally, if a nation digs in against God and sets its jaw against His calls to repentance, a point of no return will be reached — often referred to as "*when the wound becomes incurable*" ([Nahum 3:19](#), [Jeremiah 30:12](#) and [Micah 1:9](#)). At this point, the Lord will deliver the nation from judgment to destruction. That destruction may occur quickly — as with Babylon and the Soviet Union — or it may occur gradually over a period of time, as with the Roman Empire.

Examples of Remedial Judgments

There are many examples of remedial judgments in the Bible that involve natural disasters. Take, for example, the plagues with which God afflicted Egypt in order to convince Pharaoh that he should release the children of Israel from captivity. The Lord sent plagues of frogs, gnats, flies and locusts. In addition, He contaminated the nation's water, afflicted the livestock with pestilence, struck the people with sores and boils, engulfed the land in a thick darkness and finally took the lives of the firstborn of both men and livestock.

When King Ahab led the Israelites into the worship of a pagan god, the Lord raised up the prophet Elijah to call the king and his people to repentance. When they ignored Elijah, the Lord then put a remedial judgment on the land in the form of a severe three and a half year drought (1 Kings 17 & 18).

The book of Joel tells about a locust invasion that afflicted Judah. This was one of the worst calamities that could befall an agricultural society. It appears that people began bemoaning their "bad luck." That's when God sent the prophet Joel to inform them that the disaster had nothing to do with luck. Joel boldly proclaimed that the locusts had been sent by God to call the people to repentance. He warned that if they did not repent, the Lord would send something even worse — an enemy army. The people ignored Joel and the prophets who followed him, and God ultimately sent the army, delivering them from judgment to destruction.

Seventy years later, when the Babylonian captivity ended, the Jews who returned to Judah laid the foundation for a new temple and then quickly lost interest in the project. They turned their attention instead to the building of their personal homes. For 14 years the foundation of the temple stood vacant. Finally, God raised up an elderly, tough-talking prophet named Haggai. He confronted the people by asking them: "*Have you noticed that when you plant your crops, they are destroyed by root rot? And when you replant them, they are destroyed again by hail? And when you replant, a wind storm comes? God is speaking to you! He is calling you to repent of your misplaced*

priorities and give attention to the rebuilding of His temple.” For once, the people listened, obeyed and were blessed.

The Nature of God

God has continued throughout history to use signs of nature to call nations to repentance. Some people say, “Oh no, God doesn’t do that anymore because this is the ‘Age of Grace.’”

Well, the first problem with that statement is that it implies there was a previous time of no grace. The fact of the matter is that there is only one way of salvation that has ever existed — namely, grace through faith ([Joel 2:32](#)).

Furthermore, the Bible says God is “*the same yesterday, today and forever*” ([Hebrews 13:8](#)). There is no such thing as the Old Testament God of wrath and the New Testament God of grace. God does not change ([Malachi 3:6](#)). He is immutable.

The Old Testament God of wrath is the One who showed grace toward the wicked city of Nineveh when its people repented in response to the message of Jonah. The New Testament God of grace is the One who warned the church at Thyatira that if it continued to tolerate a false prophetess, He would “*cast her upon a bed of sickness and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation.*” Further, He threatened to “*kill her children with pestilence*” ([Revelation 2:22-23](#)).

Our God is a God of grace, mercy and love. But He is also a God of holiness, righteousness and justice. The balanced view of God is presented by the prophet Nahum. Speaking of God’s grace, he wrote: “*The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knows those who take refuge in Him*” ([Nahum 1:7](#)). But Nahum warned that the same God is One who is righteous and holy and who will not tolerate sin ([Nahum 1:2-3](#)):

*A jealous and avenging God is the LORD;
The LORD is avenging and wrathful.
The LORD takes vengeance on His adversaries,
And He reserves wrath for His enemies.
The LORD is slow to anger and great in power,
And the LORD will by no means leave the guilty
unpunished.*

The Role of Satan

Some counter by trying to argue that natural calamities come from Satan and not God. But the Bible teaches that God is sovereign. Satan is not free to do anything he pleases. When he wanted to torment Job, he had to ask God’s permission, and when he was granted permission, God laid down rules about what he could and could not do ([Job 1:6-12](#)).

The Bible says God does not tempt us ([James 1:13](#)). Yet Jesus taught us to pray, “*Lead us not into temptation*” ([Matthew 6:13](#)). How can these statements be reconciled? The answer is that although Satan is the tempter, he cannot do so unless God allows it.

Again, God is sovereign, and nothing happens that He does not allow, either in His perfect will or His permissive will. That is the reason the Bible attributes all natural disasters to God.

Crucial Questions

Are all natural calamities a product of Man’s sin? Yes, absolutely. The original creation was perfect. Natural calamities are a result of the curse that God placed on the creation in response to Man’s sin. When Jesus returns, the curse will be lifted and natural calamities will cease.

Do all natural calamities represent remedial judgments of God? No — most are products of the natural processes of our weather systems.

How then can we determine when a natural calamity is a remedial judgment? One important factor is the timing of the event as it relates to the sins of the nation. Another factor is the magnitude of the event. Remedial judgments are designed to have great shock value in order to capture people’s attention and force them to think with an eternal perspective. The most important factor is God’s Spirit witnessing to the spirits of those to whom He has given the gift of prophecy. They will be motivated to speak forth with a united voice.

The Example of the United States

We can see all these principles operating in the history of our own nation. We were founded as a Christian nation, committed to Christian values, and God greatly blessed us. But in the 1960s, we began to thumb our nose at God as a cultural revolution was launched. Our society quickly descended into a cesspool of sexual promiscuity, drug abuse, abortion on demand, legalized gambling, rampant blasphemy and a flood of pornography. Our national slogan became, “If it feels good, do it!” We adopted a hedonistic lifestyle, calling evil good and good evil.

God responded by raising up prophetic voices to call the nation to repentance. One of those was Dave Wilkerson, pastor of Times Square Church in New York City. I call him “God’s Jeremiah to America.” In the 1970s he began writing a series of books in which he clearly outlined the sins of America and warned of judgments from God if we did not repent. Like Jeremiah, his popularity plummeted because people — even church people — did not want to hear his “doomsday message.”

When the prophetic voices were ignored, God began to place remedial judgments on our nation — things like our defeat in the Vietnam War, the AIDS epidemic, the plague of sexually transmitted diseases, the scourge of homosexuality and natural disasters in the form of monster earthquakes, killer tornados and hurricanes. We even experienced an unprecedented volcanic eruption of Mount St. Helens in 1980 — an eruption so severe that it blackened the sky from Seattle to New York City and as far south as Oklahoma.

The culmination of the remedial judgments seemed to come with the 9/11 terrorist assault in 2001, when two symbols of American pride were attacked: the Twin Towers in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. The towers stood as symbols of our wealth; the Pentagon symbolized our military power.

As I have stated before, I believe this event was a wake-up call from God for our nation to repent. Instead, like a drowsy man who doesn’t want to wake-up, we merely rolled over and hit the snooze button on the alarm clock.

End Time Signs of Nature

In Jesus’ Olivet Discourse, delivered to His disciples on the Mount of Olives during the last week of His life, He specifically spoke of signs of nature to watch for in the end times.

Matthew recorded Him saying, “...*and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes...*” ([Matthew 24:7](#)). Luke’s account of the same speech is more detailed. He quotes Jesus in Luke 21 as saying:

*11)... there will be great earthquakes,
and in various places plagues and famines;
and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven...
25) There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars,
and on the earth dismay among nations,
in perplexity at the roaring of the sea...*

We are witnessing all these things today worldwide. All sorts of weather calamities are happening more frequently and causing greater damage — hurricanes, tornados, earthquakes, floods and forest fires.

Additionally, famine continues to rage throughout Africa and other Third World areas. Plagues like AIDS, SARS, Ebola and COVID-19 continue to challenge and perplex medical science. A new danger is the return of old diseases thought to be under control — due to the development of antibiotic resistant strains.

And for the first time ever, we are living in a time when we can see incredible sights in outer space due to space telescopes and satellite probes which we have sent to other planets — all in fulfillment of [Luke 21:25](#) which says that in the end times, “*there will be signs in the sun, moon and stars...*”

The Birth Pangs Effect

With regard to natural calamities, some simply dismiss them in a cavalier manner by asking, “What else is new?” But as I have already mentioned, Jesus said that the signs in the end times would be like “birth pangs” (Matthew 24:8), meaning they will increase in frequency and intensity. And that is what has been happening.

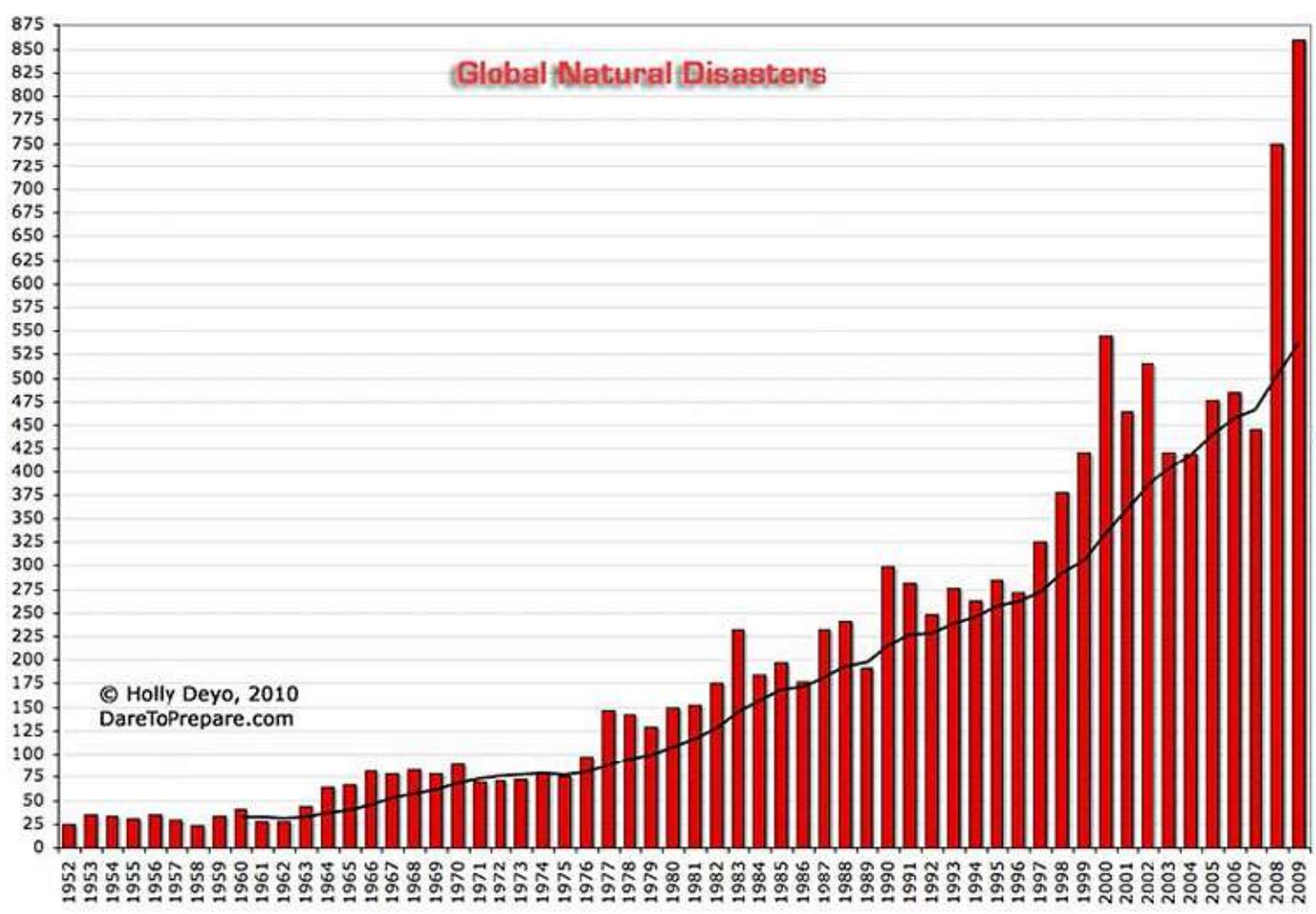
Take earthquakes for example. In the decade of the 1980s, there were a total of 1,085 earthquakes worldwide that measured 6.0 or greater in magnitude. In the 1990s there were 1,492. In the first ten years of this century, the number jumped to 1,591. With regard to monster quakes of 8.0 or greater, in the 1980s there were four; in the 1990s, six; and in the first decade of this century, 13.1

There's a better way to look at natural disasters than to consider them by category, such as the frequency and intensity of tornadoes, for the number and intensity will go up and down from year to year, although showing an overall increase over a period of time. The best way to view natural disasters is to consider all of them grouped together. When you do that, the statistics show that they are rapidly increasing, from an average of 300 per year in the 1980s, to 490 per year in the 1990s, to almost 900 per year in the first ten years of this century.²

Oddly, one of the reasons for considering natural disasters overall rather than individually is because one type of natural disaster can restrain other types.

Let me illustrate what I mean: In 2012, our nation experienced one of its worst droughts in modern history — with over 61% of America affected. Now, one side effect of that drought is that we experienced the lowest number of tornados in 60 years — after all, you can't have tornados without thunderstorms. The same was true of flooding.

The chart below illustrates the exponential growth of disasters worldwide. Ron Fraser, the author of the article that the chart illustrates, asserts: "The facts are that statistics prove natural disasters have risen startlingly since 1990."³ The Borgen Project (a non-profit organization focusing on world poverty), has labeled the increase in disasters worldwide as "skyrocketing."⁴ The fact of the matter is that the severity and cost of the disasters have been rapidly increasing, and "record disasters are becoming commonplace."⁵



Fraser presents convincing arguments that 1989 was the watershed year — “a threshold from which natural disasters escalated most dramatically compared to past eras in history.”⁶

The Message

It seems rather obvious that God is shouting at us through increasing natural disasters that “Jesus is coming soon!” And yet, few seem to be getting the message — even those in the Christian community.

All of which reminds me of the cartoon below about how people in the time of the prophet Haggai seemed to ignore his warnings that the natural disasters they were experiencing were due to the fact that they were postponing the rebuilding of the Lord’s temple.

“Global Warming”

This leads to a frequently asked question: “What is the prophetic significance of ‘Global Warming?’”

The answer is that the whole concept is a political ploy which liberals are using in an attempt to gain greater control over society. The fact that it is a non-issue was pointed out brilliantly in a 2020 article by Jack Kinsella, a writer for Hal Lindsey.⁷

He observed that 96% of all greenhouse gases and other so-called global warming emissions originate naturally from the oceans that cover five-sixths of the earth’s surface. Thus, as he put it, “That leaves only 4% to divide up between human activity, volcanoes, rotting vegetables, cow flatulence, etc.” It is estimated that the human portion of that 4% is 14%, and 14% of 4% is .056!

Even the advocates of Global Warming have recognized the absurdity of their claim that humans are responsible for the earth’s warming. So, Global Warming has morphed into “Climate Change.” And, as Harold Ambler, writing for *The Huffington Post* has observed, “the term, Climate Change, is a redundancy because the climate has always changed, and always will.”⁸

For example, scientific studies have shown the following climate periods in world history:⁹

1. The warm Roman Optimum (200 BC to 400 AD)
2. The cold Dark Ages (400 AD to 900 AD)
3. The warm Medieval Period (900 AD to 1300 AD)
4. The Little Ice Age (1300 to 1850)
5. The Modern Warm Age (since 1850)

I feel compelled to point out that the Bible does prophesy that a super-hot time is coming when God will envelop the earth in fire to burn away the pollution of Satan’s last revolt, which will occur at the end of Jesus’ millennial reign. Out of that fiery inferno will come the New Earth, which will serve as the foundation for the New Jerusalem where the Redeemed will reside forever.

Conclusion

So, true global warming is on its way! But, more importantly, the Signs of the Times are screaming that we are on the threshold of the Tribulation. And that means, in turn, that Jesus is at the very gate of Heaven, ready to step out on a cloud and come for His Church.

Meanwhile, the Church needs to wake up to the Signs of Nature and all the other signs that are converging for the first time ever. But for that to happen, our nation’s pastors need to get serious about the fact that we are living in the season of the Lord’s return, and they need to start proclaiming that fact from their pulpits.

The Church needs to stop yawning and start yearning for the return of Jesus.

Maranatha!

References

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