

Sudden Destruction

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson's sermon warns of impending judgment and the necessity for believers to heed God's warnings and prepare their hearts.

Duration: 56:03

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:1

Topics: "Destruction"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of watching and being sober in the face of impending judgment. He references 1 Thessalonians 5:6, where Paul urges believers to stay awake and alert. The preacher explains that while destruction and tragedy may befall the world, it signifies a new day for God's people. He further discusses the concept of sudden destruction, comparing it to the pains of childbirth, and warns that America will experience intensified warnings and catastrophes before its final destruction.

Transcript

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None of these messages are copyrighted and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to your friends. I've not consulted with the other pastors except just in passing, and I think they would bear out what I'm about to tell you. Now as we keep making more and more progress here in Times Square, and people are praying and interceding, the devil and all the adversaries of hell have come out of hiding.

And this church is under tremendous attack of Satan. We don't give him glory, we don't give him an edge, it's because the Bible said, greater is he that's in us than he that's in the world. But it comes across, we have occult people walk in here.

Their spirits are strong spirits they try to overwhelm, but they can't overwhelm the spirit of the living God. And tonight, I would like every one of you who believe that when the spirit of the Lord, when the enemy comes like a flood, the spirit of the Lord raises up a standard. And that's the power of the Holy Ghost.

And you have the Holy Spirit abiding in you, don't you? Tell you what I'd like you to do. I know you've been standing and sitting quite a bit, but I want you to stand in prayer and help me in the spirit of the Lord to take power and authority over every spirit that would try to hinder us from receiving the true word of God, because we need the Lord to break through to our hearts tonight. I want you to raise your hands and let's agree tonight that God will break through here, and in every service of this church, Heavenly Father, we pray that you would take authority over every principality of power of darkness, bind every lying spirit, bind that which is of Satan, bind that which is of the enemy.

Come forth in power and glory and unction. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Lord, take your authority.

Let the word go forth with spirit and unction and power. Lord, you're sending revival at the time of prayer to New York City. Lord, reclaim it now.

We bind those enemy forces. We bind everything that's unlike you, Jesus. We take your authority tonight.

We take your authority, Lord. It's not ours. It's yours.

It's your authority. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus. Hallelujah.

Oh, spirit of living God, bring forth your holy word tonight. Speak your word, Lord, and break every enemy force. Satan has no place in this house.

Satan has no place in this house tonight. Glory be to Jesus. Glory be to Him.

Hallelujah. Blessed be the name of the Lord. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

Blessed be His name. Blessed be His name. Hallelujah.

You may be seated. Thank you. My message tonight, sudden destruction, sudden destruction as to avail upon a woman with child.

First Thessalonians 5, start reading the first three verses, please. I'm reading from King James. But of the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you.

For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as to avail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. That's as far as I'm going to go right now.

We'll continue a little further in the course of the message. But give me your good ear and look at me right in the eye, please. The judgments of God strike suddenly, but never once are they without warning.

God always warns before He sends judgment. God promises, in fact, that He'll do absolutely nothing until He warns His servants, the prophets, and His watchmen. I'm reading from Amos 3 and 7. Surely the Lord God will do nothing, He will do nothing, unless He revealeth His secret unto His servants, the prophets.

The lion hath roared. Who will not fear? The Lord God has spoken. Who can but prophesy? Now here God promises, I'll have a trumpet blasted before judgment comes.

He said, I'll roar like a lion to bring the fear of me upon the people. God says, I'll not judge, I'll not send judgment upon you, upon your nation, upon the world, until there's plenty of warning. It may come suddenly, but it will not be unexpected.

It will not come without warning. And the Lord shall be seen over thee, and His arrow shall go forth as the lightning, and the Lord God shall blow the trumpet. That's Zechariah 9.14. I want you to turn to Zephaniah with me, please.

Go to the last chapter, last book of the Old Testament, and I'm doing this for the new converts here. And by the way, if you plan to come back, your first time here at Times Square Church, you plan to come back, please bring your Bible. You'll need it here.

Zephaniah. If you go to Malachi and go four books left, you'll find Zephaniah. It's right between Habakkuk and Haggai.

Does that help you? Zephaniah, first chapter. Now, keep your finger on 1 Thessalonians, because we're going to go right back to that. Zephaniah, the first chapter.

Starting to read verse 14. Zephaniah 1, starting to read at verse 14. Do you have it? The great day of the Lord is near.

It is what? In fact, the prophet seems to emphasize, he says again, it is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the Lord, the mighty man shall cry there bitterly. That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress. A day of wasteness and desolation.

A day of darkness and gloominess. A day of clouds and thick darkness. A day of the trumpet and alarm.

Because the fence cities and against the high towers. Against the fence cities and against the high towers. And I will bring distress upon all men, that they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord.

And their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as the dung. Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath. Friends, all the wealth of America doesn't mean anything when God sends judgment.

The prophets say they're going to throw their gold and their silver on the streets. They're going to walk on it. It's going to be absolutely worthless.

And I'm telling you now, you people are hoarding gold. It's going to be absolutely worthless in the day of judgment. Absolutely worthless.

Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's wrath. But the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy. For he shall make a speedy riddance, a sudden riddance of all them that dwell in the land.

Now will you look at this please. It's a time of gloominess, of darkness, thick darkness, of judgment. But it's also, verse 16, a day of what? The trumpet and the alarm.

It's a day of the trumpet and of the alarm. I wrote a book called Set the Trumpet to Your Mouth. And it's based on Hosea.

Don't turn there, but rather on Hosea, eighth chapter and the first verse. Set the trumpet to thy mouth. And that's the name of the book.

Because for three months I heard a trumpet sound. I couldn't sleep. I was standing on a wall.

I don't claim to be a prophet, but one of his many, many watchmen. God has thousands of watchmen set on the wall now. And they hear the sound of a trumpet.

And God made it clear to me, set that trumpet to your mouth. Ezekiel said, when I bring the sword upon the land, if the people of the land take a man of their coast and set him for their watchman, if when he seeeth the sword come upon the land and he blows the trumpet and he warns the people, then whosoever heareth the sound of the trumpet and taketh not warning, if the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be upon his own head. And that's the verse that prompted me to go ahead because I was talking about a hydrogen holocaust coming to America.

And how do you do that unless you're prompted by this? By the word of God that says if you don't deliver your soul, the blood's upon your own hand. And the Lord said if you blow the trumpet and they don't heed, then the blood is upon their own hand, but you have delivered your soul. Now God blows the trumpet through the voice of his watchman and his prophets.

Now the trumpet in Hebrew means a reverberating blast, a warning. A reverberating blast. Listen to what Paul said.

Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed.

1 Corinthians 15, 51 and 52. Now we are excited about that moment, aren't we? Changed in the twinkling of an eye. No Pentecostal song by the name of that.

Changed in the twinkling of an eye. The trumpets will sound, the dead shall be raised, we'll be changed in the twinkling of an eye. The Bible says at the last trump.

That suggests there were other trumpet sounds. This is the last of a series. Now I do believe there's going to be an angelic trumpet blast.

The angels will come forth, as they did on Mount Sinai. That long, piercing, mournful blast. When judgment's about to fall.

Now there's going to be a joyous sound of a trumpet when the angels come back, and we come back in glory with Christ. I believe there will be an angelic trumpet. But I also believe the prophets are talking about the voices of men.

At the last trump. At the last trump. There's coming a day when we will preach our last sermon at Times Square Church.

There's coming a day when God is going to raise up all of his servants, his watchmen, and his prophets, and they're going to preach the last trump. The last trump's going to sound. It happened to Noah.

In his wicked day, God said, I'm going to destroy it, you have 120 years. And God pinpointed the very day. It was going to happen on the 17th.

Day of the second month. This is 120 years later. And on the 16th.

The last trump sounds for Noah's generation. It's the 16th. The second month of the year.

And Noah stands for the last time. They've mocked him, they've ridiculed him, but God told him. Evidently, I'm sure there must have been some inclination.

This was going to be the last time, because God says, You preached it on the 16th, on the 17th. They got into the ark. Let me read it to you, you don't have to turn to Genesis 7-11.

In the 600th year of Noah's life. In the second month. The 17th day of the month.

The same day. Where all the fountains of the great deep broken up. And the windows of heaven were opened.

And do you know the story? The earth was drowned in a mighty flood. Everything that breathed died. The last trump sound on the 16th.

Oh friends, we've got a God who keeps a calendar. He has it all lined out. And the only reason he delays is in his patience.

He may move up his calendar a little bit. As he did for Josiah. Because under Manasseh, the nation was so wicked, God said, I'm determined to send judgment.

Josiah comes along, and the judgment is delayed for a number of years. But God said, you will not see it, but it's still determined. Holden the prophet has said, the best you can do, is to delay those coming judgments.

No wonder Paul the Apostle starts, I'll go back to 1 Thessalonians 5. No wonder Paul writes, the first verse again, let's read it. Now look at that. How do they know perfectly that the Lord is going to come as a thief in the night? He said, I shouldn't even have to tell you.

I shouldn't even have to talk about it. You know it. How is it? He's writing to the church of Thessalonica, and like Times Square Church, this letter was received when that church was only 6 months old.

6 months old. And he's writing to a 6 month old church. And he's saying, you know perfectly, you know very well, that that day of the Lord, now that day of the Lord mentioned here is the day of judgment.

He said, it's going to come suddenly as a thief in the night. And you know it perfectly well. How could they know it perfectly well? 6 month old church.

It had to be because Timothy, Silvanus, and Paul, who all preached at this church, must have preached a lot. They must have preached more. They had the law.

They had the prophets. Do you know they had the same warnings that you and I have here tonight in Times Square Church? They had it all. Paul was a faithful preacher.

He said, let me show you the way God works. Let me show you His pattern. How He works on a time clock.

Let me show you how it comes on the 17th day of the 2nd month. In the 600th year of Noah. Let me show you how it happened to the very day in all the Old Testament prophets.

In fact, this epistle was written 52 to 53 AD. Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD. They were less than 20 years away from the fulfillment of the prophecy of Jesus, of the destruction of Jerusalem.

He was trying to set them in their heart for what was coming. He said, you know perfectly well it's going to come like a thief in the night. It'll come suddenly, when it's not expected.

You know what Paul was saying as far as I'm concerned? It's perfectly clear that God's judgments fall suddenly like a thief, but no believer should ever be surprised. There should be nobody in this church ever surprised at what God's about to do. You should not be caught unaware.

That day should not overtake you as a thief, the Bible says. Not at all. He said, you know God's Word, you've seen the record.

And then Paul proceeds to tell them what it's going to be like when that day of judgment comes. I'd like to try to open that to you if the Holy Spirit allows us tonight. And then how to act when this hour comes.

On the brink of judgment, how should we behave? Alright, first of all, Paul says the day of judgment will come when society becomes obsessed with prosperity and security. Do you think we live in that kind of a day? Look at verse 3. For when they shall say peace and safety, sudden destruction cometh upon them. Now the Greek word that Paul uses here for peace is *airene* which means prosperity.

The root word of that Greek word peace is prosperity. Look it up, it's very very clear. The Greek word for safety is better interpreted security.

Prosperity and security. And the apostle says, you'll know, you will see, I want you to understand it perfectly because the sign is very clear. When men begin to say prosperity and security, when men's hearts become obsessed with riches and money madness and greed and accumulating and hoarding.

Jesus warned us it would be a time when men's hearts would fail them for fear of watching over the things that are coming upon the earth. And men will begin to yearn for something secure. They'll want to find a place where their investments won't melt away like wax.

Trying to find a retreat somewhere should the bombs begin to fall. Or a warning come. A secure haven for their assets.

But the Bible doesn't say it will be a time of peace and safety. It says they will say peace and safety. Because there is no peace to the wicked the Bible says.

There is no security as far as the world is concerned. Never in history, never in history of this nation, have men, have the Americans been so driven by a quest for money? It's called the American dream. The American dream is success.

The American dream is a Mercedes. The American dream is the biggest house you can buy, even if you can't afford it. The American dream is to be number one.

The American dream is not to fail. But one of these days soon the American dream is going to become the American nightmare. Please, look up.

The American nightmare. The stock market's become one gigantic gambling casino. Millions of Americans are playing the numbers, they're playing the lottery, hoping to strike it rich suddenly.

This city has gone crazy with lottery, the whole state. The whole nation will become one mass lottery. Everybody looking for an American dream, everybody trying to get that little nest egg.

Peace, security, prosperity. It's even infiltrated and corrupted the church of Jesus Christ. How Paul would have grieved if he knew a day would come, if he could have foreseen a day like ours, when preachers of the gospel would take the precious covenant of Christ and make it a covenant of cash.

Replacing the cross and putting a dollar sign over it. The church of Jesus Christ once stood before the world as a testimony against greed, and materialism, against the love of things, against self-love, against hoarding, against covetousness. But now the world sees the church as its biggest competitor for the good life.

They turn on Christian television programs and all they see is wealth. And they hear people say, God wants you rich. I wonder what it would be like if that lonely man, that lonely Nazarene came riding in his donkey backstage, in his sandals, they'd chase him out.

Because he hadn't been to make-up yet. And not been for Caesars. He had no place to lay his head.

But now the world laughs, because the church has rejected the message of suffering of Christ and Paul, instead decided to indulge in riches and pleasure. Now, sudden destruction does not necessarily mean only a hydrogen holocaust. Because one sudden event could strike America, one single catastrophe, and the American dream could be over.

In an hour. The judgment that suddenly fallen on God's house in America, is going to fall on our society at home. The church woke up one day, didn't it? Years ago, to a terrible, terrible tragedy that made the whole church blush.

Because we were told that American charismatic evangelist, television evangelist, spent three million dollars in one year buying fancy cars and jewelry, an air-conditioned doghouse. And I'm not laughing, folks. And you shouldn't be either.

Three million dollars, and the world laughs. The barrooms went buzz, and they held up their drinks, and they were toasting hellfire preachers who drive Mercedes. And we all blushed, because Jesus became the song of drunkards.

The ungodly laughed and they mocked. The name of Jesus became the butt of jokes and satire. And then once again, just recently, in one hour, a newscast.

And suddenly, judgment again on the house of God. Because suddenly the whole world was told the nation's number one sin preacher was caught in sin. In Times Square Church, when this was announced, I heard some screaming.

I heard people groaning, and people came to me and said, Please tell me it wasn't so! And now we watch the destruction. Amidst all the sham and the shame, these awesome words of the Scripture from Peter come back. For the time has come that judgment must begin in the house of God.

Why are we surprised? Why are we surprised? Why are we so shocked? Judgment must begin in the house of God. We've been telling the world for years that judgment's coming. And if we've been telling the world that it's coming, it begins in the house of God.

You can't preach judgment on the world without waiting for it to hit the house of God first. God's willing to let His name be mocked, just to wake up the church and give one last trumpet call to the world. And if it begin in us, listen to it, 1 Peter 4, 17, just listen.

And if it begin, that's judgment, if judgment begin in us, His house, His people, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? Now God's judgment in His house are sudden, and they're frightful, and God has warned, He said, I'm going to send judgment on my house, it's going to make everyone's ears tingle. You can go to the Old Testament, you'll find Scripture after Scripture. Now, don't turn, just let me go through some of them with you.

God was about to destroy the house of Eli, because there was sin in Eli's house. He had become indulgent, He allowed His boys to commit fornication, His sons to commit adultery right at the temple gate, right at the tabernacle door. And He wouldn't, He wouldn't correct them.

And here's what the Scripture says, God said, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of everyone that hears it shall tingle. I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knew all about. God came down through the prophets with another message during the time of Manasseh.

Corruption had spread, Bob mentioned it this morning in his message, the great Manasseh caused Israel to sin above all the kings of the earth. And when God sent the message, He said, I am going to bring such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever hears it, both his ears shall tingle. 2 Kings 21-12.

You see it in Jeremiah. Jeremiah was told that sudden judgment was coming on Israel. And God said, tell him this, I'm going to do such a work, He said, of judgment, that whosoever hears it, his ears shall tingle.

Now what's He mean? You find it all over the Old Testament. God says, I'm going to judge my house, it's going to be so awesome, it's going to be so incredible, everyone who hears it, their ears are going to tingle. Now that word tingle in Hebrew means to rattle the ears and make them red with shame.

God said, I'm going to rattle your ears. I'm going to make your ears blush. He's talking about the whole world, the wicked, are going to have blushing ears.

I believe what's happening in the church has caused the world to blush even. The judgments are so awesome. And folks, it's not just happening to television ministries that are well known.

Jesus Christ, our Lord, is shaking up the entire church around the world, and especially in America. All He's doing is turning over the shovel. To expose all the worms.

Because He wants a true planting. All He's doing is tearing down the veil. You know when the veil was went in two? It started at the top, didn't it? And then came all the way down, so that the Holy of Holies could be seen.

He started at the top, and He came right down. It split, the veil split from top to bottom. That's what He's doing now, from the top to the bottom, He's splitting it.

And thank God, I'll tell you why. What really stirs my heart and breaks my heart. Do you see what the devil thought he was doing? He thought he was going to discount all holiness preaching.

He's going to discount everything that has to do with hellfire and brimstone. He's going to try to stop and silence the voice of the prophets in the land. He's going to make the watchman seem to be nothing but preachers of darkness.

Oh, how many letters I've received in the mail. And they said, well, Vance was so and so, preached against sin. He preached holiness, and he had this thing hidden in his life.

And I can hear what they're trying to say. They don't want to come out and say it, but it's hinted at. You preach righteousness if there's something hidden in your life.

And so now there's suspicion. Everywhere, absolute suspicion. But I want you to know, it wasn't the devil that did all the exposing, it was the Holy Ghost.

And if the Holy Ghost exposed it, He knows how to handle it. He knows how to handle it. Oh folks, it's just begun.

It has just begun. And if it begins in the pulpit, He's going to touch the pew. Do you think for one moment He's going to judge those who are known and not judge you? Remember when I said you might get mad? God's judgment in His house are so frightful, men's ears will tingle.

But I want to tell you, God's going to rattle the ears and cause them to be red with shame, because there are going to be fearful judgments following society. Because God said, if it begins in my house, can you imagine if the righteous are going to be under judgment? Where will the wicked come in? What's going to happen to the society? If God is willing to expose His name to all of this shame, if God is willing to say, I'm going to clean up my house, if you won't do it, the Holy Ghost said, I'll do it. Some of you people didn't, so many people didn't have discernment.

Some of us have been crying out for five years against sending money to build swimming pools and all this garbage. We've been preaching it for years, and yet people send thousands and thousands of dollars. And God said, if you don't have the discernment, I'll shut it down for you.

And I can say that knowing in my heart, I pray every day for those who are involved and love them in my heart. Not angry at them at all. Just angry at the devil who made the nation so blind.

But I'll tell you what, the media, television, newspaper, whatever it may be, they had better delight themselves and make hay while the sun shines, because it's all about to change. It's all about to change. The judgment of God's house is going to come down.

Let's look at the next verse. Sudden destruction will come as travail upon a woman with child. Sudden destruction.

We're talking about this in verse 3. And when they say peace and safety, then sudden destruction coming upon them as travail upon a woman with child. And they shall not escape. Look this way, please.

This is God's inspired word. The Holy Ghost inspired everything of it. And God chose His words carefully.

It's not an accident that God, the Holy Ghost, made the coming judgment a type of a woman about to give birth. And that judgments were likened to birth pangs of an expected woman. Now the woman here is a lost, wicked god to society.

And she's about to give birth to a monster. Judgment's coming out of her very own womb. And as sure as an expected mother can't hide her pregnancy, the impending judgment is going to be obvious to everybody.

The closer the mother gets to the birth, the more evident it is that she's bearing. The closer we get to judgment, the more obvious those judgments must be to us. The Bible says, Paul the Apostle is saying, these sudden judgments are going to come like birth pangs and labor pains.

And the closer you get to the birth, the more frequent and more intense those labor pains are going to become. Every one of you here, as mothers who have born a child, know exactly what this means. This is the end of side 1. You may now turn the tape over to side 2. What am I talking about? First they came, what, an hour apart? And then half hour apart? And then ten minutes apart? I don't know when you were rushed to the hospital.

And then the pains became ever increasing and ever intense. And then suddenly you were in labor and you were rushed into the labor room. And the spiritual application is very, very clear.

The final destruction that's coming to America is going to come with intensified, accelerating warnings and catastrophes. These are going to be birth pangs. Now, even though the child is said to come suddenly, there's been an incubation time.

There's much evidence that the child is there, that something's about to come forth. And he's saying, look at it now. You shouldn't be surprised.

Any more than you should be surprised that your wife is bearing a child. The evidence is there. The pains are coming.

The pains will increase. They will intensify. They will accelerate.

Until finally there's going to be travail, which is labor. Now, I believe America is already ambulatory. I believe the United States of America is already headed and being rushed into the delivery room of divine judgments.

Didn't the ears of the whole world tingle when our spaceship spun out of control and you saw the scripture fulfilled in the last days? Blood and fire and vapors of smoke. Three vapors of smoke and blood and fire. Didn't the ears of the whole world tingle? Weren't they rattled? Didn't they bust with shame and fear when they heard how could believe that a nation so mighty who sent men to the moon, five astronauts, are plunging to earth while mankind stands helplessly by? Labor pains.

Close by that event, what was it, 260 marines? I don't remember the number. Suddenly blown into eternity. And this nation, supposed to be the greatest nation on earth as far as its armaments, stands helplessly by like a little child, unable to do anything about it.

Labor pains. An airplane, an airliner, bringing over 150 of our soldiers over near Iceland, the plane goes down and you saw the President of the United States, President Reagan, standing in front of those rows of

caskets, weeping, you saw the tears in his eyes? Labor pains. AIDS has been declared a national plague by doctors who can't understand why our government is not isolating these people.

Listen, I'm talking about homosexuals who refuse to stop doing what they're doing even though they know they have AIDS. And it's a plague and every doctor I talk to say, David, I don't understand it. We are not even beginning to know the extent of this plague.

And their projections are awesome, they're frightful. Labor pains, travail, drug epidemic. I started here in New York City in 1958.

There were probably 30,000 known heroin addicts at the time. Now look what's happening. You hear it on the news every day.

The gangs now, look at Los Angeles. Thousands and thousands of teenagers now roaming the streets. Not only do they have shotguns, they have machine guns.

They have Uzis. Here in the streets of New York now, roving gangs, all out for crack. This mason's gone crack crazy.

From the White House, all the way down, it's in the Senate, it's everywhere. Cocaine snorting everywhere in this mason. Even 12 and 15 year old kids.

It's getting mind-boggling. And the Bible said these things are going to accelerate, they're going to intensify. Just as a woman, about to go into labor.

Did the ears of mankind tingle when the stock market crashed? October 19th, I was down there. Brother Phillips was with me. I saw the fear.

I kept the newspapers of that day. And I looked at it this afternoon, the daily news. The headlines said, Panic! Doll plunges through the floor.

508 points. And you know what Paul says? It's going to be like a mother with child. It's going to be like an expectant woman.

The pains are going to get worse. And more timely, and intensified, and accelerated. You shouldn't be surprised, saints of God, when you turn on the news one morning, and you find that the stock market is beginning to melt down about 12 o'clock.

The panic hits, and by 4 o'clock, they may not even be able to keep it open until 4 o'clock, when the meltdown comes. And if you think I'm preaching gloom and doom, you ought to read some of The Economist. I don't preach anything regarding gloom compared to what they're preaching.

God is quickening the pace now, of troubles and sorrows. And simultaneously, the Bible said, I read it to you in Zephaniah, when it's a day of darkness, impending judgment, it's also going to be a day of the trumpet and the sound of the warning. You know it, as well as I know it.

Never since you've served the Lord have you heard so many warnings, by so many prophets, by so many watsmen, the judgment's coming. Have you ever, in your lifetime, heard so many warnings? So much so, that we're turning them off. We don't want to hear it.

I talked to some very godly people recently, that for the last 10 years have been prophesying wars, and have been comparing notes, and you know what many are saying, Brother Dave, I feel like giving up, I don't feel like saying it anymore, because nobody's listening, it's all being turned off. God had to really work on me to preach this tonight. My heart.

Jesus did say, when you see all these things begin to happen, look up and rejoice, because redemption doth nigh. But there's a condition to that. Not every Christian's going to be able to look up and rejoice.

There's a condition. Who are these? And that brings me to my third point that I want to make clear to you tonight. In this time, in our society, when we're at the brink of judgment, God is calling for people to watch and be sober.

On the brink of judgment. To watch and be sober. Now, Paul, look at verse 6. 1 Thessalonians 5, chapter 6, verse.

Therefore, let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober. Then Paul goes on further down, he says, You are not of darkness. You are not children, but you are children of the light.

And the children of the day. We are not of the night. We are not of darkness.

Now look this way, if you would, please. What Paul is saying here, What appears to be destruction and tragedy for the world, Listen closely now. What is destruction and tragedy for the world, Is the dying of a new day for God's people.

Do you want to hear it again? That day of darkness that's coming, The Lord said, has nothing to do with you and me if we're walking in holiness. Has nothing to do with us. Because he said, you're not of the day, you're not of the night.

That's a nighttime situation. That's the darkness of destruction to the wicked and the ungodly. But you are servants of the day.

You walk in the day, and what is going to be judgment on this world, Is going to be resurrection for you. Hallelujah. He said that day of darkness has nothing to do with you.

Don't thank God. He said, God, appointment with wrath for them is your appointment with glory. As these labor pains increase, Hallelujah.

God is going to do something in the heart of his bride. Every crisis is going to be one crisis near a home. And with every crisis that comes and every bad news that comes, Did you see the labor pains happen? And the AIDS spread? You're going to be standing on scripture after scripture, No plagues will come nigh thy dwelling.

You're going to have the word of God come so loud to you, You're going to absolutely live from this book. You're going to live on your knees. We're not going to have to beg you to pray in those days, folks.

Because you're going to see the judgments fall like lightning, striking one after another. Hallelujah. Someone said, well, what if there's food shortages in New York City when those things come in? I said, well, I don't know how God does it.

He may just let a potato truck hit a pole and roll all the potatoes down your street. You've got to pick them up. God has a way.

David said, I'm old and gray and I've yet to see God's people after beg for bread. The Bible said, Yeshua, you're not of this world. You're not destined for darkness and destruction either.

For God, look at verse 9, For God hath not appointed us to wrath, But to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ. Hallelujah. One of these days, Wall Street's going to become Whale Street.

Wailing. Those who are the children of the darkness, the children of the night, The Bible said, are going to be drunken in the sleep when that day comes. For they that sleep, sleep in the night.

They that be drunken are drunken in the night. Let us, who have the day, be sober. I'm going to talk about that word, sober.

This has to do with any kind of earthly intoxication. To intoxicate means, listen now, to intoxicate means to excite the human spirit to a high fever pitch. To excite your human spirit to get all wrapped up in something ambitious.

Now this is one of the most powerful warnings Paul ever gave the church on the brink of judgment. Listen to me, rich or poor, high or low, employed or unemployed, black or white, whoever it may be, listen to what Paul is saying. He's saying, on the eve of destruction, don't get excited about anything on this earth.

Don't become intoxicated, don't get high over anything but Jesus. Now I know that we've got to occupy until Jesus comes. We've got to be diligent.

We've got to provide well for our whole household. The Bible said if a man neglects his own household, he's worse than infidel and he's denied the faith. God expects you to provide.

And in all things we're to do our very best is unto the Lord. But, he said above all else, be sober and be watchful. And the word sober here in the Greek means to be discreet, discerning, cautious.

And what Paul is saying, don't let anything you do take a hold of your heart on the brink of destruction. Don't let anything that you're involved in. Now you can say I won't let it happen, but that's the war of your eternal soul.

And if you don't get the victory over that, and I mean victory, it'll destroy and damn your soul. It can be all wrapped up in some new romance you have. It can be wrapped up in your career, your job, your business.

He said, be sober, be discreet, discerning, cautious. Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil has a roaring lion, is walking about seeking who may devour. However, he's just steadfast in the faith.

And Paul said, Christian, watch out. Watch out and be warned. You may be right now drinking the wine of destruction, the wine of busyness.

You're intoxicated. You walk around thinking you're not, but it already has your heart. He said don't be drunk and be sober.

Be cautious. It doesn't mean you have to take a poverty vow. It doesn't mean you can't be blessed.

But God is saying whatever it is, it can be your ministry. It can be something you want to do. You get so wrapped up in that, so wrapped up in doing, you miss the whole purpose of what he's saying here.

Be sober, be watchful, be vigilant. You see, there's a holy remnant people today that will never be tripped up by pornography or adultery or fornication or any of these kind of evil things of the flesh. But, Bob mentioned it today and I want to back that up and emphasize it.

Satan tries to use something good, something worthwhile, something legitimate to take your heart. I feel it so strong. I've got to say it to this church again.

Hear it in the spirit. Hear it in the heart. Hear it in your spiritual ear.

Don't just say, I won't get over-involved. Don't just say, I won't get intoxicated by what I'm doing and what I have in my life or my job, my career, my family, my love, my ministry. Because I find that a daily battle in my life.

Because the Lord's been weaning me. The Bible says he's going to lay the axe to the root. Now that means first of all he's going to take away the Jewish heritage because they rejected him.

He's going to cut off the roots of Israel at that time. He said that because they rejected him. But it's also, God said, I'm going to have a people who are going to let me take the axe and cut away everything that ties them to this earth.

And I don't know you folks, but I've been letting Jesus chop away at every root. Hallelujah. There's still some there, but I'm saying chop away, Jesus.

When you come, I don't want any roots on this earth. Hallelujah. Go to 2 Peter, please.

Glory to Jesus. 2 Peter, 3rd chapter, verse 9, beginning. 2 Peter, chapter 3, beginning to read verse, let's start verse 9. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness.

But his longsuffering does word, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, into which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

Why don't the kingdom now people see that verse? Why do they overlook that? The earth and also all the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, means destroyed, what manner of persons ought you to be in all holy conversation and godliness? In other words, your lifestyle should be holy. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God.

Now stop right there a minute. You and I are commanded by the Lord to yearn for this day of judgment. Look at it.

Looking for and hasting, which means yearning for, earnestly desire, the coming of the day of the Lord, wherein the heavens being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Can you believe what God said? I'll say it again, can you believe what God said? You're to earnestly desire that day. You say, well that's sadistic.

No it isn't. Because the only way the new heaven and the earth can come is they all be burned away. Hallelujah.

And that new heaven and new earth is going to be where righteousness dwells. Where Jesus is king. A new heaven and new earth.

Glory be to God. He said, earnestly desire this day of the Lord. Verse 13, nevertheless we according to his promise look for what? New heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace. What's it say? Without spot and blameless. Hallelujah.

Will you look at me again? Can you imagine people hearing this tape saying, doesn't anybody look at him? This is not a time to be settling down. This is not a time to be at ease in Zion. I'm going to read you a scripture from Zephaniah, don't turn there, but listen to Zephaniah 1.12. And it shall come to pass at that time, that's at the time of judgment, the day of the Lord, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and I'll punish the men that are settled on their leaves.

That say in their heart, the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil. In other words, everything's going to continue as it was from the found days. Nothing really changes, crisis after crisis comes.

We've outlived all the crisis, nothing's going to happen, that day will never come. And they're settled on their leaves. Now leaves happen to be the sediment of a wine that's being cured.

And that's the dregs, the sediment that settles at the bottom. And he said, you've settled down, you don't want to be stirred. You know, we have a lot of people that have never come back to Title Square Church because they don't like what's happening here.

They come here and their heart gets stirred. And all that junk, all that dregs, all the sediment gets stirred up and they can see it. They want to go to a church, they've walked out of here long ago.

They've walked out to find a nice, comfortable church where nothing stirs them. So that all that junk can stay at the bottom of the heart. They're settled on their leaves.

They've settled down on the sediment and the junk. They don't want anybody to convict them. I've had people say, Brother Dave, words to this effect, I've got a friend who won't come here.

They see it's too heavy, the preaching is too strong. And every time you go there, somebody's hitting on sin. One lady walked out, she said, I can't take all those problems.

Oh, so many problems in Times Square Church. Well, we may have a busy stall, but we've got the oxen. Hallelujah.

Listen to me closely now. If you don't want your heart stirred, don't come to a church like this. There are other churches like this in New York City, I know.

In Brooklyn and in New Jersey, beginning to stir hearts. But folks, on that day of judgment, when that hour comes, you'll thank God that your heart was stirred. Because the prophet spoke of Moab.

Moab is settled on its leaves and refuses to be emptied from vessel to vessel. Refusing to be emptied from vessel to vessel. And that means that they were unconcerned.

They said, don't bother me, I don't want to be involved, I don't want to be involved. Yes, there are times I've wondered, oh Lord, here at this church, are we preaching too strong? Are we coming, you know, because you're poured from vessel to vessel. You'll get it Sunday morning from Brother Phillips.

And then you pour it out Sunday night, here. Then you come Tuesday, and you pour it from another vessel. You come Friday, and Gary pours you into another vessel, and you pour it from vessel to vessel.

And all the junk is stirred up. But as it's being stirred up, it's being skimmed off the top. Hallelujah.

Glory to God. I want my heart stirred. I listen to these men, I get shaken up too, just like you do.

Lord's shaken me tonight. I tremble in my knees when I think of what's coming to this nation. Settled on their knees, unconcerned.

God says very clearly that there are people who want to be quiet and peaceful, undisturbed in their prosperity. But there's a powerful prophetic utterance by John the Baptist, and I just give it to you, and I'm going to repeat it as I close. He's going to lay the axe to the root.

Well, I'll tell you what, folks. I've got my bags packed. I'm all packed, and I'm ready to go.

I can't name you one thing here on earth that's worth staying for, except the body of Jesus Christ, and to win more souls for Jesus. I just want to stay long enough until he gives me the last soul that I'm supposed to win, or this church is supposed to call. But one day, God's going to make it known to us.

I believe he's going to wake up every one of his prophets, he's going to wake up every one of his evangelists. They're all going to be speaking the same language at their last labor pains when travail of judgment comes to America. They're going to be on the street corners, they're going to be in pulpits, and they're going to say, The day of the Lord has come! The day of the Lord has come! And we're going to go to sleep at night, and the Holy Spirit's going to say, In the morning you'll be with me! In the morning it's all over! You don't have to warn anymore, you don't have to preach it anymore, it's all over! Hallelujah! That excites me! Are you packed? You know what that means? A heart, a flame for him.

Loving Jesus with everything, that he's the only thing that matters anymore. Every day I get up now, every day and all day long, Jesus, there's nothing left in this world that I want, it's all you! Folks, think of every dollar you have in the bank. It's all going to burn! Your cars, your house, your apartment, it's all going to burn! And I'm not about to take an offering right now either.

I'm telling you the truth. You can look at everything. That's why we're just praying that God give this Times Square Church a permanent home.

We're just wanting a roof over our head. Not looking for anything fancy, just a roof over our head. Because it's all going to burn.

Hallelujah! Let's pray. This is the conclusion of the tape.

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