

CALIFORNIA DREAMIN ?

by: Bill Watson / 1-14-25

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As we all know, southern California has about 3 or 4 major fires that are simultaneously burning as we speak and is now threatening more acreage as it encroaches into more suburban areas. Pasadena, California is now being threatened. The former Ambassador College campus, now owned by an evangelical church group, is mighty close to the approaching flames. And only one fire as we go to print, is under control. The rest of them are only about 35 % contained, while the Santa Ana winds continue to fan the flames, with 100 MPH gusts.

This is a very unfortunate situation that sadly is destroying some of the United State's most beautiful country side. Multi million dollar homes along with neighborhoods that are decades old with an *historical legacy* that are priceless and cannot be replaced, are going up in smoke. Even Will Rogers historic home was burned to the ground as was the park it was located in—along with many high profile people's homes as well—like Mel Gibson, Paris Hilton. Billy Crystal, and Jamie Lee Curtis; just too mention a few.

It is so woefully disheartening! So many families that have lost everything and of which now is exacerbated by Insurance companies that are reneging on their responsibility of coverage for the losses, looters, and arsonists that are just making a bad situation worse! There have even been reports that *looters are dressing up like firemen* so they can access the damaged homes without being recognized as looters. It's a disgusting condition to think there are people who will take advantage of *fellow citizens* while they are vulnerable, for personal gain—it's pathetic and unconscionable, to think there are people participating in such "sorrowfully wretched" behavior!!

Compounding this destruction, is what appears to be a *complete mismanagement* of "safety assets" that are designed for back-up to combat conditions like this. The Los Angeles Mayor, Karen Bass, called for a \$50 million cut to the *Los Angeles Fire Department* (LAFD), after she was warned about a previous \$7 million cut for overtime, had already severely limited response to wildfires. So, it wasn't like she didn't know about this looming danger.

In addition, the city of L.A. scheduled the Santa Ynez Reservoir for maintenance! That's right!! Of all things, right in the heart of, and during the season of the Santa Ana winds. Who does that? And furthermore, didn't tell anyone how long it would be off line! And though former Chief Engineer, Martain Adams, claimed it wouldn't have eliminated the damages; it would have helped avoid some of the hydrants from loosing water pressure so early in the "fire-fight," which would have been helpful.

However, Mayor, Karen Bass, was threatening \$49 more million dollars in additional cuts to the LAFD a week before the fires broke out. In a memo, dated January 6th, the day before the fires started, it was determined if that budget cut was to be achieved, approximately 16 fire stations would have to be closed down! Something is really missing with regards to priorities in such a high potential wildfire area, when considering the extraordinary amount of property investments the Los Angeles area contains. It's becoming obvious the "City Government Officials" have *grossly mismanaged their priorities*, leaving 10's of thousands of acres and structures, like homes and business, vulnerable to the dangers the geography presents.

Clearly, knowing some of the back-drop of what has happened and where some of the "balls" were dropped doesn't change anything. The mass of this tragedy, size and scope of

devastation we are witnessing is enormously mind boggling, leaving us only to lament the destruction of so much loss of properties and lives!

So, is there anything we can do? Let me mention there are reports coming to us that certain brethren in God's Church have personally experienced, and been affected by the fires. Some have totally lost their homes, while others have been disrupted in their lifestyles and perhaps have lost their jobs due to the damage the fires have caused.

But, if you'd like to help, there is a way you can contribute if your so compelled to do so. Below is a contact link you can go to that will **serve the needs of brethren in "God's Church, specifically,"** living in the greater L.A. area that have experienced the effects of the fires.

Secondly, The Samaritan Purse Organization, *sponsored by Franklin Graham* is also going to be helping as many as they can in the area. They too are a legitimate organization you can contribute to as well.

However, please, keep **EVERYONE** in that area of California in your prayers !!

<https://churchofgodnetwork.org/ca-wildfires-fundraiser/>

(all donations will be "directed only" to Sabbath Keeping COG brethren)

already has plans to help the victims (Samaritan Purse—donations to "all" in the greater L.A. area)