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The Coronavirus, Plagues, and the End-Times



By Steven J. Hogan

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I assume you have heard of the coronavirus, the contagious flu virus that started in China and has been spreading to other countries. This respiratory ailment, also called COVID-19, can be deadly, particularly with the elderly, and the sick. This can be frightening, especially when you hear about quarantines, lock-downs, social distancing, cancellations, and see people wearing masks and, worst of all, that many are dying. As of today (3/11/20), reports (worldometers.info) are that 125,810 people have been infected, and that 4,607 have died, most of these in China. On one hand, there's reason to be afraid, for there's presently no proven cure, and we don't know where it will spread, and how many more will die before scientists develop a vaccine.

That being said, some say this virus is being hyped-up, that it is not now

and will not in the future be as deadly as plagues in the past. At "cdc.gov/flu/about/burden/index", we read, *"CDC estimates that influenza* (in the U.S.) *has resulted in between 12,000 – 61,000 deaths annually since 2010."* Those are huge numbers of people dying just because of the flu. Then there's the 1918 influenza pandemic with an estimated 50 million deaths worldwide ("cdc.gov/flu/pandemic-resources), a number that dwarfs the now known deaths from COVID-19. But to be honest, there are too many unknowns to predict what is going to happen with this particular virus.

Regardless of how many will die from what has just been declared to be a global pandemic by the World Health Organization, there have always been contagious diseases (plagues), and they will continue in the future. One reason we know this is because the Bible says so. Now only one verse in the New Testament talks about plagues and, interestingly, it is found in a passage that describes the end-times and Christ's coming. What does it say? *"There will be great earthquakes, and in various places **plagues** and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven"* (Luke 21:11). Jesus is talking, among other things, about plagues. Vine's dictionary defines it as *"a pestilence, and deadly infectious malady,* (it) *is used in the plural in Luke 21:11."* A plague is a pestilence, an infectious disease which can be deadly and is usually widespread.

What does God want us to learn about plagues in the end-times?

1. Jesus tells His disciples many things that will be occurring in the end-times before His 2nd coming, and one of these is plagues. He gives us advance notice so we aren't afraid, and so we are alerted to the fact that He will soon be returning to rapture the church.

2. The immediate context lists other things that will be taking place: wars, famines, great earthquakes, terrors and great signs from heaven. In addition to these, Matt. 24:4-26, 2 Thess. 2:1-8, and Rev. 6:1-14 describe conditions and different events occurring on

the earth before Christ's return. There will be increasing lawlessness, financial meltdowns, persecution, deception, apostasy, the Antichrist on earth, and the desolation of the temple. Therefore, the rapture of the church is not imminent, and cannot happen at any time.

3. These plagues, along with wars, famines and earthquakes, will be occurring in *"various places"* around the world. This means none of these particular events are happening all over the world, just in *"various places."* With regards to these plagues, this seems to say that there will never be a global pandemic. For example, as of now, only a handful of people in the United States have been diagnosed as having this coronavirus, which means the vast majority are just hearing about it, but are not experiencing it. Matthew 24:6

4. Matthew 24:8, in reference to these plagues and other end-time signs, says, *"All these things are… birth pangs."* Before a woman gives birth, she experiences birth pains, which increase in both intensity and frequency, and likewise, these plagues and other events will increase in both intensity and frequency. In context of the larger picture, it must be seen that this present plague, COVID-19, is one of many birth pains. The accumulated effect of these birth pains will be deteriorating conditions around the world, which will result in people wanting a *"savior."* Sadly, billions of people will be deceived when this *"savior",* this evil, devilish man, the Antichrist, begins ruling the earth. But always remember, these birth pains are pointing to that time when Jesus Christ will come back to rapture the church and defeat the Antichrist.

5. With regards to these signs and events, Jesus says, *"these things must take place first, but the end does not follow immediately"* (Luke 21:9). In Matt. 24:8, Jesus tells us, *"All these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs."* As you probably know, a pregnant woman has beginning birth pains, which are not extremely painful, but her pain intensifies the closer she is to giving birth. So too, the plagues, earthquakes, famines, wars are just beginning signs

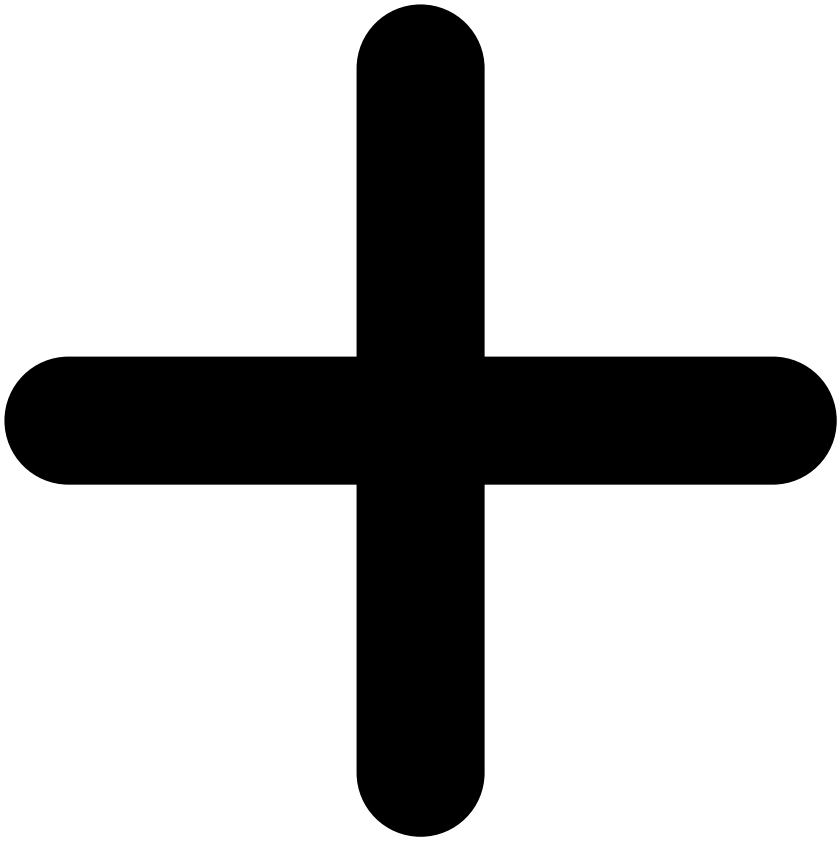
indicating that Christ's return is drawing near. As time goes on, these prophesied events will continue to take place, and increasingly so. When I look at God's word, and look out at what's happening in the world, I believe we are now at this beginning stage, that we are living in the last years of this church age. But many more things still need to happen before Christ comes backs to take His bride to heaven, particularly, events related to Daniel's 70th week and the Jewish people.

6. These plagues and other events taking place are wake-up calls for the Christians, are to alert us and make us aware that it won't be long before our Savior returns to rapture the church. Luke 21:28 says it this way, *"When these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."* Romans 13:11 tells us, *"Do this, understanding the present time: the hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation now is nearer than when we first believed."*

7. **These events, like loud-sounding sirens warning of danger, are also for the unsaved.** It is not physical death that is to be feared, not a plague, an earthquake or a war, but Christ Himself, the Judge of all the earth. Might unbelievers be terrified by these events, so they turn from their sin and turn to Christ. The greatest disease is not a physical disease, but the spiritual disease called sin, a spiritual cancer that kills the soul – and the only cure is Jesus Christ. *"God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"* (Rom. 5:8). *"God made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him"* (2 Cor. 5:21). *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but receive eternal life"* (John 3:16). If Jesus Christ has not saved your soul, if you have not yet been forgiven of your sins, then now's the time to turn to Him and receive eternal life. Do this before it's too late, before Christ returns to rapture the church, before you are left on earth fearfully trying to hide from Him, knowing you will be judged forever by the Holy and Mighty One. But *"whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved."*

Romans 10:13

P.S. It’s important that we are not afraid during difficult times like these. Here’s a post that I believe will help you to have the peace God wants you to have – “The Coronavirus – Fear and Panic, or Faith and Peace.” And here is another post that will help you understand what God wants you to know about the end-times. *“Does Anybody Know What Time It Is?”*





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