

## **COVID-19 and the Second Coming of Christ**

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • May 24, In the year of our Lord Christ, 2020  
Song Leader and Song Suggestions: Larry Amberg (9.30am) and Phil Joseph (11.00am) – Songs on the return of Christ

### **Prelude:**

#### **I. They're at it again!**

- A. Whenever there is a global crisis, or
- B. sometimes not even that,
  - 1. it might be merely national,
  - 2. there are people who twist the Scriptures
    - a) to claim that the crisis is a sign
    - b) that the end is about to happen.

#### **II. Many articles and videos again preach this message,**

- A. that the current Coronavirus Disease 2019 is a sign or
- B. that it is like a sign,
  - 1. warning us of the actual signs
  - 2. to come right before the end.

#### **III. One article in *The Christian Post* said:**

**“Mark Hitchcock, author of over 30 books related to biblical End Times prophecies, said Scripture is clear that ‘there will be plagues in the End Times.’ He cited Luke 2:11 [They meant Luke 21.11, DR], Revelation 6:8, and the prophecy of the four horsemen of the Apocalypse, where the fourth rider kills one-fourth of the Earth’s population with pestilence and the ‘wild beasts of the earth.’”**

**– Wed. 05.06.AD2020, 12.29 PM**

**End Times scholar answers: Is COVID-19 part of biblical prophecy?  
By Leah MarieAnn Klett, Christian Post Reporter**

- A. Luke 21.11 says:

**And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and**

**pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.**

**– Luke 21.11**

B. Revelation 6.8 says:

**So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.**

**– Revelation 6.8**

C. Mark Hitchcock said further:

**“I think it reveals the globalism of today. One person in China got this sometime in the fall and now it’s in some 190 countries. It’s also a picture of how small our world is today and how things are set up for the world ruler, the Antichrist, who is coming. I see just a lot of foreshadows and previews in the coronavirus, but I don’t see this as a fulfillment of a specific prophecy.”**

D. *The Christian Post* also referenced him:

**“Still, Hitchcock, who also serves as the pastor of Faith Bible Church in Edmond, Oklahoma, said he believes the End Times are drawing nearer due to the fulfillment of several key events.**

**“So many things are happening in our world today: Israel is back in their land, the Middle East is constantly in turmoil, globalism is occurring—all of these things are signposts and point to what the Bible predicts about the soon coming of Christ,” he said. ‘We don’t know when He’s coming; it could be today, it could be five years from now.’”**

1. Israel in the land of Palestine,
2. the Middle East in turmoil, and
3. globalism
  - a) are not signposts

- b) that the return of Christ shall happen in our generation.
- E. I will not deal with each of his so-called signs, because
  - 1. you will see from what I present to you,
  - 2. that there will be no signs.

#### **IV. As I go through this message,**

- A. Ecclesiastes 1 teaches something
- B. that will be guiding me in this presentation:

**9      That which has been is what will be,  
That which is done is what will be done,  
And there is nothing new under the sun.**

**10     Is there anything of which it may be said,  
“See, this is new”?  
It has already been in ancient times before us.**

**11     There is no remembrance of former things,  
Nor will there be any remembrance of things that are to come  
By those who will come after.**

**– Ecclesiastes 1.9–11**

- 1. People see a worldwide crisis as a sign, but
- 2. as Solomon said,
  - a) the things we see today
  - b) are things that have happened before, and
    - (1) the things that happen today
    - (2) the generations yet to be will forget and
      - (a) they will think the crisis that they experience
      - (b) is surely a sign of the end.

#### **Persuasion:**

##### **I. Why the date-setters keep getting it wrong**

- A. They believe that the return of Christ will be earthly.

1. They believe that Jesus will come down from heaven,
  - a) set foot on the Mount of Olives, and
  - b) set up a David-like kingdom,
  - c) headquartered in Jerusalem.
2. They also believe it will be earthly because
  - a) they believe He will reinstitute the levitical sacrificial system
  - b) with the temple rebuilt in Jerusalem, or
    - (1) they believe that He will not return
    - (2) until the Jews have rebuilt the temple and restarted the sacrificial system.
3. What is wrong with these ideas?
  - a) First Thessalonians 4 said that we shall meet the Lord in the air:

**17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.**

**– First Thessalonians 4.17**

- (1) It is permanent that we and He
- (2) shall never be on this earth again.
- b) Why would He reinstitute or allow the Jews to reinstitute the levitical sacrificial system?
  - (1) When Jesus died, He made it null and void.
  - (2) The Book of Hebrews rebuked second generation Jewish Christians for heading back to Judaism.
  - (3) This is also the point of the Book of Galatians.
    - (a) Attempting to go back to the levitical, sacrificial system
    - (b) the Lord considers as apostasy.

c) Hebrews 8 offers a thorough refutation:

**1 Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, 2 a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man. 3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices. Therefore it is necessary that this One also have something to offer. 4 For if He were on earth, He would not be a priest, since there are priests who offer the gifts according to the law; 5 who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." 6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.**

**– Hebrews 8.1–7**

- (1) We have a High Priest sitting at the right hand of God in heaven.
  - (a) Why would He set up something on the earth?
  - (b) Why would He revert to something that is less?
- (2) He serves in the temple the Lord built, not what man built.
  - (a) Man has already had his temple.
  - (b) The Lord serves in the great and true tabernacle in heaven.
    - i) Why would He want them to rebuild their temple
    - ii) that He has destroyed a few times already?
- (3) The writer said that if Jesus were on earth, He could not be a priest.
  - (a) He is from the tribe of Judah.
  - (b) Priests under the Law of Moses came from the tribe of Levi.
    - i) Jesus would have to give up His priesthood
    - ii) if He came back to the earth.

- (1) Who wants Jesus to give up His priesthood?
- (2) Four times the Book of Hebrews quotes this passage:

**4 The LORD has sworn  
And will not relent,  
“You are a priest forever  
According to the order of Melchizedek.”**

**– Psalm 110.4**

- (a) That gives me the impression
- (b) that Jesus will remain as a priest.

B. They believe that it will have a countdown.

1. What all the date-setters have in common
  - a) is the belief that the Second Coming of Christ has a countdown,
  - b) that the countdown will be obvious by signs.
2. Second Thessalonians 2 says that two things have to happen first, but
  - a) as you will see,
  - b) the apostle did not indicate
    - (1) that as soon as those events have happened,
    - (2) Jesus shall appear:

**1 Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, 2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. 3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.**

**– 2 Thessalonians 2.1–4**

- c) Those two things happened centuries ago.
- d) Here is the thing that date-predictors miss:
  - (1) The Second Coming of Christ will be like a thief in the night.
  - (2) The Hebrew prophets never pictured the First Coming as happening like a thief in the night.
- C. They keep applying prophecies of His First Coming to His Second Coming.
  - 1. That would be like applying prophecies of the land promise to Israel to the church.
  - 2. That would be like claiming that since God virtually ended the world in Noah's day with a flood, God shall end the world for good with a flood.
    - a) Date-setters do this because they believe
    - b) that the Jews rejecting Jesus kept Him from becoming a Davidic king.
- D. They fail to see that the Second Coming is different from the First Coming in every way.
  - 1. Hebrews 9 Jesus will appear a second time apart from sin.

**28 To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.**

**– Hebrews 9.28**

## **II. No Signs**

- A. Matthew 24 shows that we cannot know the specific time.

**36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.**

**43 "But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. 44 Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."**

**– Matthew 24.36, 43–44**

B. First Thessalonians 5 shows that we cannot even know the general time.

**1 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. 2 For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. 3 For when they say, "Peace and safety!" then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape. 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief.**

– **1 Thessalonians 5.1–4**

1. Man could pinpoint the first coming of Christ,
  - a) the times and the seasons,
  - b) for example, the Roman Empire.
2. Note that this follows what I showed you last week from 4.13–18.
3. And remember that Paul did not write this in chapters and verses.

C. Here are two more passages in quick succession:

**2 Peter 3.10**

**But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.**

**Revelation 16.15**

**"Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame."**

D. What about things in the Book of Revelation?

1. On Wednesday nights, I just started teaching the Book of Revelation.
2. Come to that class and we shall see.

### **III. Times Are Not that Bad**

- A. Compare the first four centuries of the church
- B. Compare the Inquisition

- C. Compare the Black Death
- D. Compare America's Civil War
- E. Compare both World Wars
- F. Compare the Great Depression
- G. I do not want to minimize any suffering that anyone is experiencing

**Exhortation:**

**I. Is this coronavirus a sign, even a hint, of the end, that Jesus is ready to return?**

- A. No.
- B. All those passages that premillennialists use refer to other things.

**II. Moreover, the way to prepare for the Second Coming is not**

- A. by watching world events or
- B. by interpreting frightening moments as signs of the end time.

**III. You prepare for it by following the teachings of Jesus Christ.**

**IV. 2Pe 3.10–12**