

**"What in the World is Happening?"**

**Part 1**

**Introduction:** Lately I have heard many different ideas as to what is happening under this coronavirus. Some Pastors are preaching that this is the apocalypse, some are saying that this is the end of the world, and some are very dogmatic in stating that this is God's judgment upon the United States for the sins of the nation. This list continues and within the list there are many conspiracy theories some of which are really out there. But what is really happening?

Therefore, I thought it would be good for all of us to consider what is going on by using God's Word to examine some of the events that are unfolding. The first point which I want to consider is:

**I. What is NOT happening.**

**a. It is not the end of the world.**

There are those who are teaching that what we are seeing is the end of the world or the apocalypse. This is not the end of the world. This world in which we are living in will be here for at least another 1007 years. Let me show you why I say this:

**Daniel 9:24-25**

<sup>24</sup> *Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.*

<sup>25</sup> *Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.*

<sup>26</sup> *And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.*

<sup>27</sup> *And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

Here in these verses we find the words of Gabriel to Daniel and these words are very important. He tells Daniel that 70 weeks are determined upon THY PEOPLE. That would be Israel. These are by the way WEEKS OF YEARS. So, 70 weeks of years would be 490 years.

Gabriel also tells Daniel that these 70 weeks begin when Nehemiah was given the command to go back and rebuild the walls around Jerusalem. From that date until the coming of the Messiah 69 weeks of years would pass. That would be 483 years. So, from the commandment given to Nehemiah until the coming of the Messiah would be 483 years. Now let me show you what Jesus said to Jerusalem.

**Luke 19:37-42**

*<sup>37</sup> And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen;*

*<sup>38</sup> Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.*

*<sup>39</sup> And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.*

*<sup>40</sup> And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.*

*<sup>41</sup> And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,*

*<sup>42</sup> Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.*

If they had done their homework using the prophecy of Daniel they would have known the very day Jesus would ride into Jerusalem. Now let us get back to Daniel.

**Daniel 9:24-27**

*<sup>24</sup> Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.*

*<sup>25</sup> Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and*

**threescore and two weeks**: *the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.*

<sup>26</sup> *And after **threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off**, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.*

<sup>27</sup> *And he shall confirm the covenant with many **for one week**: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.*

In verse 26 we are told that the Messiah would be cut off meaning He would die. Then in verse 27 the focus switches. Now Gabriel talks about the Anti-Christ and the covenant he will make with many. It will be for ONE WEEK. Remember that 483 of the 490 years are fulfilled up to the death of Jesus. This ONE WEEK in verse 27 is the final WEEK or 7 YEARS. What we need to understand is that there is a gap between 26 and 27 and we are currently living in that gap. This gap will end with the Rapture then the final WEEK of years/7 years will begin. So, we can be sure there are 7 years of this earth left, but that is not all.

At the end of the Tribulation Jesus will return to the earth and set up His earthly kingdom.

### **Revelation 20:6-8**

<sup>6</sup> *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and **shall reign with him a thousand years**.*

<sup>7</sup> *And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,*

<sup>8</sup> *And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters **of the earth**, Gog, and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.*

The EARTHLY KINGDOM of Jesus Christ will last 1000 years. Therefore, we can know for sure that what is happening is NOT THE END OF THE WORLD. This world will last at least 1007 years.

**b. We are NOT in the Tribulation.**

### **Matthew 24:6-8**

<sup>6</sup> And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

<sup>7</sup> For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

<sup>8</sup> All these are the beginning of sorrows.

The signs which Jesus spoke of here are signs that will happen in the first part of the tribulation not in our age. Let me show you the parallel verses.

#### Revelation 6:4-8

<sup>4</sup> And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

<sup>5</sup> And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

<sup>6</sup> And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

<sup>7</sup> And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

<sup>8</sup> And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

These are the results of the Seal Judgments that start the Tribulation. Death here is disease or pestilence. These will all happen in the beginning of the Tribulation.

Now I will agree that some of what we are seeing is setting the stage for the Tribulation and some things are a prelude to the Tribulation. But we must be very careful about using every trial or devastation that comes as a barometer to determine where we are in God's plan. There have been pandemics throughout the history of the world.

Almost every time some trial comes into the United States the church wants to declare that it is a SIGN. But what about the believers that are and have been suffering in other countries? This past week I received the new Israel My Glory magazine and I was reading

about the persecution of Christians around the world. "On average, there are 8 Christians killed every day for their faith"; "9,488 churches or Christian buildings were attacked," and "3,711 Christians were detained without trial, arrested, sentenced and imprisoned." They listed some of the top places of persecution from Open Doors World Watch List 2020:

- ✓ North Korea (#1) the worst nation. Christians found there are instantly "deported to labor camps as political criminals or even killed on the spot."
- ✓ Afghanistan (#2) is "an Islamic society where Christianity exists in secret." It is "illegal for an Afghan person to leave Islam," and family members are often first to attack or kill converts.
- ✓ In Somalia (#3), "conversion to Christianity is regarded as a betrayal"; "family members and clan leaders will harass, intimidate and even kill" converts. The Islamic group Al Shabaab slaughters Christians "on the spot when discovered."
- ✓ In Libya (#4), "there is no freedom of speech, no equal treatment of Christians, no recognition of the church and no churches being built."
- ✓ Pakistan (#5) "is afflicted by numerous radical Islamic groups," which "regularly target" churches. "Christians are regarded as second-class citizens. Also, the country's anti-blasphemy laws are disproportionately applied against the Christian minority, making it difficult and dangerous to live one's faith in public."
- ✓ In Sudan (#7), "the government has arrested or intimidated many Christian leaders, and numerous churches have been demolished. Extremists have attacked Christians, especially in the Nuba Mountain region, where thousands of Christians have been killed or displaced."
- ✓ In Yemen (#8), civil "war has allowed radical Islamic groups to expand their operations in certain areas, leading to Christians being abducted and killed. Open church activities are forbidden and leaving Islam is forbidden. Muslims who decide to follow Jesus could face the death penalty."
- ✓ In Iran (#9), which "is governed by Islamic law, . . . the rights and professional possibilities for Christians are heavily restricted. . . . [I]t is illegal to produce Christian literature or hold church services in Farsi. Converts from Islam face persecution from the government."
- ✓ The Maldives (#14), popularly recognized as a beautiful island nation and tourist destination, is a fortress of Sharia: Its constitution requires all citizens to be Muslim. Conversion from Islam means that someone can be stripped of citizenship and punished. Even foreign workers who are Christians are closely watched. Churches are outlawed, and openly carrying the Bible is illegal. The country is so tightly controlled by Islamic law there is not even a Bible fully translated into the native language.

- ✓ *In India (#10)—where "Hindu radicals often attack Christians with little to no consequences"—"the government plans to introduce a national facial recognition system. There were at least 447 verified incidents of violence and hate crimes against Christians in India. . . . More tracking could increase these attacks."*

Many believers have been under persecution for years but when a trial comes to the US many believers are quick to claim the end is near. We may be very close to the Rapture, but we may not be. Maybe God will use what is happening to stir a revival because He longs to see more people come to Jesus Christ for salvation.

The point I want to make in this is what we are seeing is NOT the events of Matthew 24. Those will not start until the after the Rapture.

## II. What IS Happening.

### a. Chastening of the church.

To help us to see this point I want to take you to the book of Revelation and look at one of the letters to the 7 churches and the letter we need to see is the letter to the church at Laodicea. The letters to the churches can be seen in several ways and one of the ways is that each church represents the True church in a specific age. The church at Laodicea is the last of all the churches and therefore it represents the church that will exist before the Tribulation. With that said let us notice what Jesus said to the church.

#### Notice Revelation 3:14-20

<sup>14</sup> *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;*

<sup>15</sup> *I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.*

<sup>16</sup> *So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.*

<sup>17</sup> *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:*

<sup>18</sup> *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.*

<sup>19</sup> **As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.**

<sup>20</sup> *Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.*

This church was neither hot nor cold, but they were lukewarm. What had happened was the wealth of the world had replaced their passion for the Lord.

Let me tell you what had happened to this church. The wealth and the prosperity of the world had stolen away their hearts. They were completely caught up in materialism.

Let me show you the Words of Jesus from the Sermon on the Mount.

**Matthew 6:19-24**

<sup>19</sup> *Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:*

<sup>20</sup> *But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:*

<sup>21</sup> *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

<sup>22</sup> *The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.*

<sup>23</sup> *But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!*

<sup>24</sup> **No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.**

When Jesus spoke of an EVIL EYE, He was referring to GREEDINESS.

**Conclusion:**

We are going to come back to this next week but let me close with a few thoughts. The church today is identical to the church at Laodicea. The church has become worldly. It is very difficult today to distinguish between believers and non-believers. We are to live separated lives. We are not to love the world or the things in the world.

**Notice Revelation 3:18-19**

<sup>18</sup> *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.*

<sup>19</sup> **As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.**

*What is happening?*

*April 19, 2020*

We must repent. I believe that one of the reasons for what we are seeing is the chastening of God upon the church.