

Coronavirus Covid-19 — Practical Response According To The Bible

History has taught us a simple truth; plagues are not new. The first plague mentioned in the Bible is recorded in Genesis 12:17 when God sent a plague upon Pharaoh because of Abram's wife. The book of Exodus refers to ten plagues that God inflicted upon an uncooperative Egyptian Pharaoh through the prophet Moses (Exodus 7-12). The words plague and plagues occur seventy-one times in the Bible. In the last book of the Bible, the book of Revelation, God has prophesied that a long series of plagues will come upon the earth in the future. These plagues are symbolized as Seals and Trumpets (Revelation 8:6-9:21) and Bowls (Revelation 16:1-17:18). Almost every time the Bible refers to plagues as an act of God's judgment.

In Luke 21:11 Jesus tells us that in the last days God will gradually allow the world system to degenerate.

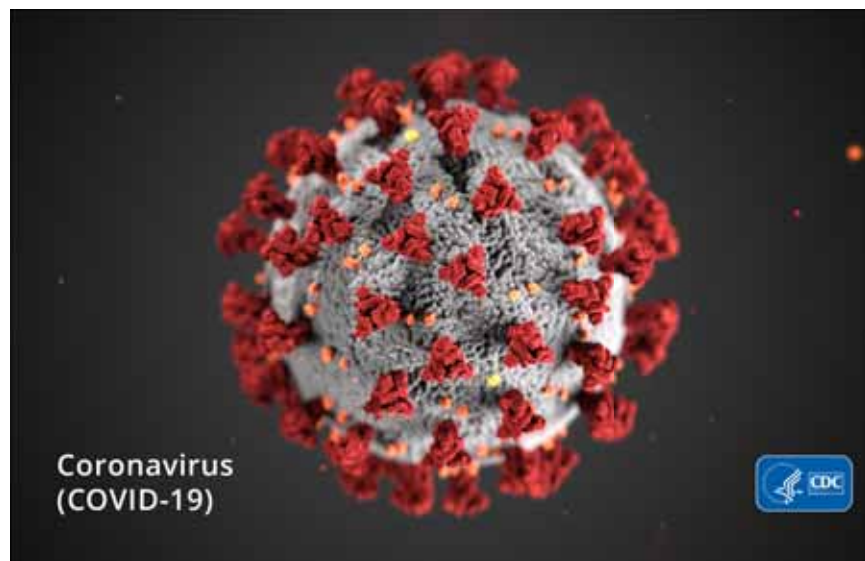
Then He continued by saying to them, "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be great earthquakes, and in various places plagues and famines; and there will be terrors and great signs from heaven." Luke 21:11 (NASB)

Jesus says that in the last days, there will be earthquakes, plagues in various places, and famines. Notice the word plagues.

THE CORONAVIRUS COVID-19. The Biblical evidence

is that plagues are normally acts of God's judgment. According to the Shorter Oxford Dictionary, a plague is an illness or disease especially an infectious, contagious disease spreading rapidly over a wide area with great mortality. But is it possible that a plague, such as the coronavirus, can occur just because we live in a sinful world? The answer is probably yes! That is, the coronavirus could be an act of God's judgment, but then it could just be the result of a sinful decaying world.

Caringly Yours reports that the coronavirus was first identified in the 1960s.



First identified in the 1960s, coronavirus is a common virus that primarily infects the nose, upper throat and sinuses. While most aren't dangerous, some strains have been reported to be severe. The virus derives its name

from its crown-like shape.¹

The current coronavirus was first detected in Wuhan, China. The city is the tenth largest in China with about 11 million people. WebMD, a well-respected medical website, reports,

In early 2020, after a December 2019 outbreak in China, the World Health Organization (WHO) identified a new type, 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV), which can be fatal. The organization named

1. Everything You Need to Know About Coronavirus. Caringly Yours. 28 January 2020.

the disease it causes COVID-19.²

The message of these two reports is that the virus can be dangerous and highly contagious. The current coronavirus is dangerous and it spreads quickly.

Now let us repeat our question. Is the coronavirus an act of God's judgment or the result of living in a sinful world? Since we do not know the mind of God, we cannot know the answer. But we can confidently say that the panic over the coronavirus that is sweeping the globe should cause every man and woman to be sure that they are going to heaven when they die.

BELIEVER'S RESPONSE TO THE CORONAVIRUS. But how should a Christian respond to the coronavirus? Matthew 8:23-27 helps us discover the answer with an example of the twelve disciples. In this passage, Jesus and the twelve disciples are in a boat during a great storm. Verses 24-25 give us some important information about their situation.

And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being covered with the waves; but Jesus Himself was asleep. And they came to Him and woke Him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing!" Matthew 8:24-25 (NASB)

This is truly an amazing event. While Jesus was sleeping, the disciples are in great fear. They beg Jesus to save them. They think they are going to die. If you were Jesus, how would you have responded? Would you try to comfort them? Watch what Jesus did.

Verse 26 says that Jesus rebuked them first, then calmed the storm.

He said to them, "Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?" Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it became perfectly calm. Matthew 8:26 (NASB)

Jesus shocked them by rebuking them first. In that rebuke, Jesus revealed that they were men of little faith. Why were they men of little faith? Notice what Jesus tells us. They were

afraid. Do you see that one symptom of little faith is fear?

About now you are probably wondering how this applies to the growing fear about the coronavirus. The answer is that Christians need to be people of great faith and respond in faith to our God. But how do we become people of greater faith? Jesus gives us the answer later in Matthew 16:8-9 when Jesus tells the disciples the fourth time that they had little faith.³ They were anxious. Now discover what He told them.

But Jesus, aware of this, said, "You men of little faith, why do you discuss among yourselves that you have no bread? Do you not yet understand or remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets full you picked up?" Matthew 16:8-9 (NASB)

Jesus told them that they needed to either understand that He could accomplish great miracles or they needed to remember the miracles that He had performed. The miracles Jesus referred to are called the feeding of the five thousand and the feeding of the four thousand.

Therefore, if you have little faith, ask God to help you understand and remember what God has already done for you and for others in the past. Then trust Him for whatever may occur in the future. 1 Peter 5:7 reminds us to cast . . .

. . . all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7 (NASB)

Only in God the Father can we find perfect peace.

Those who love Your law have great peace, And nothing causes them to stumble. Psalm 119:165

God can protect every believer from the virus. We have a God who is in total control of every situation. But if He chooses to allow you to become infected — trust Him! Ask Him to heal you. You should also consider asking your church leaders to pray for you (James 5:14-16). 1 John 4:8 reminds us that God is love! We do not need to fear, but trust Him for our future. He will never leave us alone (Mat-

2. Reviewed by Brunilda Nazario, MD. Coronavirus. WebMD. January 22, 2020.

3. The second and third times Jesus told the disciples that they had little faith were in Matthew 8:26 and 14:31.

thew 28:20).

The worst possible situation is that you might be left here on this planet to live some more years. The apostle Paul said in Philippians 1:21,

For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. Philippians 1:21 (NASB)

The best possible situation for a Christian is to go to heaven, where righteousness dwells and there is no more sickness, pain and suffering. Then we can see our God for the first time in our lives.

A QUESTION FOR YOU. May I ask, "Will you go to heaven if you were to die as the result of the coronavirus?" If you are not sure that you will go to heaven if you were to die due to the virus, then I urge you to consider God's offer

of salvation and life eternal in heaven. This life is short, but eternity is forever. If you have never done so, confess your sins to God. Tell God that you believe Jesus Christ, the Son of God, died on the cross for your sins and was resurrected. Tell Him that you want Him to take over your life. Please read Romans 10:9-13 which describes what you must do.

... that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." Romans 10:9-13 (NASB)