
BIBLE TALK

This week the question is this: **Was the current Coronavirus pandemic predicted in the Bible?**

We are living in very interesting times. Currently the coronavirus pandemic has disrupted our lives in ways we could never have imagined early this year. The question before us is simply this: **Did the Bible predict this outbreak?**

Why is this question even being asked? Because of the following passage of scripture:

Matthew 24:6-8

⁶ And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, **pestilences**, and earthquakes in various places.

⁸ All these are the beginning of sorrows.

In verse 7 is the mention of "*pestilences*." This means plagues, epidemics, viruses, and diseases. Some people believe what we are seeing in the United States right now is a fulfillment of this prophecy which Jesus gave about "*pestilences*" or the outbreak of diseases and epidemics.

The question we're asking here is: Is this true? Did Jesus predict the current outbreak of Coronavirus which we are now experiencing? Is Mt 24:7 a prediction of current events?

The answer is simply, "*NO*." With confidence I assure you the current outbreak is not the focus of Mt 24:7. Let me explain why.

If you will take the time to read the entire chapter of Mt 24 you will see two questions being asked by the disciples. In verse 2 Jesus predicted the destruction of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. In verse 3 the Lord's disciples asked two questions:

- When will these things be? (In other words, when will the temple be destroyed?)
- What will be the sign of Your coming and the end of the world?

When Jesus begins to respond to these questions, He begins by telling the disciples about signs which are not really signs at all. Think about this: Signs that are not signs of anything. In verse 4 Jesus said, "*Take heed that no one deceives you.*" In other words, there will be some people who come along and point to some current events and they will use these current events to scare people into thinking that the end has arrived. Jesus said, "Don't believe it." He's saying, don't let these people deceive you with things that are signs of nothing. Listen to verses 6-8:

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Here is an entire list of things which deceivers will point to in order to deceive people. They will point to:

- Wars and rumors of wars.
- They will point to one nation rising up against another nation.
- They will point to famines, pestilences (pandemics) and earthquakes.

Did you notice what Jesus said? He said, "*The end is not yet.*" He said again in verse 8, "*These are the beginning of sorrows.*" In other words, these signs are not signs of anything unusual about to happen. Jesus is simply saying that all of these things (wars, famines, pandemics, earthquakes) are the normal occurrences of life on earth. These things have occurred throughout history and will continue to occur and they point to nothing. Don't let anyone deceive you into thinking the end is here and you can expect the Lord to return at any moment.

In verses 43-44 Jesus said He will return like a thief in the night—at a time when men are not expecting. He said in verse 36 that no one except God knows the time of His return. In verse 42 Jesus said, "*Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.*" No one is able to predict the end of the world. No one knows when that will happen except God.

So what lesson can we learn from all of this? We should learn that the Lord is going to return when people are least expecting it and therefore, we should constantly be serving the Lord and working for Him in order that when the time comes, we will be ready for Him. The Lord knew that if people knew exactly when He was coming, some would wait till the last minute to obey Him and serve Him. He doesn't want us waiting till the last minute. He wants us serving Him constantly—always. Nor does the Lord want people fretting every time there is a pandemic.

Earthquakes, famines and pandemics do not mean the Lord is about to return. These are things that happen throughout the course of history. The coronavirus is happening now. There will be another virus on some other day if the world lasts that long. My advice to all who are listening to this message is to obey the gospel. Be baptized into the Lord Jesus Christ (Gal 3:27) and faithfully assemble with His church for which He died (Acts 20:28)—the church of Christ (Rom 16:16). The fact of the matter is, one day all of us will get sick and die, or we will have an accident and die. The day we each die will be the "end of the world" for us. We do not know when this will happen, so we need to always be watching and ready.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Well ... thanks for listening to our message this week. We invite you to visit our website www.WillOfTheLord.com. There you may download the notes and the audio file of the message you just listened to.

Call again next week when we consider a new subject on ***Bible Talk***.