

DISCERNING THE SIGNS OF THE LORD'S COMING AND THE TIME OF VISITATION OF THE LORD

Sumainyo ang kapayapaan at biyaya na kaligtasan at buhay na walang hanggan na matatanggap lamang, wala nang iba, mula sa Panginoong Jesucristo, ang Dios Anak na nagkatawang tao, upang akuin Niya ang ating kasalanan at tubusin tayo mula sa ating pagkakasala sa pamamagitan ng pag-aalay Niya ng buhay ng Kaniyang katawang tao hanggang kamatayan, at sa Kaniyang pagkabuhay mula sa mga patay, ang sinomang sumampalataya sa Panginoong Jesucristo nang tuloy, tuwiran, tapat at walang pasubali, at tanggapin Siya na kaniyang lahat sa lahat, itong Panginoong Jesucristo na ito na ang kaniyang magiging kaligtasan, buhay na walang hanggan at kaluwalhatian magpakailanman.

INTRODUCTION

A. Rapture and the Tribulation Period

We cannot afford to be ignorant in these last days. We don't know how long before we will hear the shout from heaven, the voice of the archangel and the trump of God. You need to be awake, aware, and abiding in Jesus Christ who is coming again to Rapture His Church (John 14:1-3; 1Thessalonians 4:16-18; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52).

Rapture of the Church is imminent and the start of the 7-yrs Tribulation Period is just around the corner. Those who will be left behind in this earth after the Rapture and during the Tribulation Period shall go through a time of test, **“which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.”** (Revelation 3:10). It is a time of **“...great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.”** (Matthew 24:21).

B. Second Coming

After the Tribulation Period, Jesus physically and visibly returns with His Church and victoriously destroys once and for all the man's government under the antichrist (the one world government) and majestically and gloriously establish His throne in Jerusalem and sit in David's throne forever and ever unto eternity.

C. His Seemingly Two Comings In The Last Days

1. There are two comings of Jesus in these last days. Jesus said that His coming will be **“immediately after the tribulation of those days”** (Matthew 24:29-30) to establish His kingdom here on earth.¹ People on earth “will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. His coming is known (after the tribulation) and it is called the personal and visible second coming of Jesus here on earth together with His Church.

¹ The tribulation period is the last week (of years) spoken of by Daniel, the prophet, when the Messiah deals with Israel to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins (Dan 9:24). But in the middle of 7 years of tribulation, prophet Daniel and the Lord Jesus, both mentioned that the antichrist shall make the abomination that causes desolation.

2. There is another coming spoken of by the Lord in John 14:3, **“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”** This coming precedes the tribulation period when the raptured saints (the Church composed of both dead and alive) meet the Lord Jesus in the air. This coming is described by the Lord Jesus Christ as **“but of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.”** (Matthew 24:36. Cf. Matthew 24:42, 44) Though no one knows when Jesus will come again to rapture His Church, yet, He gave signs in answer to the question of His disciples, **“...what shall be the sign of thy coming...?”** (Matthew 24:3).

D. Signs of the Coming of Jesus Christ

1. Birth Pains (Matthew 24:3-8)

a. Spiritual deception

- 1) Some are teaching a false Christ as “man only” because they say, He emptied (derived from kenosis) Himself of His Godhood. (Philippians 2:6-8) The Greek word “*kenosis*” should be taken figuratively, not literally, because His Godhood is eternal and infinite and it is impossible to empty His Godhood. His Godhood was never diminished when He came in the flesh for the Bible teaches, **“For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”**(Colossians 2:9). He **“came in the flesh”** (Jn 4:2-3) into this world in His TOTALLY SELF-SACRIFICING and His UTTERLY SELF-ABASING or SELF-HUMBLING act (John 1:1,14; Philippians 2:1-8). If Jesus is just a plain man when He came in the flesh, God would have ceased being God or ceased in His wisdom and power because the Bible teaches that **“Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God”** (1 Corinthians 1:24) and **“in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”** (Colossians 2:3).
- 2) The Bible teaches that there will be **“those that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist.”** (1John 4:2). The Bible teaches that when Jesus came into this world, the Son saith, **“Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me.”** (Hebrews 10:5). The Son has taken already the body prepared for Him by God the Father and then implanted into the womb of virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35). Even when the Son of God was still in heaven, He was already called the Son of man (He has already born all the characteristics and traits of man except sin) because the Bible teaches that **“no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.** (John 3:13)
- 3) Some teach that Jesus derived His manhood from Mary. This is not true based on the paragraph immediately before this. If Jesus would have derived His human body from Mary, it would not have been the blameless, sinless and perfect sacrifice for sin Mary, like all of us, is with the original sin from Adam **“for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God”** (Roman 3:23). Then His body would have required salvation and could not have been the sinless offering to redeem man from sin once and for all. (Hebrews 10:10) He could not have qualified as the **“Christ, our Passover Lamb sacrificed”** (Corinthians 5:7) for us **“without blemish”** (Exodus 12:5).

- 4) Some being a man with human father and mother claim to be Jesus Himself. It is logical that the creature cannot take the place of the Creator. No man or vicar can supplant Jesus, for there is no other given under heaven by which we must be saved. So Jesus warned, **“Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.”** (Matthew 24:4-5)
- b. Wars and rumors of wars. Aside from the leaders of coalition of nations to invade Israel that are already at the doorstep of Israel in Syria, there are nations that have a large stockpile of nuclear armaments that are more than enough to destroy man and this earth. Russia alone has 1,600 deployed and 6,500 reserved nuclear warheads while US has 1,600 deployed and 6,185 reserved.
- c. Famine. 795M people all over the world are living below the poverty line.
- d. Pestilence and Death. I will take up COVID-19 at a later portion of this article.
- e. Earthquakes in Diverse Places. USGS reports recording 12,000-14,000 each year. For the Philippines, it is 2,000 per year of varying magnitude. March 11-13 recorded 20 earthquakes (5.0-5.9 magnitude) including San Nicolas, Philippines with 5.2 magnitude.

2. **Noahic signs** (Genesis 6:5)

“And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth...when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.” (Genesis 6:5)

2Ti 3:1-5 “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.” Today we see examples of wickedness: racism, xenophobia, violence, school shooting, LGBTQ, immorality, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, (entertainment parks, restaurant, partying, sports), pro-choice abortion (42 million per year), persecution of believers (100 million Christians persecuted, doubled since 2012).

I thought many would see the convergence of signs and events but just as the Lord Jesus said that the coming of the Son of man shall be like the days of Noah before the flood. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. (Matthew 24:37-39)

3. **Sign of Jonah** (Matthew 12:39-41)

“An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and

condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.” (Matthew 12:39-41)

After being delivered from the belly of a big fish, Jonah, a type of Jesus, preached repentance to the Ninevites. Similarly, Jesus came preaching repentance and salvation and the whole world saw “how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.” (1Corinthians 15: 3-4) Before judgment fell upon Sodom, the Lord sends the two angels. Before judgment fall on Nineveh, the Lord sends Jonah.

COVID-19 and other signs are sent by the Lord as warnings. Can't we see the “time of the visitation” of the Lord? The convergence of the signs (Matthew 24) is here telling us that the judgment of the Lord is at hand.

4. COVID-19 is now Pandemic

- a. In the past two weeks, the number of cases of COVID-19 outside China has increased 13-fold, and the number of affected countries has tripled.
- b. Europe is the new center of coronavirus pandemic. US President Trump has declared national emergency. He announced a 30-day halt on air travel to the United States from Europe. On Friday, the National Guard said that by the end of the day, it would deploy 1,000 troops Florida, Iowa, Louisiana, New York, Rhode Island and Washington. In a statement, the National said its "first priority is to protect our people while saving lives."
- c. In the Philippines, President Duterte announces lockdown of entire Metro Manila. Land as well as domestic air and sea travel to and from the region will be suspended from March 15 to April 14, while mass gatherings have been banned
- d. There are now more than 118,000 cases in 114 countries, and more than 5,000 lives lost.
- e. In the days and weeks ahead, we expect to see the number of cases, the number of deaths, and the number of affected countries climb even higher.
- f. Of the 118,000 cases reported globally in 114 countries, more than 90 percent of cases are in just four countries, and two of those – China and the Republic of Korea - have significantly declining epidemics.
- g. The growing fear over the spread of the virus is faster than the disease itself. Dow Jones dropped 1,100 points. Indicates fearful investors due to coronavirus. Regions, countries are locked down, schools closed, offices closed, 50 million jobs in tourism practically stopped, IATA Report Airlines potential revenue losses of \$113 billion due to COVID-19.
- h. Milan, the main economic center in Italy is completely shutdown. The whole country has come to a standstill.
- i. Just as the issue on global warming advances the move for globalist, so with the pandemic diseases like COVID 19 could be again for the advantage of globalist where no boundaries are recognized and the whole planet earth population living as one without boundaries. This moves forward the move for the establishment of a one-world government. Also WHO is mentioning that cash handling is a medium by which COVID 19 can spread faster.

Again, this is for the globalist, a cashless society, promoting the one world economy to be established by the antichrist.

All these issues and events seem to point eventually to the formation by the antichrist, a one-world government, one-world economy and one world religion. Daniel 2:40-44 tells us that there will be a global government (last of the kingdoms of men) which will be crushed into chaff by the government of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

- j. On the other hand, the COVID 19 is also showing how this government - economy system is so fragile that a virus too small to be seen by a simple microscope but only by an electron microscope can create havoc on the government and the economy of man. Truly this world is passing away and will be replaced. (Matthew 24:35; Hebrews 1:8-12)

SERMON

A. The Visitation of the Lord

1. Discerning the Visitation of the Lord

Here the Lord was asked by the Pharisees and the Sadducees to give them a sign that they may believe. He answered and said unto them, **“When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather today: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?”** (Matthew 16:1-3). They knew not the **“time of their visitation”** (Luke 19:44), that is, that the Messiah has come and **“His coming”** was the time of their merciful visitation.

With just a virus, so nano-small that you need an electron microscope to see it, has shaken the whole world. Almost to a pandemonium, governments and nations declare national emergency, national or community quarantine, total shutdown of schools, churches, industries and commerce, stock prices falling to almost 2,000 points and all are frantically working to contain the spread of disease. But fear and anxiety has spread much faster than the disease. Wika nga ng mga millennials, naging “viral” na ang fear. The Lord Jesus says about just before His coming, **“Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.”** (Luke 21:26) People becoming panicky they could empty the grocery store in matter of days. The chaos and fear and anxiety we see now is just a sedated preview of the Tribulation period. The Bible speaks of the tribulation period when the fourth seal of judgment is opened, fourth part of the earth die because of sword, hunger, and with death (pestilence), and with the beasts of the earth.” What we are experiencing under COVID-19 is just like a walk in the park on a peaceful Sunday afternoon.

2. Psalm 8

Ano ang pagdalaw? Sa Psalm 8, may katanungan si Haring David sa Panginoong Jesus, Bakit ang tao ay patuloy na dinadalaw ni Yahweh? **“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained, what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest (*imperfect tense*) him?** Katiting lang ang tao, sa laki ng universe kung ihahambing mo ang tao, napakaliit ng tao, parang alabok sa gitna ng dagat, napaka-insignificant ng tao in space and time, he can easily be taken for granted. But not to the Lord. To the Lord, the worth of the entire cosmos is not

comparable to the value of the soul. **“For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?”** (Matthew 16:26). Jesus cares for the seemingly insignificant you and me that He minds even the smallest detail of our lives, like the number of our hairs. Jesus said, **“But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.”** (Mat 10:30-31)

3. Ang kahulugan ng visitation o pagdalaw ng Panginoon ay hindi lamang presence kundi nangangahulugan na tinutuos ka, iniinspection ka kung tama ang ginagawa mo. Tinitimbang ng Panginoon ang ating espiritu. **“All the ways of man are clean in his own eyes (*we have blindspots*); but the Lord weigheth the spirits.”** (Proverbs 16:2). Tinimbang ka ngunit kulang. (cf. Daniel 5:25 **“...MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN”**). Lord decides to "audit" our lives.
4. Kaya iyong visitation ay hindi lamang to be present but to be present to correct or present to commend. Iyong sinabi na dinalaw ka ng Panginoong, ang ibig sabihin, kung mayroon kang mali, sinasaway ka at itinutuwid ka sa iyong mali. At kung tama ang ginagawa mo, kinakalugdan ka ng Panginoon.

B. Salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ

1. Many are panicky about contracting the coronavirus disease. As Christians, we should not ignore the virus-issue but we should protect ourselves by taking all necessary precaution without being anxious. **“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”** (Philippians 4:6-7).
2. In Egypt, because of the Pharaoh’s defiance against the Lord’s people going to the promised land, the Lord visited and passed through the land that night to strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt. The Lord said in Exodus 12:12-13, **“For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord. The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.”**

All who have submitted, surrendered, subjected themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ, our Passover Lamb, has their households and hearts covered by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus in His visitation will Passover you. **“For I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.”** (Exodus 20:5-6)

C. The Coming of the Son of Man

1. The above listing of events contains just a small portion of events converging towards the last days. The events show that governments of men cannot solve global issues. We see, in the statue dreamt of by King Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel chapter 2), the degradation of quality of governments as figuratively represented by the value of metals from the head to the toes, from gold, to silver, to bronze, to iron until the worst, iron and clay (which do not adhere

together as one). Therefore the decaying government of men must be replaced by the “government upon the shoulder of the Prince of peace” and **“the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever.”** (Isaiah 9:6-7)

2. There is a more deadly virus that is worse than pandemic. It is cosmic. No mask can protect no one. It is fatal and it has infected all, and I wonder why this has not been of extreme concern to all individuals, families, nations and government. It is a virus called **MYOWNSIN**. It corrupts the heart, mind and body. But a sure cure has been provided, **NOTHING BUT THE BLOOD OF JESUS!**
3. It is sad and disturbing to see people to be just plainly be busy with their lives, professing Christians playing church, pastors either not seeing or they have turned a blind eye to the increasing frequency and intensity of the birth pains and the unavoidable prophetic end-time judgments. Where are the watchmen on the wall? Why are they not blowing the horn, not sounding the alarm?

This whole world has become a sinking ship, like the Titanic because the watchmen cannot see the iceberg. There is a blind spot and they don't see the iceberg in the prophetic horizon. Some passengers of the Titanic blasphemed that even God cannot sink the Titanic. When the Titanic sailed its maiden voyage, there were three classifications of passengers, the super, filthy rich and the aristocrats and those that belong to the “Who's who”, then the middle-packers and below the ship are those who belong to the “who's he?”. When the Titanic sank, there were only two kinds of passengers: the **lost** and the **saved**.

4. They were deceived. They failed to see the iceberg. Jesus said that in the last days there will be deceptions. Jesus said, **“Do not be deceived.”** (Matthew 24:4). The apostle Paul wrote that in the last days, there are those who **“received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this cause, God shall send them strong delusions that they should believe a lie that they all might be damned who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”** (2Thessalonians 2:10-12)

D. What Are We To Do In The Last Days?

1. The Lord said that these things must come to pass that the end shall come. We are much closer to the Rapture now than you think. Jesus is coming to take us out of this world. **“For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”**(Romans 8:18). (cf. John 14:1-3; 7:24)
2. In these last days of uncertainty, in this world of deadly viruses and self-seeking politicians, let us not be caught in that melee (*confusion, disturbance, turmoil*) but rather to share the salvation and peace of the Prince of Peace that surpasseth all understanding. The Bible says that we should **“walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”** (Ephesians 5:15-16)
3. Revelation 22:20 Jesus saith, **“Surely I come quickly.”** And we say, **“Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”**

Sermon by: Rev. Mario I. Quitariano (Sunday, March 15, 2020)