**SIGNS OF HIS SOON RETURN** April 26, 2020

**The Growing Signs**

**MATTHEW 24: 3-14**

Compared to the “birth pangs” of travail by Jesus (v.8), these signs will only grow in frequency and ferocity as His second coming approaches. He highlights seven areas of this activity…

1. **False Christs and false prophets (v.4-5, 24)**
* So amazing and convincing will these people be, that even the elect would be deceived, if God so allowed
* Powerful, personal appeal and seemingly miraculous works will deceive and delude many--

2 Thess 2:9-11 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan,

with all power, signs, and lying wonders, 10and with all unrighteous deception among

those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should

believe the lie, 12that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but

had pleasure in unrighteousness. NKJV

* This line of imposters will culminate in the final Antichrist, the Beast, with his false prophet.

1. **Wars and rumors of wars (v. 607a)**
* Continuous throughout human history because of human nature --

Js 4:1-2 Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? 2You lust and do not have.

 You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have

 because you do not ask. NKJV

* Jesus’ expression (a Hebrew phrase) even means a global conflict, or “world war”
* The outcome of two world wars: rebirth of the nation Israel and rise of the United Nations
1. **Widespread famines, diseases, and earthquakes (v.7b-8)**
* Despite advances in agriculture, starvation and mal nourishment stalk the globe
* Disease outbreaks like COVID-19 will only increase and worsen
* Earthquakes have been increasing exponentially since the last century
1. **Persecution and martyrdom of Christ’s followers (v.9-10)**
* Persecution of true believers has been constant in church history from the start –

Heb. 10:32-34 But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: 33partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated; 34for you had compassion on me in my chains, and joyfully accepted the plundering of your goods, knowing that you have a better and an enduring possession for yourselves in heaven. NKJV

* The USA has been an unique exception, but that is under attack today
* Worst places – North Korea, Iran, China, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia
1. **Apostasy, turning away from the faith (v.11)**
* Past Christian nations are becoming post-Christian, rise of the “nones” in US
* “Liberal” Christianity, the “emergent” church, hyper-grace
* 2 Tim. 4:3-4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine,

but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. NKJV

1. **Lawless, loveless society (v.12-13)**
* Riots, violence, murder, mayhem, moral confusion and perversion
* 2 Tim. 3: 1-4 But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: 2For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, 4traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, NKJV
* Man’s persevering faith proves God’s preserving grace!
1. **Gospel preached to all nations (v.14)**
* Global outreach taking place today
* Great moves of God in China, Iran, Israel, Africa, South America
* Expect a great moving of God’s Spirit in the last days – in unlikely places, with unlikely people.