**SIGNS OF HIS SOON RETURN** May 3, 2020

**Gripping Signs**

In Jesus’ “Olivet Discourse” (Matthew 24, Mark 13, Luke 21), He responds to the disciples’ questions:

 When will these things be (the destruction of the Jewish temple)?, what is the sign of Your coming?, and

 When is the end of the age?

The singular great sign was the rebirth of the nation Israel (1948). The growing signs through the ages

include ever-increasing wars, earthquakes, famines, pestilences (like COVID-19), false messiahs, persecution of Christians, lawless society, etc. These most gripping signs will consummate in the final generation on earth.

**LUKE 21:22-28**

1. **Alignment of the Nations (v.23-24)**
* “the land and…this people” concern the Jewish people in Israel
* Ezk. 37-38 concern the battle of Gog and Magog. It is yet future and involves Russia, Iran, Libya, and Turkey invading Israel through the Syrian nation. All these players are in place in Syria right now. We will look at this in coming weeks, but the Lord is bringing it together now as you read this.
* Israel’s return involves a coming back to the Land and will include coming back to the Lord

Hosea 3:4-5 For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince,

without sacrifice or *sacred* pillar, without ephod or teraphim. 5Afterward the children

 of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God and David their king.

They shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days. NKJV

* as a glacier moves so slowly it is imperceptible, God is often moving among the nations at a slow pace so that only those with eyes to see and ears to hear will be aware of it.
1. **Alerts in the Heavens (v. 25-26)**
* unlike the slow-moving ebb of human history, these signs are visible to all when they occur
* in the atmosphere – “sea…waves…” tides affected by the moon, wind currents by the sun Weather patterns include super waves (tsunamis), tornadoes, hurricanes, hailstorms –

Rev. 16:21 And great hail from heaven fell upon men, *each* hailstone about the weight of a talent. Men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great. NKJV

* in astronomy – “sun…moon…stars” are God’s “signs” upon earth –

Gen. 1:14 Then God said, “Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs and seasons, and for days and years;  NKJV

Near the very end of the age, amazing signs in heaven are God’s LAST CALL to a lost world

Rev. 6:12-14 I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. 13And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. 14Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. NKJV

1. **Alarms in the Hearts (v.25-26)**
* outward events shall cause “distress…perplexity…fear”
* so dreadful that if God didn’t stop it, all humanity would perish –

Mk 13:20 And unless the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days. NKJV

* some aspects of prophecy are more understood the closer we come to them in time – technologies of today readily fit the Bible’s final predictions, including

Artificial Intelligence and “the Singularity” (c.2045 per Ray Kurzwell) – think “SkyNet” in “Terminator 3” Robotics, nano-technology, biological warfare, robotic armies, drones for killing and surveillance, satellite surveillance, 24/7 of every square foot on the planet, biometric ID with implanted chips or tattoos

1. **Anticipation of our Hero (v. 27-28)**
* the believer need not fear – Christians can “escape all these things” (v.36)
* those who are saved after the church is raptured away can still look forward to their redemption

“Lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh” (v.28) – Keep Looking UP!

* for believers in Christ, here’s how it all ends: the Hero comes in on a white horse to save the day.

the villain is defeated, the Hero gets the girl (bride is the Church), and they all live happily ever after!

---except those who don’t know Christ!