

Today's News in Light of the Bible

PROPHETIC Newsletter

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DR. ED HINDSON

The challenge of the global pandemic brought on by the coronavirus has the world on edge. Many are questioning are we in the Tribulation Period?

No, we are not in the Tribulation. The Rapture has not occurred and the Antichrist has not been revealed. This is not the end of the world!

What is happening IS serious. Hundreds of thousands of people are affected worldwide. I believe this is a precursor of things to come. It is a warning from God!

As terrible as the current crisis is, it is but a glimpse of the king of global judgments that one day will come upon the whole world.

What can we as Christians do? We can use this time to pray and read God's Word more. We can share our faith and live each day to God's glory!

Until He returns,

Ed Hindson



Could COVID-19 Lead to a Spiritual Awakening in America?

While Covid-19 has brought devastation, both physically and economically, something else is occurring during this pandemic crisis. A new poll from the Pew Research Center has found that a majority of Americans have prayed for the end of the pandemic.

According to the survey, evangelicals are among the most likely to say that they have prayed for an end to the virus, with 82 percent saying they have done so. Among religious “nones” — those who describe their religion as “nothing in particular” — 36 percent say they have prayed about the virus. And 15 percent of those who generally, seldom, or never pray say they have prayed for an end to

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Calls for One World Government Increase Due to COVID-19

Gordon Brown, former prime minister of the United Kingdom, has urged world leaders to create a temporary form of global government to tackle the twin medical and economic crises caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Brown, who was at the center of the international efforts to tackle the impact of the near-meltdown of the banks in 2008, said there was a need for a taskforce involving world leaders, health experts and the heads of the international organizations that would have executive powers to coordinate the response. “This is not something that can be dealt with in one country,” he said. “There has to be a coordinated global response.”

Brown said the current crisis was different to the one in which he was previously involved. “That was an economic problem that had economic causes and had an economic solution. This is first and foremost a medical emergency and there has to be joint action to deal with that. But the more you intervene to deal with the medical emergency, the more you put economies at risk.”

Brown said his proposed global taskforce would fight the crisis on two fronts: there would need to be a coordinated effort to find a vaccine, and to organize production, purchasing and prevent profiteering.

Many countries have announced economic packages in the past two weeks but Brown said a taskforce could: make sure the efforts of central banks were coordinated; take steps to prevent the record flight of capital from emerging market economies; and agree a joint approach to the use of government spending to boost growth.

Brown reminded there had been resistance in 2008 to using the G20 as a vehicle for tackling the financial crisis, but that it should



be clear to world leaders there was no possibility of a go-it-alone approach working.

“We need some sort of working executive,” Brown said. “If I were doing it again, I would make the G20 a broader organization because in the current circumstances you need to listen to the countries that are most affected, the countries that are making a difference and countries where there is the potential for a massive number of people to be affected - such as those in Africa.”

He believes the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund need an increase in their financial firepower to cope with the impact of the crisis on low- and middle-income countries.

While no one should be against nations working together to combat the virus, this push for a one world government should set off alarm bells in the minds of Christians. For decades, critics of the Bible at large and Bible prophecy specifically have attacked the view that a future antichrist figure could one day rise to power and take over a government that would control the entire world, both

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Iran Blaming U.S. for COVID-19: Demons Are Leading Their Enemies

Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said during a recent live television address that the United States “is being accused” of having created the COVID-19 virus, and that “demons” are assisting the enemies of Iran.

Iranian news agencies omitted the latter quote from their coverage of the speech. Following criticism of this omission, the Telegram channel of the Cyber Division of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) posted a full video of Khamenei’s statements. As support for his assertions about the demons, the Cyber Division also posted video clips of two seminary lecturers who are well-known in regime-affiliated ideological circles, Ali Akbar Raefi-Pour and Hojatoleslam Valiollah Naghi-Pour, claiming that Israeli and American espionage agencies are using “demons” to carry out intelligence operations against Iran and against the resistance organizations affiliated with Iran.

Associates of Khamenei have previously accused Jews of using sorcery. Mehdi Taeb, a close Khamenei associate and the head of the Ammar Headquarters think tank that advises the supreme leader, said in 2013 the Jews’ sorcery is the most powerful in the world and that they are using it to attack Iran. Also in 2013, the *Rasanews* website, which is associated with the seminaries in Iranian city of Qom, published an article claiming Jews hand down their knowledge of sorcery from generation to generation in order to use it to control the world, nature and even God’s decisions.

In his March 22 speech, Khamenei reiterated the accusation that the United States had created and was spreading the COVID-19 virus across the world. “Demons are assisting the enemies. There are enemies who are demons and there are enemies who are humans, and they help one

another,” he said. “The intelligence services of many countries cooperate with one another against us. ... Today, our most evil enemy—the enemy of the Islamic Republic [of Iran]—is America.”

The IRGC Cyber Division published a video of Khamenei’s

statements, captioned “*The Supreme Leader’s Important Hint Regarding the Western-Hebrew Spy Apparatuses’ Use of Infidel Demons to Strike Iran,*” along with clips of statements by the two lecturers.

The first clip is an excerpt from an undated speech by Ali Akbar Raefi-Pour, a seminary lecturer affiliated with the Ammar Headquarters think tank, who says: “The Israeli Mossad is officially and insistently using demons to read the other side’s military thinking, to read the enemy chief of staff’s plans, and to carry out intelligence operations.”

The second clip showed Hojatoleslam Valiollah Naghi-Pour, identified as a seminary lecturer and a “broadcasting authority expert,” speaking on a program on satanic forces aired on an unknown date by the Iranian Broadcasting Authority’s Channel 3. He said: “Israel wanted to use demonic force to infiltrate the intelligence



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the crisis.

While most churches are closed throughout the country, online streaming has greatly increased. On March 15, 4.7 million people watched services on the Church Online Platform, according to Oklahoma-based Life Church which created the platform. This is one of several platforms used by churches across America. In YouVersion's Bible app, searches for "fear" went up by 167 percent. It also saw large spikes in searches for "fear not," "spirit of fear," "do not fear" and "God has/did not give us a spirit of fear."

The pandemic has brought about a search for spiritual answers throughout the nation, possibly in part because science, the god of so many secularists, seemingly has little answers in combating the virus.

This should not come as a surprise to us. Tragedies often make people come to grips with the reality that human life is a frail thing and there must be something greater than merely accumulating wealth and finding pleasure. The last time America went through a great tragedy on September 11th, churches were packed as Americans from all walks of life and backgrounds flocked to services. Democrats and Republicans alike called on the blessing on God for the nation.

It seemed as if true revival had finally come back to America and a great spiritual awakening was upon us. However, the spiritual fervor did not last among less religious people and America was quickly back to turning away from God.

How then can we as Christians work now to lead our nation back to a spiritual revival?

1. Trust the grace of God in the details of your life. If this virus has done anything, it has shown the frailty of our own human systems. We cannot trust in our stock portfolio or even in our own health but can only trust in the grace and power of Almighty God.

2. Pray for God to get the attention of unbelievers to draw them to Himself. As we have already seen, this virus is getting the attention of unbelievers across the land and they are beginning to look for answers outside of themselves. Pray that God will continue to get these seeker's attention and will draw them to the gospel. Even in a time such as this, with the pandemic closing churches doors and with limited personal contact, God

has allowed for the creation of technology, such as online streaming and social media, that can be used to share the gospel and answer the questions of unbelievers.

3. Witness to family and friends who may be more open to the gospel than ever before. Yes, we should pray that God will get unbelievers' attention during this time. However, we also need to be prepared that God's answer to reaching unbelievers with the gospel may be us. We need to be ready to take this opportunity to share the gospel with our family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers who are searching for answers. Revival will not occur unless we are ready to share the gospel with the unbelieving world around us.— *PNL*

WHAT CAN WE DO TODAY?

1. TRUST GOD

2. PRAY

3. WITNESS

PRAY: Pray worldwide revival and for opportunities to share the Gospel with unbelievers.

Persecution on the Rise in India

As Christian persecution continues to rise under the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in India, authorities in a southern state removed a statue of Jesus and 14 crosses from a Christian property after radical Hindu groups alleged it was being used for religious “conversions.” According to *Catholic News Agency*, the 12-foot statue and crosses were taken down from Mahima Betta, a Catholic cemetery and center, in Doddasagarahalli, about 30 miles north of Bangalore in the state of Karnataka.

Officials had recently “called all communities and said there had been complaints about conversion,” J.A. Kanthraj, a spokesperson of the Archdiocese of Bangalore, told the Indian news channel NDTV. “People, however, said there was no problem and no conversion was happening. But two days ago, the tahsildar (official) brought police and a JCB loader, and without any notice, oral or written, they removed the statue and the stations of the cross.” The land has been used by local Christians for nearly 40 years without any issues, the U.S.-based persecution watchdog International Christian Concern (ICC) said. During the Lent season, Indian Christians also used the area for the Way of the Cross and prayer gatherings.

The area’s Catholic Archbishop Peter Machado said the Christians of Bangalore “consider the forceful removal of the statue of Lord Jesus at our legally allotted burial ground ... as unacceptable and are greatly shocked and we condemn this high-handed action of the local authorities.” The archbishop added



that there had been “absolutely no problem from local people to our burials, nor our prayers and devotions on the hill. While the Christians attend these prayers and devotions, the others are not forbidden to visit this place. Since about a week, some people from outside have been creating tensions by spreading wrong rumors that the place is used for conversion, which is completely far from the truth.”

Modi, of the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, took office as Prime Minister in 2014. “Since the current ruling party took power in 2014, incidents against Christians have increased, and Hindu radicals often attack Christians with little to no consequences,” noted Open Doors World Watch List, which ranked India as the 10th worst country for Christians.

“The view of the Hindu nationalists is that to be Indian is to be Hindu, so any other faith — including Christianity — is viewed as non-Indian. Also, converts to Christianity from Hindu backgrounds or tribal religions are often extremely persecuted by their family members and communities,” Open Doors added. At least one Christian was attacked every day last year. More than a dozen incidents of Christian persecution were recorded by Christian groups in India last month alone.

“Things have become far more difficult for pastors like me,” Pastor Ramesh Kumar, a church planter who leads house churches in 12 villages outside of Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, told ICC. “Almost daily, I encounter

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economically and militarily. However, with the rise of such organizations as the United Nations and the European Union, this has become closer to a reality.

It is possible that Brown's push to form a one world government, which is seemingly unlikely at this time, is laying the foundation for the future. This could be another stepping stone toward the type of one world government spoken

of in the Bible. Even one hundred years ago, people could not even begin to understand how one man, or one government organization would ever have the power or capability to control the entire world. However, modern communication technology and a global economy has made this much closer to a possibility. Perhaps this is just another sign that we are approaching the Rapture and the Tribulation. — *PNL*

PRAY: Pray God's purposes will continue to be accomplished and that His plans will be fruitful throughout the world.

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systems of Iran, Hezbollah and Hamas. They did not succeed, and they [the Israelis] are still wondering why not, because it is well known that the Jews are experts in sorcery and in creating relationships with demons."

These types of attacks have unfortunately become commonplace and only lead to continued

escalation of tensions between nations that are dealing with problems because of the virus. Iran continues to attack Israel in the media, calling for their destruction. Iran also attacks the United States for being Israel's Western ally. Until Iran stops these verbal assaults and threats, tensions will remain high in the region. — *PNL*

PRAY: Pray Iranian officials will see a need to stop these escalations and control what they say about other nations, including both Israel and the United States.

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a situation where I am asked to stop preaching the Gospel and recant my faith in Jesus."

In February, leaders of the Hindu nationalist group Vishwa Hindu Parishad held a press conference claiming they identified 30 locations in India's Uttar Pradesh state where religious conversions were taking place, notes ICC. The VHP leaders vowed to end these "forced" conversions in a door-to-door "Ghar Wapsi" campaign. As part of "Ghar Wapsi," or "back to

home" campaigns, Hindu extremists' storm into villages and lead "reconversion" ceremonies in which Christians are compelled to perform Hindu rituals. Since this announcement, attacks on Christians and their places of worship in Uttar Pradesh have "skyrocketed," according to ICC, which notes that almost every weekend since the press conference, it has received reports of Christians in Uttar Pradesh facing intimidation, harassment, arrest or assault.— *PNL*

PRAY: Pray for the Christians in India who are under constant threat and persecution.