



**A Spiritual Encouragement Message
May 12, 2020**

We Spread Hope Not Fear

As Christians we have the responsibility and honor to spread the gospel of salvation and not the pandemic dramatic stress, we need to be spreading hope not fear.

This is not the end of the world! If it was, it would have happened already. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burnt up (2 Peter 3:10). Sadly, some people misinterpret Scriptures to their shame spreading error instead of the gospel message.

Scriptures like Mathew 24, also Mark 13 and Luke 21 correspondingly, are often taken out of context like a fish taken out of water by those who darkens counsel by words without knowledge (Job 38:2). Those words of Jesus recorded by the mentioned gospel writers were centered mainly on the theme of the fall of Jerusalem back in the year 70 AD. Jesus Himself specified that for the Son of Man to come back for His church no one knows when it will take place (Mathew 24:36-51) He said, "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only." Much less any ordinary presumptuous individual 2000 years later. Jesus emphasized no one knows, at an hour you do not expect, at an hour that you are not aware of. Clearly that day no more pandemics nor signs will be given. No one should spread comfort with lies. Besides, Moses' signs were mostly pests and plagues, but Jesus' signs were mostly of healing. When the Apostles and disciples experienced a Great Famine throughout the world (Acts 11:27-30) their reaction was not to warn everybody about the end of the world! They did not take that Great Famine as a sign of the Lord coming, nor

the end of times. Their response was a determination to send relief, they showed God's will being done on earth as it is in heaven, they showed God's kingdom love. Likewise, the disciples of the second and third centuries during the catastrophes of the Antonine Plague 165-180 AD, and the Cyprian Plague 251-266 AD their Christian response was also one of spreading help and hope, not fear. In the Byzantine period, during the Justinian Plague 541-542 AD, believers were again providing help and spreading hope not fear. There have been many more pandemics, famines, and wars in history and we are still here. Absolutely, no one should assume nor presume to know the exact day when the Lord will come and the world will end, it would be way easier to find a particular leaf in an entire forest than to find that specific date. Our hope lies on the fact that Jesus willingly came to die on a cross, was buried and resurrected to make it possible for us to obey His Word and to have eternal life. Obviously, every day and every hour of our lives we need to wait, being ready to be taken, in hope not fear and "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming"(Mathew 24:42).

"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing" (Edmund Burke). Prayers is the least we should constantly be offering and doing. Right now we have a huge open door of opportunity to share hope as many hundreds, maybe thousands of people are temporarily listening to the gospel message through different virtual avenues. Multitudes of needy, poor, hungry believers and unbelievers have heard the Word in theory from us, but have not yet seen it in practice. During these pandemic times when some are spreading the coronavirus and others are disseminating error, it is our turn to spread hope not fear.

In Christ,

Oscar Velazquez