

# Did God Send the Coronavirus COVID-19?

“Whenever I close the skies so there is no rain, or whenever I command locusts to lay waste to the land, or **whenever I send epidemics** among my people, when my people humble themselves—the ones who are called by my name—and pray, seek me, and turn away from their evil practices, I myself will listen from heaven, I will pardon their sins, and I will restore their land.”

2 Chronicles 7:13-14 ISV

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NASB New American Standard Bible © 1995 by Lockman Foundation

NCV The Holy Bible, New Century Version © 2005 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

NIV The Holy Bible, New International Version © 1973, 1978, 1984 by

International Bible Society

NKJV New King James Version, Holy Bible © 1983 by Thomas Nelson, Inc.

NLT New Living Translation © 1996, 2004, 2007 by Tyndale House Publishers

RSV Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by Division of Christian Education of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America

# Contents

Does the Bible Talk about God Sending Epidemics or  
Disasters? 4

The Disasters God Sent on Egypt When Pharaoh Refused to  
“Let My People Go!” 7

Could the Coronavirus Be Just a Coincidence? 26

Was the Coronavirus Sent by Satan the Devil? 28

Did God Send Epidemics on the Ancient Israelites? 34

Would the New Testament’s Jesus Act Like the God of the  
Old Testament? 40

What about the Left Behind Teaching That Today’s Events  
Can’t Fulfill Prophecy? 44

A Wake-up Call Leading to Repentance? 47

About the Author 55

# Does the Bible Talk about God Sending Epidemics or Disasters?

This book features a lot of Scripture quotes. That's because the opinion of this book's author matters very little compared with God's opinion as expressed in the pages of the Bible.

So, does the inspired written Word of God tell us that God sends epidemics or disasters? And, does it tell us whether the Almighty sent the COVID-19 coronavirus that is ravaging the world as of this writing?

Obviously, COVID-19 is not mentioned by name in the Holy Scriptures that were penned thousands of years ago. But those inspired writings do tell us that God has sent epidemics and other disasters in the past—but always for a good purpose, and with a good outcome.

This book will not tell you whether God sent the coronavirus. The author does NOT claim to have received a supernatural message answering that question. But the Bible will tell you enough information on this topic, to allow you to form

an intelligent opinion on the matter for yourself. And this book attempts to gather, distill and assemble together for easy reading, most of the Bible passages that you will need.

Disasters sent by God are found throughout the Bible, from cover to cover, in both the Old and New Testaments. The ancient Hebrew prophets spoke about them, and so did the Lord Jesus Christ.

Nearly everyone knows the story of the exodus of the Jews from slavery in Egypt, after Moses repeatedly pleaded with that nation's ruler Pharaoh to "Let my people go!" It has been the topic of a number of motion pictures and animated features. Each time Pharaoh refused to "Let my people go!" God answered him by sending a plague or disaster on Egypt.

But the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob also sent disasters on the Jewish people. When King David's royal successor Solomon dedicated the holy temple in Jerusalem, God appeared to him and said,

**"Whenever I close the skies so there is no rain, or whenever I command locusts to lay waste to the land, or whenever I send epidemics among my people, when my**

**people humble themselves—the ones who are called by my name—and pray, seek me, and turn away from their evil practices, I myself will listen from heaven, I will pardon their sins, and I will restore their land.”—2 Chronicles 7:13-14 ISV**

So, God speaks here, not only of answering prayers for healing a devastated land, but also begins that sentence by identifying himself as sending the disasters that caused the devastation: “whenever I send epidemics among my people.”

Not that such epidemics would *always* be sent by God, but he says he will answer prayers to end epidemics he sends—*if* those who are suffering “pray, seek me, and turn away from their evil practices.”

Does that prove that God sent the COVID-19 coronavirus? No. But it gives us something to think about.

Was it just a mean, cruel Old Testament God who did such things? No, because, as we will see, the New Testament shows Jesus sending disease on his people, as well. And none of this was to be mean and cruel, but was done for good reasons with a good outcome.

# The Disasters God Sent on Egypt When Pharaoh Refused to “Let My People Go!”

As mentioned already, nearly everyone knows the story of the exodus of the Jews from slavery in Egypt, after Moses repeatedly pleaded with that nation’s ruler Pharaoh to “Let my people go!” It has been the topic of a number of motion pictures and animated features. Each time Pharaoh refused to “Let my people go!” God answered him by sending a plague or disaster. Let’s read the historical account, as it is found in the Bible’s second book titled Exodus.

(The ancient Egyptians worshipped a number of different ‘gods’ such as Ra and Isis. Hebrew manuscripts distinguish the true God by the name translated into English as “Yahweh” or “Jehovah.”)

## **FROM EXODUS CHAPTER 7**

**14 Jehovah said to Moses, “Pharaoh’s heart is stubborn. He refuses to let the people go.**

15 Go to Pharaoh in the morning. Behold, he goes out to the water; and you shall stand by the river's bank to meet him; and the rod which was turned to a serpent you shall take in your hand. 16 You shall tell him, 'Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, has sent me to you, saying, "Let my people go, that they may serve me in the wilderness:" and behold, until now you haven't listened. 17 Jehovah says, "In this you shall know that I am Jehovah. Behold, I will strike with the rod that is in my hand on the waters which are in the river, and they shall be turned to blood. 18 The fish that are in the river shall die, and the river shall become foul; and the Egyptians shall loathe to drink water from the river.'"" 19 Jehovah said to Moses, "Tell Aaron, 'Take your rod, and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, over their streams, and over their pools, and over all their ponds of water, that they may become blood; and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood and in vessels of stone.'"

20 Moses and Aaron did so, as Jehovah commanded; and he lifted up the rod, and struck the waters that were in the river, in



the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood. 21 The fish that were in the river died; and the river became foul, and the Egyptians couldn't drink water from the river; and the blood was throughout all the land of Egypt. 22 The magicians of Egypt did the same thing with their enchantments; and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he didn't listen to them; as Jehovah had spoken. 23 Pharaoh turned and went into his house, and he didn't even take this to heart. 24 All the Egyptians dug around the river for water to drink; for they couldn't drink the river water. 25 Seven days were fulfilled, after Jehovah had struck the river.

## FROM EXODUS CHAPTER 8

1 Jehovah spoke to Moses, Go in to Pharaoh, and tell him, "This is what Jehovah says, 'Let my people go, that they may serve me. 2 If you refuse to let them go, behold, I will plague all your borders with frogs: 3 and the river shall swarm with frogs, which shall go up and come into your house, and into your bedroom, and on your bed, and into the house of your servants, and on your people,

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and into your ovens, and into your kneading troughs: 4 and the frogs shall come up both on you, and on your people, and on all your servants.” 5 Jehovah said to Moses, “Tell Aaron, ‘Stretch out your hand with your rod over the rivers, over the streams, and over the pools, and cause frogs to come up on the land of Egypt.’” 6 Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt. 7 The magicians did the same thing with their enchantments, and brought up frogs on the land of Egypt.

8 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron, and said, “Entreat Jehovah, that he take away the frogs from me, and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice to Jehovah.”

9 Moses said to Pharaoh, “I give you the honor of setting the time that I should pray for you, and for your servants, and for your people, that the frogs be destroyed from you and your houses, and remain in the river only.”

10 He said, “Tomorrow.”

He said, “Be it according to your word, that you may know that there is no one like Jehovah our God. 11 The frogs shall depart from you, and from your houses, and from your servants, and from your people. They shall remain in the river only.”

12 Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh, and Moses cried to Jehovah concerning the frogs which he had brought on Pharaoh. 13 Jehovah did according to the word of Moses, and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the courts, and out of the fields. 14 They gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. 15 But when Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart, and didn't listen to them, as Jehovah had spoken.

16 Jehovah said to Moses, “Tell Aaron, ‘Stretch out your rod, and strike the dust of the earth, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt.’” 17 They did so; and Aaron stretched out his hand with his rod, and struck the dust of the earth, and there were lice on man, and on animal; all the dust of the earth became lice throughout all the land of Egypt. 18 The magicians tried with their enchantments to

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produce lice, but they couldn't. There were lice on man, and on animal. 19 Then the magicians said to Pharaoh, "This is God's finger:" and Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he didn't listen to them; as Jehovah had spoken.

20 Jehovah said to Moses, "Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh; behold, he comes out to the water; and tell him, 'This is what Jehovah says, "Let my people go, that they may serve me. 21 Else, if you will not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you, and on your servants, and on your people, and into your houses: and the houses of the Egyptians shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground whereon they are. 22 I will set apart in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there; to the end you may know that I am Jehovah on the earth. 23 I will put a division between my people and your people: by tomorrow shall this sign be.'"" 24 Jehovah did so; and there came grievous swarms of flies into the house of Pharaoh, and into his servants' houses: and in all the land of Egypt

the land was corrupted by reason of the swarms of flies.

25 Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, “Go, sacrifice to your God in the land!”

26 Moses said, “It isn’t appropriate to do so; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to Jehovah our God. Behold, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and won’t they stone us? 27 We will go three days’ journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to Jehovah our God, as he shall command us.”

28 Pharaoh said, “I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to Jehovah your God in the wilderness, only you shall not go very far away. Pray for me.”

29 Moses said, “Behold, I go out from you, and I will pray to Jehovah that the swarms of flies may depart from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people, tomorrow; only don’t let Pharaoh deal deceitfully any more in not letting the people go to sacrifice to Jehovah.” 30 Moses went out from Pharaoh, and prayed to Jehovah. 31 Jehovah did according to the word of Moses, and he

removed the swarms of flies from Pharaoh, from his servants, and from his people. There remained not one. 32 Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also, and he didn't let the people go.

## FROM EXODUS CHAPTER 9

1 Then Jehovah said to Moses, "Go in to Pharaoh, and tell him, 'This is what Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, says: "Let my people go, that they may serve me. 2 For if you refuse to let them go, and hold them still, 3 behold, Jehovah's hand is on your livestock which are in the field, on the horses, on the donkeys, on the camels, on the herds, and on the flocks with a very grievous pestilence. 4 Jehovah will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt; and nothing shall die of all that belongs to the children of Israel.'"" 5 Jehovah appointed a set time, saying, "Tomorrow Jehovah shall do this thing in the land." 6 Jehovah did that thing on the next day; and all the livestock of Egypt died, but of the livestock of the children of Israel, not one died. 7 Pharaoh sent, and, behold, there was not so much as one of the livestock of the Israelites dead.

But the heart of Pharaoh was stubborn, and he didn't let the people go.

8 Jehovah said to Moses and to Aaron, "Take to yourselves handfuls of ashes of the furnace, and let Moses sprinkle it toward the sky in the sight of Pharaoh. 9 It shall become small dust over all the land of Egypt, and shall be a boil breaking out with boils on man and on animal, throughout all the land of Egypt."

10 They took ashes of the furnace, and stood before Pharaoh; and Moses sprinkled it up toward the sky; and it became a boil breaking out with boils on man and on animal. 11 The magicians couldn't stand before Moses because of the boils; for the boils were on the magicians, and on all the Egyptians. 12 Jehovah hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he didn't listen to them, as Jehovah had spoken to Moses.

13 Jehovah said to Moses, "Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Pharaoh, and tell him, 'This is what Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, says: "Let my people go, that they may serve me. 14 For this time I will send all my plagues against your heart,

against your officials, and against your people; that you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth. 15 For now I would have stretched out my hand, and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth; 16 but indeed for this cause I have made you stand: to show you my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth; 17 as you still exalt yourself against my people, that you won't let them go. 18 Behold, tomorrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as has not been in Egypt since the day it was founded even until now. 19 Now therefore command that all of your livestock and all that you have in the field be brought into shelter. Every man and animal that is found in the field, and isn't brought home, the hail shall come down on them, and they shall die.””””

20 Those who feared Jehovah's word among the servants of Pharaoh made their servants and their livestock flee into the houses. 21 Whoever didn't respect Jehovah's word left his servants and his livestock in the field.



22 Jehovah said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward the sky, that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt, on man, and on animal, and on every herb of the field, throughout the land of Egypt.”

23 Moses stretched out his rod toward the heavens, and Jehovah sent thunder, hail, and lightning flashed down to the earth. Jehovah rained hail on the land of Egypt. 24 So there was very severe hail, and lightning mixed with the hail, such as had not been in all the land of Egypt since it became a nation. 25 The hail struck throughout all the land of Egypt all that was in the field, both man and animal; and the hail struck every herb of the field, and broke every tree of the field. 26 Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Israel were, there was no hail.

27 Pharaoh sent, and called for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, “I have sinned this time. Jehovah is righteous, and I and my people are wicked. 28 Pray to Jehovah; for there has been enough of mighty thunderings and hail. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer.”

29 Moses said to him, “As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands to Jehovah. The thunders shall cease, and there will not be any more hail; that you may know that the earth is Jehovah’s. 30 But as for you and your servants, I know that you don’t yet fear Jehovah God.”

31 The flax and the barley were struck, for the barley was in the ear, and the flax was in bloom. 32 But the wheat and the spelt were not struck, for they had not grown up. 33 Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and spread abroad his hands to Jehovah; and the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured on the earth. 34 When Pharaoh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants. 35 The heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he didn’t let the children of Israel go, just as Jehovah had spoken through Moses.

## FROM EXODUS CHAPTER 10

1 Jehovah said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I may show

these my signs among them, 2 and that you may tell in the hearing of your son, and of your son's son, what things I have done to Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that you may know that I am Jehovah.”

3 Moses and Aaron went in to Pharaoh, and said to him, “This is what Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, says: ‘How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, that they may serve me. 4 Or else, if you refuse to let my people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your country, 5 and they shall cover the surface of the earth, so that one won't be able to see the earth. They shall eat the residue of that which has escaped, which remains to you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which grows for you out of the field. 6 Your houses shall be filled, and the houses of all your servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians; as neither your fathers nor your fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were on the earth to this day.’” He turned, and went out from Pharaoh.

7 Pharaoh's servants said to him, “How long will this man be a snare to us? Let the

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men go, that they may serve Jehovah, their God. Don't you yet know that Egypt is destroyed?"

8 Moses and Aaron were brought again to Pharaoh, and he said to them, "Go, serve Jehovah your God; but who are those who will go?"

9 Moses said, "We will go with our young and with our old; with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a feast to Jehovah."

10 He said to them, "Jehovah be with you if I will let you go with your little ones! See, evil is clearly before your faces. 11 Not so! Go now you who are men, and serve Jehovah; for that is what you desire!" They were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.

12 Jehovah said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come up on the land of Egypt, and eat every herb of the land, even all that the hail has left." 13 Moses stretched out his rod over the land of Egypt, and Jehovah brought an east wind on the land all that day, and all night; and when it was morning,

the east wind brought the locusts. 14 The locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the borders of Egypt. They were very grievous. Before them there were no such locusts as they, nor will there ever be again. 15 For they covered the surface of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened, and they ate every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left. There remained nothing green, either tree or herb of the field, through all the land of Egypt. 16 Then Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron in haste, and he said, “I have sinned against Jehovah your God, and against you. 17 Now therefore please forgive my sin again, and pray to Jehovah your God, that he may also take away from me this death.”

18 He went out from Pharaoh, and prayed to Jehovah. 19 Jehovah turned an exceeding strong west wind, which took up the locusts, and drove them into the Red Sea. There remained not one locust in all the borders of Egypt. 20 But Jehovah hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he didn’t let the children of Israel go.

21 Jehovah said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand toward the sky, that there may be darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt.” 22 Moses stretched out his hand toward the sky, and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days. 23 They didn’t see one another, and nobody rose from his place for three days; but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings.

24 Pharaoh called to Moses, and said, “Go, serve Jehovah. Only let your flocks and your herds stay behind. Let your little ones also go with you.”

25 Moses said, “You must also give into our hand sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice to Jehovah our God. 26 Our livestock also shall go with us. Not a hoof shall be left behind, for of it we must take to serve Jehovah our God; and we don’t know with what we must serve Jehovah, until we come there.”

27 But Jehovah hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and he wouldn’t let them go. 28 Pharaoh said to him, “Get away from me! Be careful

to see my face no more; for in the day you see my face you shall die!”

29 Moses said, “You have spoken well. I will see your face again no more.”

## FROM EXODUS CHAPTER 11

1 Jehovah said to Moses, “Yet one plague more will I bring on Pharaoh, and on Egypt; afterwards he will let you go. When he lets you go, he will surely thrust you out altogether. 2 Speak now in the ears of the people, and let every man ask of his neighbor, and every woman of her neighbor, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold.” 3 Jehovah gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh’s servants, and in the sight of the people.

4 Moses said, “This is what Jehovah says: ‘About midnight I will go out into the middle of Egypt, 5 and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the female servant who is behind the mill; and all the firstborn of livestock. 6 There shall be a great cry

throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there has not been, nor shall be any more. 7 But against any of the children of Israel a dog won't even bark or move its tongue, against man or animal; that you may know that Jehovah makes a distinction between the Egyptians and Israel. 8 All these servants of yours will come down to me, and bow down themselves to me, saying, "Get out, with all the people who follow you;" and after that I will go out." He went out from Pharaoh in hot anger.

9 Jehovah said to Moses, "Pharaoh won't listen to you, that my wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt." 10 Moses and Aaron did all these wonders before Pharaoh, and Jehovah hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he didn't let the children of Israel go out of his land.

## FROM EXODUS CHAPTER 12

29 At midnight, Jehovah struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of livestock. 30 Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all



his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead. 31 He called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, “Rise up, get out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel; and go, serve Jehovah, as you have said! 32 Take both your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also!”

33 The Egyptians were urgent with the people, to send them out of the land in haste, for they said, “We are all dead men.”

34 The people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes on their shoulders.

35 The children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they asked of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and clothing. 36 Jehovah gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have what they asked. They plundered the Egyptians.

So, there is no doubt that the true God—the God of Israel—sent these plagues on Egypt. But, what does that tell us about the modern coronavirus COVID-19?

# Could the Coronavirus Be Just a Coincidence?

Most people in today's world don't think of God as they read the news and watch world events unfold. But Bible readers do, because its history shows the hand of God in the exodus from Egypt, the Jewish captivity in Babylon, the return from captivity to the Promised Land, and the worldwide spread of the Christian Gospel.

We know that everyone eventually dies. Romans 5:12 tells us that **“sin entered into the world through one man, and death through sin; and so death passed to all men, because all sinned.”**

The first man Adam rebelled against God, and that sin led to death for all of his offspring and descendants, including in today's world. Death comes in many ways, and diseases of every sort take their toll every year.

And we know that unexpected things happen to all of us. Ecclesiastes 9:11 says, **“time and chance happen to”** everyone.

So, could the coronavirus be just a coincidence? Perhaps. But there is a lot more evidence to examine, before reaching an informed conclusion.

# Was the Coronavirus Sent by Satan the Devil?

The Bible book of Job tells of an incident where a righteous man was afflicted with illness by one of the angels who rebelled against God and came to be known as Satan the devil.

That wicked adversary sought to justify his own bad behavior by arguing that Job was faithful to God only for selfish reasons—for the blessings he received. Satan demanded to take away those blessings, and argued that Job would then curse God, instead. The Almighty allowed the test to go ahead, with Satan first taking away Job's possessions and his children, and then taking away his good health.

But Job proved faithful under test, and God soon restored his good health and blessed him more abundantly than before. Does Job's suffering under Satan's hand prove that it was

this angelic enemy of God who sent COVID-19?

Let's look at what happened back then:

(Note: Because we are quoting such extensive portions of Scripture, we are forced to use a copyright-free translation. Please feel free to compare the text from your own favorite Bible version, that may use language more familiar to you.)

## **FROM JOB CHAPTER 2**

**1 Again, on the day when the sons of God came to present themselves before Jehovah, Satan came also among them to present himself before Jehovah. 2 Jehovah said to Satan, “Where have you come from?”**

**Satan answered Jehovah, and said, “From going back and forth in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.”**

**3 Jehovah said to Satan, “Have you considered my servant Job? For there is no one like him in the earth, a blameless and an upright man, one who fears God, and turns away from evil. He still maintains his integrity, although you incited me against him, to ruin him without cause.”**

4 Satan answered Jehovah, and said, “Skin for skin. Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. 5 But stretch out your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will renounce you to your face.”

6 Jehovah said to Satan, “Behold, he is in your hand. Only spare his life.”

7 So Satan went out from the presence of Jehovah, and struck Job with painful sores from the sole of his foot to his head. 8 He took for himself a potsherd to scrape himself with, and he sat among the ashes. 9 Then his wife said to him, “Do you still maintain your integrity? Renounce God, and die.”

10 But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?”

In all this Job didn't sin with his lips. 11 Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come on him, they each came from his own place: Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite, and they made an appointment together to come to sympathize with him and to comfort him. 12

When they lifted up their eyes from a distance, and didn't recognize him, they raised their voices, and wept; and they each tore his robe, and sprinkled dust on their heads toward the sky. 13 So they sat down with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his grief was very great.

It's clear that Satan the devil sent these troubles on Job thousands of years ago. In fact, the Bible teaches that he has been misleading and afflicting mankind from the very beginning—when he spoke through a snake and deceived the first man Adam's wife Eve: **“the old serpent, he who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world.”**—Revelation 12:9

Could what happened to Job happen to Christians today?

In Luke Chapter 22:31, we read that Jesus said this to Peter:

**“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat.”**

Some translations say **“Satan has DEMANDED to sift all of you as wheat.”**

The Greek word translated “asked” or “demanded” carries the sense of being handed over, so that Satan can do this sifting.

Most of what goes on in heaven and in the invisible realm of the spirits is unknown to us.

But we just saw that Satan made similar demands in the Old Testament book of Job. The devil challenged God and wanted to prove that Job would become unfaithful if put under pressure—first losing his possessions and his children, and then losing his good health. Now Satan demands to put the apostles to the test, sifting them like wheat.

Where does Satan get the right to make demands like that?

John 16:11 tells us that Satan, **“the ruler of this world has been judged.”**

It seems that the devil has been on trial in God’s heavenly court. Maybe he has certain legal rights in that heavenly court? We don’t know.

So, we can’t really answer for sure, why God permitted Satan to test Job, or why he permitted the devil to sift the apostles like wheat—or why



he is allowed to persecute and tempt Christians today.

We just have to trust God.

At Genesis 18:25 Abraham asked, **“Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?”**

And the answer must be, ‘Of course, he will.’

We have the promise at 1 Corinthians 10:13, that **“No temptation has taken you except what is common to man. God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted above what you are able, but will with the temptation also make the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”**

But does the Bible implicate Satan as the cause of the COVID-19 coronavirus? More evidence needs to be examined.

# Did God Send Epidemics on the Ancient Israelites?

Did God send the 2019-2020 coronavirus epidemic?

God tells us what we need to know, but he also leaves us to figure things out for ourselves based on the information he gives us. Jesus often did that when he spoke in parables.

In regard to the coronavirus, some of that information can be found in the history of the ancient nation of Israel.

Around 1000 B.C., after King Solomon dedicated the Temple he built for the Lord in Jerusalem, God spoke to him. 2 Chronicles 7:13 tells us God said, **“Whenever I close the skies so there is no rain, or whenever I command locusts to lay waste to the land, or whenever I send epidemics among my people, when my people humble themselves—the ones who are called by my name—and pray, seek me, and turn away from their evil practices, I myself will listen from heaven, I will pardon**

**their sins, and I will restore their land.”—2**  
Chronicles 7:13-14 ISV

So, God spoke of sending locusts and epidemics on Solomon’s people, the nation of Israel. And he said he would answer prayers for locusts and epidemics to stop if the nation of his people **“pray to me and repent and turn away from the evil they have been doing.”**

Many people become upset, even angry, at the suggestion that God sends locusts and epidemics. “God is love, so he doesn’t do such things,” they say.

But, as we noted in an earlier chapter, even those who don’t read the Bible should be familiar with the story of the Jewish people’s exodus from Egypt—and the plagues that God sent on Egypt before Pharaoh finally let Moses’ people go.

The 8th plague God sent on Egypt was locusts that ate up their food crops. The 5th plague God sent was a disease killing their farm animals. And the 6th plague consisted of boils and sores covering everyone’s skin.

“Well, that was Egypt,” some people may say. “God wouldn’t send plagues like that on us!” Many Israelites felt the same way, and assumed

God would send plagues only on their enemies. But God himself says otherwise.

After they were freed from their slavery in Egypt, God told his Chosen People through Moses that they would be blessed if they obeyed his laws, but that they would be punished with disasters if they disobeyed. In Deuteronomy 28, beginning with Verse 15, God's messenger Moses said,

**However, if you do not obey the Lord your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come on you and overtake you:**

**16 You will be cursed in the city and cursed in the country. ...The fruit of your womb will be cursed, and the crops of your land, and the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks. ...**

**21 The Lord will plague you with diseases until he has destroyed you from the land you are entering to possess. 22 The Lord will strike you with wasting disease, with fever and inflammation, ... 27 The Lord will afflict you with the boils of Egypt and with tumors, festering sores and the itch, from which you**

cannot be cured. ... **35 The Lord will afflict your knees and legs with painful boils that cannot be cured, spreading from the soles of your feet to the top of your head. ...**

**38 You will sow much seed in the field but you will harvest little, because locusts will devour it. —Deuteronomy 28:15-38 NIV**

So, God spoke of sending locust plagues and horrible diseases on his own Chosen People.

The nation of Israel *did* sin and Moses said at Numbers 16:46, **“The plague has begun.”** And Verse 49 says, **“Now those who died by the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred.”**

Later, when Israelite men were committing sexual immorality with the women of the Midianites, Numbers chapter 25 tells us God sent an epidemic disease on them. When one of their leaders took drastic action to end that unfaithfulness, Numbers 25:8-9 tells us, **“the plague was stayed from the children of Israel.”** But, **“Those who died by the plague were twenty-four thousand.”**

During the reign of King David, when he sinned against God, 1 Chronicles 21:14 says that

**God “sent a pestilence on Israel; and seventy thousand men of Israel fell.”**

Again, centuries later when Israel turned away from God, God told his prophet Jeremiah at Jeremiah 24:10, **“I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, among them, until they be consumed from off the land that I gave to them and to their fathers.”**

These disasters were sent for a purpose. God’s purpose was to bring them to repentance—to cause them to change their hearts and minds, and turn back to God, so he could bless them. Like any good parent, he disciplines us for our own good.

But, many people today will say, “Our God doesn’t act like that.”

Probably they say that because they don’t read the Old Testament.

There is also a popular notion today that it was only the God of the Old Testament who sent plagues and disasters, and that in the New Testament somehow a kind and gentle Jesus took the place of that harsh and mean Old Testament God.

But that notion is popular only among people who don’t actually read the New Testament.

What does the New Testament tell us about whether Jesus would send a disease like the COVID-19 coronavirus? Let's look at the evidence.

# Would the New Testament's Jesus Act Like the God of the Old Testament?

There is a popular notion today that it was only the God of the Old Testament who sent plagues and disasters, and that in the New Testament somehow a kind and gentle Jesus took the place of that harsh and mean Old Testament God.

But that notion is popular only among people who don't actually read the New Testament. If they read it, they would realize that Jesus is just like his heavenly Father. At John 14:9 Jesus said, **“He who has seen me has seen the Father.”** And Hebrews 1:3 says that Jesus is **“the exact representation”** of God the Father.

When he healed a man who had been unable to walk, Jesus also told him to stop sinning, or something worse may happen to him. John 5:14 says, **“Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, ‘Behold, you are made well. Sin no more, so that nothing**



**worse happens to you.”** That was a warning for his own good.

Decades later, when the resurrected and risen Christ sent a message to the Christian church in the ancient city of Thyatira he gave them a stern warning of the punishment he would send on church members who were behaving immorally. We find that in Revelation 2:21, where Jesus says about the self-proclaimed ‘prophetess’ who was spearheading the immoral element in the church,

**“I have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. 22 So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways. 23 I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds.”—**  
Revelation 2:21-23 NIV

If Jesus spoke those words from heaven about a church that tolerated sexual immorality back then, how would he feel today about churches that wink at fornication and even fly the rainbow flag?

At Romans 11:22 (NIV) the Apostle Paul spoke of **“the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.”**—kindness to those who repent of their sins and walk in God’s ways, but sternness to those who disregard God’s mercy and persist in wrongdoing.

So the revelation of God through Jesus Christ is consistent with the revelation of God in the Old Testament. He is a loving heavenly Father, but also an old-fashioned strict Father who corrects and disciplines people with the aim of bringing them to repentance. And he is a God who will ultimately punish with severity wrongdoers who reject his mercy.

The ‘Jesus’ of popular culture who loves and accepts everyone and everything, without a call to repent and without ever mentioning punishment—that is not the real Jesus—the Jesus of the Bible.

People who read the Bible from cover to cover find it to be consistent from cover to cover, because God does not change. In Chapter 3, Verse 6 of the book of Malachi, the last book of

the Old Testament, God tells the prophet, **“I the LORD do not change.”** (NIV)

And in Hebrews 13:8 in the New Testament we are told, **“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”**

Jesus is coming again. And he warned that there would be disasters in the days leading up to his return in power. At Luke 21:11 he said, **“There will be great earthquakes, famines, and plagues in various places.”**

Would these be naturally occurring events, or would God actually send some of the disasters in the final days of this world? The best answer is found in the New Testament’s last book, the Apocalypse or Revelation. It speaks plainly of God sending plagues or disasters upon this rebellious world. Revelation 15:1 says there were **“seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them God’s wrath is finished”**

So, there is no basis for claiming that it was only in Old Testament times that God would send epidemics and other disasters, to call people to repent from their bad ways.

# What about the *Left Behind* Teaching That Today's Events Can't Fulfill Prophecy?

Many Christians dismiss the thought that any of the end times disasters Jesus foretold, or any of the disasters depicted in the book of Revelation could be happening today, because the Church has not yet been raptured to heaven, and we have not yet seen the rise of an Antichrist figure as portrayed in the *Left Behind* novels that became so popular a few decades ago.

But few realize that this *Left Behind* theology represents a new teaching that swept through the churches during the past century—not the traditional Protestant understanding of the Bible.

People who accept the teachings of *Left Behind* find themselves looking to the future for events that would fit the fictional pattern. They believe that God's prophetic clock stopped, and won't start again until the Rapture. As a result, they miss the fulfillment of Bible prophecy in recent

history and in today's headlines. This hinders their ability to follow Jesus' command to **“be always on the watch.”** (Luke 21:36)

The *Left Behind* view of the rapture and the end times was *not* embraced by such great Bible scholars as Martin Luther, John Calvin, Jonathan Edwards—nor by commentators from Wycliffe in the 1300's to Spurgeon in the 1800's. Instead of a future 7-year “Tribulation” taught by *Left Behind*, they understood the tribulation spoken of in the Old and New Testaments as already well underway in their lifetimes and lasting hundreds of years. So they saw world events involving the papacy and the Islamic conquest as fulfilling Bible prophecy, not irrelevant as in the *Left Behind* view.

So, while those who embrace the popular *Left Behind* teachings immediately dismiss any thought of God intervening in today's world, that view can be easily refuted. See the books *LEFT BEHIND Answered Verse by Verse*, which points out the errors in that theology, and *NeoHistoricism: Why Islamic Terror and Clergy Sex Abuse Wouldn't Surprise Luther, Calvin, Wycliffe, Knox, Wesley, Spurgeon or Jonathan Edwards*, both of which can be read for free online at the website

BibleNook.com—or purchased where books are sold.

Once the questionable *Left Behind* teachings are out of the way, it is possible to examine more closely the question of whether or not God sent the COVID-19 coronavirus.

# A Wake-up Call Leading to Repentance?

So, did God send the COVID-19 coronavirus? Is the coronavirus a plague from God? ...or from the devil? ...or just a coincidence?

Does it signal the end of the world? Or, is it a wake-up call for this world? And for lost sinners to turn to Christ?

What is it? And who or what caused it? Really, we don't know. We can't say, for sure.

But, just as Jesus often left his audience to draw their own conclusions after hearing his parables, we have heard enough to draw our own conclusions about this modern plague.

The Bible tells us that God stops epidemics in answer to prayer. It is popular to quote from 2 Chronicles 7:13-14 the part where God said, **“when my people humble themselves—the ones who are called by my name—and pray, seek me, and turn away from their evil practices, I myself will listen from heaven, I**

**will pardon their sins, and I will restore their land.” (ISV)**

But the words just before that are seldom quoted—the words where God said, **“Whenever I close the skies so there is no rain, or whenever I command locusts to lay waste to the land, or whenever I send epidemics among my people...”** Why? Evidently, it isn’t popular to mention that God said he might **“send epidemics.”**

So, God spoke of sending locusts and epidemics. And he said he would answer prayers for locusts and epidemics to stop if the nation of his people **pray, seek me, and turn away from their evil practices.” (ISV)**

Many people become upset, even angry, at the suggestion that God sends locusts and epidemics. “God is love, so he doesn’t do such things,” they say.

But, even those who don’t read the Bible should be familiar with the story of the Jewish people’s exodus from Egypt. The Exodus has been the topic of epic motion pictures as well as animated features. And these all depict the plagues that God sent on Egypt before Pharaoh finally let Moses’ people go.



As discussed in detail earlier, the 8th plague God sent on Egypt was locusts that ate up their food crops. The 5th plague God sent was a disease killing their farm animals. And the 6th plague consisted of boils and sores covering everyone's skin.

“Well, that was Egypt,” some people may say. “God wouldn't send plagues like that on us!”

But, after they were freed from their slavery in Egypt, God told his Chosen People through Moses that they would be blessed if they obeyed his laws, but that they would be punished with disasters if they disobeyed. In Deuteronomy 28, beginning with Verse 15, God said,

**“...if you do not obey the Lord your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come on you and overtake you:**

**...21 The Lord will plague you with diseases until he has destroyed you from the land you are entering to possess. 22 The Lord will strike you with wasting disease, with fever and inflammation, with scorching heat and drought, with blight and mildew, which will plague you until you perish. ... 27 The Lord will afflict you with the boils of Egypt and**

**with tumors, festering sores and the itch, from which you cannot be cured.” (NIV)**

The nation of Israel did sin and, as noted in an earlier chapter, God sent epidemics upon them, and thousands died each time.

These disasters were sent for a purpose. God’s purpose was to bring them to repentance—to cause them to change their hearts and minds, and turn back to God, so he could bless them. Like any good parent, he disciplines us for our own good.

The ‘Jesus’ of popular culture who loves and accepts everyone and everything, without a call to repent and without ever mentioning punishment—that is not the real Jesus—the Jesus of the Bible. We’ve seen in the Scripture passages quoted in an earlier chapter, that Jesus is just as strict as God the Father in the Old Testament.

People who read the Bible from cover to cover find it to be consistent from cover to cover, because God does not change.

Christ is coming again. And he warned that there would be disasters in the days leading up to his return in power. At Luke 21:11 he said,

**“There will be terrible earthquakes, famines, and dreadful diseases in various places.”**

Would these be naturally occurring events, or would God actually send some of the disasters in the final days of this world? The best answer is found in the New Testament’s last book, the Apocalypse or Revelation. It speaks plainly of God sending plagues or disasters upon this rebellious world. Revelation 15:1 says, **“There were seven angels bringing seven disasters. These are the last disasters, because after them, God’s anger is finished.”**

But Revelation 16: 9 says most people would refuse **“to change their hearts and lives and give glory to God.”**

These end times disasters serve as warning signs, for the purpose of alerting people to the approaching end, and to call them to repent and return to God.

But God knew ahead of time that most people would NOT see these things as warnings from God and so would refuse to listen. Revelation 9:20-21 says, **“The other people who were not killed by these terrible disasters still did not change their hearts . . . and turn away from**

**murder or evil magic, from their sexual sins or stealing.”**

We don't know if the terrible things happening now are part of the sign of Christ's return. But, if they are, then we have reason to be glad. Jesus said at Luke 21:28, **“Now when these things begin to take place, straighten up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”**

But, if today's events are just a wake-up call before we reach that final stage, then we can pray that people who don't know the Lord will come to their senses, repent, and turn to him for salvation.

Our heavenly Father has our eternal future in view. So, is the Coronavirus a plague from God? ...or from the devil? ...or just a coincidence? Does it signal the end of the world? Or, is it a wake-up call for this world? And for lost sinners to turn to Christ? Really, we don't know. We can't say, for sure.

But we can say for sure that people need to hear the Gospel. And we can hope that these troubling events in the world will bring people to their knees in prayer and will cause people to re-

examine their lives, and to think about where they will spend eternity.

As we offer help and comfort to those are in distress, we can remind them that this life isn't all there is. As they face uncertainty about their future, we can tell them of the hope Jesus gives. We can share the promise of John 3:16 that **“God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”**

And, if you haven't been a religious person, but the coronavirus crisis now has made you think about how fragile life is, and where you will spend eternity when this life is over, respond to Jesus' invitation where he says: **“Come, follow me.”**—Luke 18:22

You are included in Christ's call to **“Come to me, all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart; and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”**—Matthew 11:28-30

He promises, **“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give eternal life to them. They will never perish,**

**and no one will snatch them out of my hand.”—John 10:27-28**

## About the Author

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*Answering Jehovah's Witnesses Subject by Subject* (Baker Book House)

*Behind the Watchtower Curtain* (Crown Publications; reprinted by BookSurge Publishing; also published in Russian and Japanese)

*Bible for the End Times* (CreateSpace)

*Blood on the Altar* (Prometheus Books)

*Come, Follow Jesus!—the Real Jesus* (CreateSpace)

*Doorstep Bible Answering Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses* (CreateSpace)

*How to Rescue Your Loved One from the Watchtower* (Baker Book House; reprinted by CreateSpace)

*Index of Watchtower Errors* (Baker Book House)

*Jehovah-Talk: The Mind-Control Language of Jehovah Witnesses* (Baker Book House)

*Jehovah's Witness Literature: A Critical Guide to Watchtower Publications* (Baker Book House)

*Jehovah's Witnesses Answered Verse by Verse* (Baker Book House; also published in French, Spanish, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Faroese and partially in Arabic)

*LEFT BEHIND Answered Verse by Verse* (Lulu)

*Mormonism: Changes, Contradictions, And Errors* (Baker Book House)

*Mormons Answered Verse by Verse* (Baker Book House)

*Mormons: How to Witness to Them* (Baker Book House)

*NeoHistoricism: Why Islamic Terror and Clergy Sex Abuse: wouldn't surprise Luther, Calvin, Wycliffe, Knox, Wesley, Spurgeon or Jonathan Edwards* (CreateSpace)

*No Blood!* (a novel) (BookSurge Publishing)

*Parallel Gospels in Harmony—with Study Guide* (Lulu)

*The Original Bible for Modern Readers* (editor) (CreateSpace)

*United Nations vs Israel and the End of the World* (CreateSpace)

*Worse Than Waco: Jehovah's Witnesses Hide A Tragedy* (BookSurge Publishing)