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## **THE SURE WORD by Jonnie Hutchison**

### **IS THE PANDEMIC A SIGN OF JESUS' IMMINENT RETURN?**

Some are claiming that the ongoing world-wide pandemic is a sign of the soon return of Jesus to “rapture the saints” followed by seven years of tribulation, and then the return of Jesus a third time to set up His earthly kingdom over which He will rule for a thousand years. One writer claimed that the devil is at work by means of the pandemic preparing for the coming into power of the so-called “Anti-Christ.” All of these ideas are a part of a religious teaching known as premillennialism. However, None of these ideas are found in the Bible.

The premillennial “rapture” is not found in the Bible neither by name nor concept. The rapture is supposed to be a sudden and secret snatching away of the saved by the Lord. Those left behind will be surprised and shocked at this sudden inexplicable disappearance. However, one of the passages used to teach this supposed rapture actually contradicts the premillennial view. 1 Thessalonians 4:13ff is said by premillennialists to be a preview of the “rapture”, yet in verse 16 the Bible reads, “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven **with a shout**, with **the voice** of an archangel, and with **the trumpet of God**. And the dead in Christ will rise first.” A shout, a voice and a trumpet are intended to be heard. This hardly sounds like the premillennial “rapture” which is supposed to be a sudden and quiet snatching away of the saints. Instead, this passage is describing the second and final coming of Christ, not a secret so-called “rapture.”

Most premillennialists believe that Matthew 24 is a description of the seven years of tribulation which they say will follow a “rapture.” Yet, Matthew 24:16 reads, “then let those who are **in Judea** flee to the mountains.” The so-called tribulation is supposed to be a world-wide event, but what is described in Matthew 24 was limited to the area of Judea. Matthew is describing, not a world-wide tribulation, but the destruction of Jerusalem by the armies of Rome which happened in 70 A.D. and is a matter of secular history.

Premillennialists believe that the so-called “Anti-Christ” will be a one-man world-wide dictator. Yet, in the first century the apostle John wrote, “Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour” (, 1 John 2:18). Anyone who opposes Christ is antichrist.

The time of Christ’s coming is unknown (1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Peter 3:10). Know this, the present pandemic is **NOT** a sign or the Lord’s imminent return!