



Psalm 46

Psalm 46 Revelation 6:1-8 Luke 10:25-37

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Pastor Dave Bolte

You have probably heard of the **Four Horsemen Of The Apocalypse**. It is a graphic way to describe the **Signs of the End** of the world. We heard about the **Four Horsemen** today in the reading from the book of Revelation. The **Fourth Horseman** of the Apocalypse is **pale**¹ in color; the text actually says it's **greenish** in color – like when we say someone who is sick looks “*green around the gills*.” Here is the passage from Revelation:

When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come!" And I looked, and behold, a **pale horse**! And its rider's name was Death, and Hades followed him. And they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with **pestilence** and by wild beasts of the earth. Revelation 6:7-8

This **Fourth Horseman**, which is **pale and green** in color, brings all kinds of destruction on the earth, including **pestilence**. This pestilence includes all kinds of sickness and disease, including epidemics and pandemics. We are currently getting a front row look at this **green horse**.

The **Coronavirus** is spreading quickly across the earth. It's a pestilence that is making many sick, and killing others. It is in the news every day; there is a sense of fear spreading across the earth. It is almost impossible to keep up with the updates. It is sweeping across our own country: and Italy is even in lockdown because of it. The CDC expects it to continue to get worse.



¹ The color of this horse in the Greek text is “*chlorus*” (= English Chlorophyll, which is essential in *photosynthesis*, allowing plants to absorb energy from light and stay green). It's the ghastly greenish complexion of a decaying corpse. This is the color of death itself. It was the word that doctors used to describe sick people.

So what is our response to this? How does your Christian faith help you understand and respond to the *Coronavirus*? There are several things to keep in mind.

First, this is a *Sign Of The End*². The signs of the end are meant to lead you to repentance. Jesus revealed the signs to us so that we would know that Judgment Day is coming and that we would be ready. **The only way to be ready is to repent of your sin, confess it to God, and believe that you are forgiven because of the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.** Whenever you hear about the *Coronavirus*, take a minute to make sure your heart is repentant and that you trust only in Christ for your eternal salvation.

A second thing to keep in mind is that we *Trust God in all things*. Psalm 46 teaches us to *turn to the Lord when the earth gives way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, when its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.* (Psalm 46:2-3). These are figurative ways to describe troubled times ... like what we are seeing on the earth right now with the *Coronavirus*.

God does not promise that we are exempt from the troubles of the world, but rather He promises that He is with us, He will help us, and we do not have to fear. Whatever pestilence, or trouble, or violence, or disaster may happen to us, we still belong to the Lord. Our lives are in His hands. All of His promises still apply to you. You belong to Him. Your sins are forgiven. Heaven is your Home. Nothing changes because trouble comes into your life ... even if it is the *Coronavirus*.

Let's take a look at **Psalm 46** again this morning. It's on the gold insert you received today.
Let's read it responsively verse by verse.

The Lord promises to be your refuge and strength, your “mighty fortress”, your safe place in this troubled world. Nothing can change God's promises to you. Nothing can take your hope away. Regardless of what happens in this world, you will still have the resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting. Nothing changes that. Because we

² Remember that the “Signs of the End” are **global and historical** – they affect all nations in various ways and to varying degrees and various times throughout the entire end times period. The *Coronavirus* is the latest example. There have been many “pestilences” throughout history. Here are top 10 Epidemics in history, where millions of people were affected and/or killed: Polio, Typhus, AIDS, Malaria, Cholera, Smallpox, Yellow Fever, The Black Death (Plague), Influenza, and Tuberculosis. <http://www.healthcarebusinesstech.com/the-10-deadliest-epidemics-in-history/>

have that confidence and trust, we do not fear the troubles comes into your life ... even if it is the *Coronavirus*.

This Psalm teaches us to trust in God alone. Do not put your hope and trust in the CDC, or the government, or the news media, or how much toilet paper you have stockpiled ... put your hope and trust in God alone. He is your Refuge and Strength; He will help you.

You know, there is something even worse than the *Coronavirus*: **it's sin**. Sin is a worldwide pandemic; every single person has it; sin has a 100% death rate.

But God is greater than our sin! The Son of God took our sin to the cross where He destroyed it; and now, for those who look to Jesus in faith, they will live and not die! They have eternal life! The Lord is their refuge and strength and delivers them from the terrible destruction of sin and guilt and death itself.

This same Son of God is with you today; the Lord Jesus is your refuge and strength!

Trust in Him and do not fear. God does not promise that we are exempt from the troubles of the world, but rather He promises that He is with us, He will help us, and we do not have to fear.

Finally, a third thing to keep in mind is *mercy*. This is the time when your light shines the brightest. While the world is in fear, and near panic, *you have peace*, and you can act in *mercy*!

- † Share your *peace and trust* in Christ with other people.
- † Let them know that this is a *Sign of the End* and teach them about *repentance and faith* in Christ so that they are ready for the Last Day!
- † Share *Psalm 46* and other Scriptures with your family and friends so that they too can learn to have *peace and trust* in Christ!
- † *Help* your neighbor who is in need; *share* with them if you can; *check-in* on them if they are all alone.
- † This is not the time to be *selfish & hoarding* --- it is the time to *selfless & giving*.
- † If your neighbor or friend gets sick, be *merciful* and *help* them.

While much of the world is responding in fear, *you can respond with love and mercy!*

This *Coronavirus* is not the first pestilence that has ever swept over the earth. **Martin and Katy Luther** lived during an outbreak of the Bubonic Plague in 1527 in

Wittenberg, Germany³. The “Black Death” killed millions, and people died horribly from it. Most of the people of Wittenberg had fled for their lives, but not the Luther’s. *They understood the times.* They knew that their neighbors needed help. They knew people needed hope, peace and comfort that only Christ can give. They decided to be merciful and stay. While not condemning those who fled, the Luther’s decided to stay --- they wanted to show love and mercy to those affected with the plague. They even opened their home in order to have mercy and help those in need during the Black Death.

Maybe we are coming onto a time like that . . . maybe not.

But what if we are?

What will you do? How can you be *merciful* in the midst of this epidemic? How can you be the *Good Samaritan* to your neighbor in need? How can you let your light shine in the shadow of the *Coronavirus*? How can you demonstrate your *peace and trust* in God when the whole world seems to be in fear?

This is a time when the light of Christ shines brightly; this is where you stand out as a Christian and live your life differently than the fearful world around you. Look for those times; look for those in need; look for those who are in fear; look-out for your neighbor. *Let your light shine by being merciful!*

Right now, we are eye witnesses to *the Green Horseman of the Apocalypse* galloping across the earth. May it lead you to **repentance**, to deep **faith** in God as your Refuge and Strength, and give you opportunities to be **merciful** to the fearful and hurting around you.

Amen!

³ When Martin Luther was dealing with The Black Death plague, he wrote these wise words that can help inform the way we approach things happening in our world right now...*"I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance inflict and pollute others and so cause their death as a result of my negligence. If God should wish to take me, he will surely find me and I have done what he has expected of me and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others. If my neighbor needs me however I shall not avoid place or person but will go freely as stated above. See this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash nor foolhardy and does not tempt God."* Luther's Works Volume 43 pg 132 the letter "Whether one may flee from a Deadly Plague"