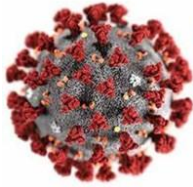


# God is in Control!



*Harvesting for the Kingdom*

1



Novel Coronavirus, 2019-nCoV  
is now officially called  
**COVID-19**  
CO - Corona  
VI - Virus  
D - Disease  
World Health Organization

## A “Global Pause” An Unprecedented Time

- Affecting virtually 100% of the globe; *God has allowed it!*
- God is in control, working our sinful choices out for good
- Our focus; how God will use this to advance His Kingdom!
  - God is dealing with our *attitude* toward government at this time
  - Pandemics have often preceded revival and awakenings!
- God plows the soil of our hearts to *plant* during difficult times
  - He breaks up clods and turns over soil – bring nutrients; oxygen
  - We must discern *what* we sow, *where* we sow and *how* we sow

2

## The Dangers and the Exposure of Evil

- People are now demonstrating for “re-opening the economy”
  - Even when curves are flattening, stay at home orders are extended
  - Essential services are often determined by government values
  - Some think we are heading for a forced vaccine with a tracking chip!
- So what are we as believers to do?
  - Should we defy government orders and force the issue legally?
  - Should we alert people the last days and anti-Christ are here?
- Liberty under law – self-government – is the cure
  - Government over-control always leads to poverty and death
  - Of all people, *believers should emulate self-government in Christ!*

3

## The Larger Kingdom Goals God has in Mind

- A global wake-up call for the Church – *will she arise?*
  - Will we as the body of Christ repent and arise to new life?
  - With the National Day of Prayer tomorrow, we should pray and fast!
- As God forces power to the bottom – *will we serve?*
  - Though the enemy wants to centralize, God is in control!
  - As top-down control fails we can all influence others locally!
- *A lesson from God's Judgment on Judah – 725 B.C.*
  - Prophets declared truth in decline of Israel (pointing out priorities)
  - *Isaiah declared God's priorities (hope) during a time of Judgment*

4

## Pruning prepares us for the Harvest

- *For before the harvest, when the bud is perfect and the sour grape is ripening in the flower, He will both cut off the sprigs with pruning hooks and take away and cut down the branches – Isaiah 18:5*
- *I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit... I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit for without Me you can do nothing. – John 15:1-2; 5*

5



### Preparation by *Pruning*

- Remove damaged branches
- Thin out excess branches
- Prune to shape the tree/vine
- Only prune what is necessary



*The purpose of pruning is to learn to abide in the Vine!*

6



## Daily Abiding in the Vine

- Give God your damaged emotions from the past
- Repent (remove)
  - Dependency on your own strength or determination
  - Distractions from your dedicated time of devotions
  - Earnest seeking of Him
  - Intercession for others
  - Satisfaction with the level of character you now have

7

## Harvesting for the Kingdom – Is. 28:26-28

- Isaiah gives a parable - God *harvests* during Judgment

*“... For he instructs him in right judgment, His God teaches him. For the black cumin is not threshed with a threshing sledge, nor is a cartwheel rolled over the cumin: but the black cumin is beaten out with a rod. Bread flour must be ground: therefore he does not thresh it forever. Break it with his cartwheel.”*

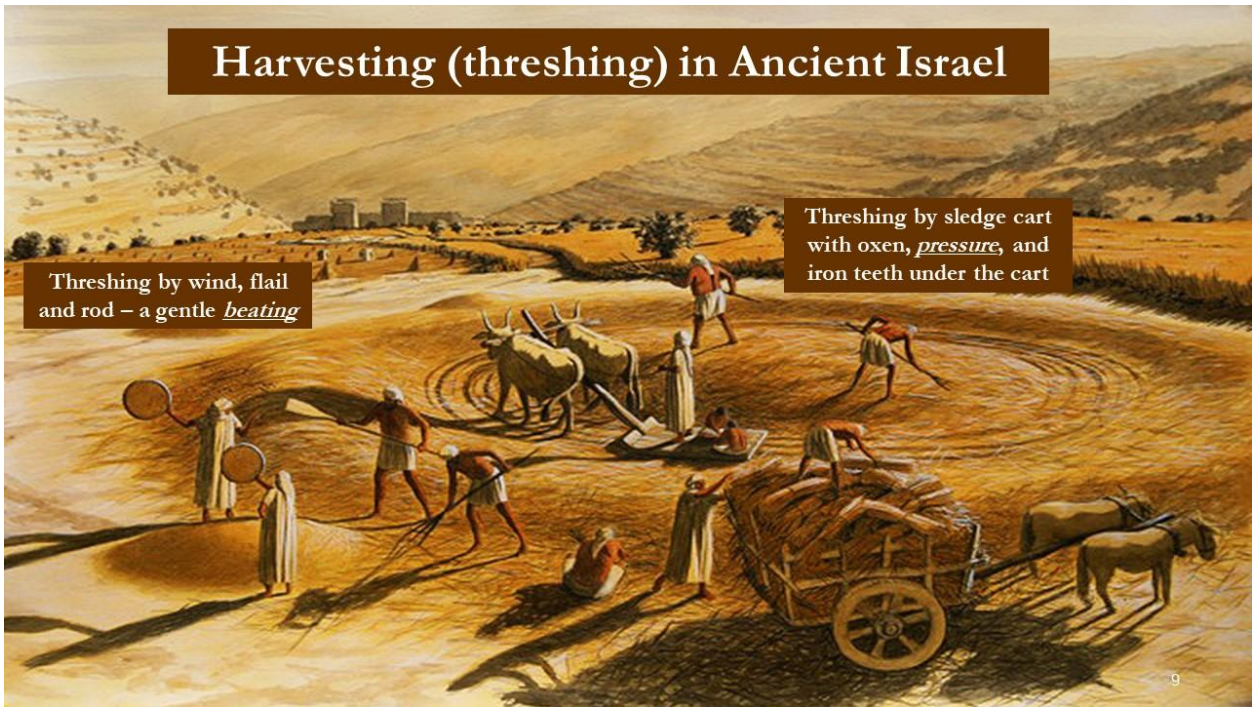
  - Harvest by flail or rod – gently beaten by wind or the instrument
  - Harvest by sledge cart – broken by wheels and teeth under pressure
- *By either method, the outer shell must be broken in order to release the present fruit and future seed! (seed is in the fruit)*

8

## Harvesting (threshing) in Ancient Israel

Threshing by wind, flail and rod – a gentle *beating*

Threshing by sledge cart with oxen, *pressure*, and iron teeth under the cart

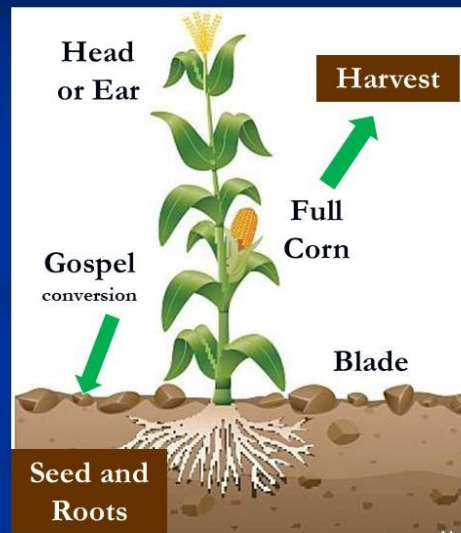


### Threshing the *attitude* of the believer

- **Priorities** – *the Glory of God is our focus* – *Romans 8:18-19*
  - Let rebellion “no one can tell me what to do” blow away like chaff
  - *Are we affirming God’s control or the Devil’s?*
- **Perspective** – .... *lawful, but not expedient* – *1<sup>st</sup> Cor. 6:12*
  - Everything the Bible condemns does not have to be illegal...
  - *God-given rights are tempered by personal responsibility*
  - Emphasizing rights over responsibility produces entitlement
- **Peripheral vision** – *Don’t be a stumbling block* – *Romans 14:13*
  - Respect the one who may be fearful or cautious – don’t demean
  - Jesus came “under the law” to redeem – we should do the same

## Thy Kingdom Come

- Plowing the Soil to receive seed
- Planting; *evangelism / growth*
  - First the blade; *germination or regeneration* – an individual revival
  - Then the head (or ear); *vegetative state or awakening* – a change in the home and church
  - Then the full corn; *reproductive or reformation* – cultural change / state
- Harvesting the Kingdom!



## Pruning the Church to express the Kingdom

- What is Kingdom influence? (it includes saved and unsaved)
  - A *measure* of Christ's rule in the individual, home, church, and state
  - The *influence of Christ* from the inside-out and the bottom-up!
- The Church is to *birth* the Kingdom – Psalm 33:12
  - The condition of God's people blesses or curses a nation
  - *The Church must focus on Christ and not on itself!*
- The quality of repentance determines the quality of fruit
  - Have we *over-emphasized experience over fruit-bearing?*
  - The Church is to salt and light its city in the opposite spirit!
  - Local business innovation is today a model for the Church

## God plants strategically with a harvest in view

*“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.” – Galatians 6:7*

- *Hosea 10:12 - Sow with a view to righteousness, reap in accordance with kindness, break up your fallow ground, for it is time to seek the Lord, until He comes to rain righteousness on you.*

## The Farmer Plows

- *The Farmer plows through fields of green, and the blade of the plow is sharp and keen (repeat)*
  - *But the seed must be sown to bring forth grain, and nothing is born without suffering and pain.*
  - *And God never sows in the heart of man without intention, purpose and plan.*



## The Farmer Plows

- *So when you feel the plows sharp blade, let not your heart be sorely afraid (repeat)*
- *For like the farmer God chooses a field, from which He expects an excellent yield.*
- *Rejoice though your heart is broken in two, God seeks to bring forth a rich harvest in you.*