

## The Sword of Pestilence and Biblical Living

- I. Definitions.
- A. pestilence: Any fatal epidemic disease, affecting man or beast, and destroying many victims.
  - B. epidemic: Of a disease: 'Prevalent among a people or a community at a special time, and produced by some special causes not generally present in the affected locality.'
- II. If Covid-19 is a pestilence, we should particularly heed what Scripture says about such.
- A. A pestilence is a sword of God. **LEV 26:25; 1CH 21:11-12.**
  - B. If God thus judges His own people, so will He judge all nations. **JER 25:29.**
  - C. Pestilence being a specific, fatal disease sent from God as judgment, there will be a cost exacted regardless of the efforts at mitigation. **AMO 9:1-5.**
    - 1. To conclude otherwise would be to affirm that God can be overruled.
    - 2. Mitigating damage is one thing. Presuming to eradicate divine pestilences is another.
    - 3. Something to ponder: If an epidemic disease is *zoonotic* (can be transmitted from animals to humans), how many animals need to be vaccinated to halt the epidemic?
  - D. The sword of God cuts off the righteous as well as the wicked. **EZE 21:3-5.**
  - E. God has arrows of punishment for the wicked and arrows of mercy for the righteous. Both arrows hurt and kill. **1KI 22:20, 34-38; 2CH 34:26-28 c/w 35:20-24 c/w ISA 57:1.**
  - F. God made it clear to Israel that appointed worship is not the enemy of the people like a pestilence or plague. **EXO 5:3; NUM 8:19.**
- III. What one thinks about the Covid-19 situation depends largely on the source of information he credits. *How* one is lead has much to do with *where* he is lead.
- A. Wisdom leads "...in the way of righteousness..." (**PRO 8:20**). It does not accommodate sin.
  - B. "...in the midst of the paths of judgment..." (**PRO 8:20**).
    - 1. midst: The middle point or part; the centre, middle.
    - 2. Wisdom "...saves us from deviating on either hand. *In medio virtus – Virtue lies in the midst.*" (Matthew Henry)
    - 3. Compare this with **PRO 4:25-27**. Travel the highway, not the ditches.
    - 4. We make many errors in judgment when we carry things to extremes.
    - 5. Peter tended to think in extremes. **JOH 13:8-9.**
    - 6. Our rule is *moderation*, the avoidance of extremes. **PHIL 4:5.**
    - 7. The right way is often found between the extremes.
    - 8. Haste without *circumspection* (**EPH 5:15**) can yield regrettable extremes. **PSA 116:11.**
  - C. In assessing the Covid-19 situation, we dare not overlook our spiritual instruction for living for it is in spiritual growth that discernment between good and evil is found. **HEB 5:14.**
  - D. God forbid that we should lose our spiritual well-being because of a "new normal" that is being pushed on us. The Jewish Apostles of the First Century had a "new normal" of sweeping cultural change and fears to face, yet Jesus told them, "In your patience possess ye your souls" (**LUK 21:19**).
- IV. Is there a great conspiracy afoot? Possibly, but remember that not everybody involved in a conspiracy is generally aware of it. **2SAM 15:10-12.**
- A. Be especially wary of thinking evil of brethren who may not view the Covid-19 situation as

- you do, as if they are active conspirators against all that is good!
- B. Conspiracy may indeed be the only logical conclusion that explains events at hand.
1. It is an error to assume a dark conspiracy for everything that comes along and a conspiracy mindset can hobble one's progress through life by paranoia.
  2. But it would also be an error to not consider the possibility of a dark conspiracy, given the nature of men, and the preponderance of evidences that favor conspiracy over disconnected coincidences as the best explanation for events.
  3. " 'To think no evil, where no evil seems,' is the duty of a Christian; but to refuse to see it, where it most evidently appears, is an imposition on the understanding itself." (Adam Clarke)
- C. The Apostles concluded a grand Satanic conspiracy orchestrated the crucifixion, but also that God overruled that conspiracy for our salvation. **ACT 4:25-28.**
- D. Wicked men may conspire and pursue their own agendas for power and wealth but God is not dethroned as King and Head of the church and creation thereby. **PSA 76:10; ISA 10:12.**
- E. If Covid-19 with its consequences is a conspiracy to destroy us, it is by the permissive decree of God Who has an eye on His church. **ZEC 2:8.**
- F. Beware of giving too much power to the enemy! This breeds obsession, futility, hopelessness, panic and a loss of perspective in the bigger picture of ultimate victory in Christ. **2CO 2:14.**
- V. In making ourselves enthusiastic armchair analysts of events and policies, we can be prone to becoming a tool of Satan in our zeal, and discredit the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- A. We should not be ignorant of Satan's devices as he works in the children of disobedience (**2CO 2:11; EPH 2:2**) but we do not NEED to know the full depths of Satan. **REV 2:24 c/w PSA 64:6.**
- B. Before you peddle an accusation of conspiracy, beware of being a false accuser, a slanderer. **PRO 10:18.**
1. slander: The utterance or dissemination of false statements or reports concerning a person, or malicious misrepresentation of his actions, in order to defame or injure him; calumny, defamation.
  2. The word *devil* in the New Testament translates the Greek *diabolos* which means a false accuser, slanderer. **1TI 3:11; 2TI 3:3; REV 12:10.**
  3. Beware of believing an evil report simply because you want to believe it.
  4. Satan would love to cast aspersion on our credibility as disciples of Jesus Christ by drawing us into the carting of false accusations. *Let not our good be evil spoken of.* **ROM 14:16 c/w 1TI 5:14.**
  5. Strive to prove any accusation you make or peddle. **1TH 5:21; DEU 13:12-14.**
    - a. Things aren't always as they appear. **JOH 7:24.**
    - b. Any of us could be charged with wrongdoing based upon bits and pieces of information taken out of context and pasted together!
    - c. However, when men openly declare their wicked intentions and methods, they leave little room for concluding ignorance or innocence. **ISA 10:13.**
  6. Evil surmisings reveal a corrupt mind. **1TI 6:4-5 c/w PRO 16:27.**
  7. Our constitution may allow us to say whatever we want but our Bible does not!
- C. There is an element of pride that tends to accompany a conspiracy mindset: one is convinced that he is on the inside of all credible information and that others are fools. **ROM 11:13 ct/w 1CO 8:1; LUK 1:51.**
1. One can be so convinced of his own expertise that he makes false prognostications

that do not take into consideration the work of God.

**ISA 47:13; PRO 5:6; DAN 2:21.**

2. Beware of desiring acclaim as "...some great one" (**ACT 8:9**).

- D. Preoccupation with "the conspiracy" can crowd out the word of God and its effect in our lives, which is almost the worst thing we can do. **LUK 8:14.**
- E. If what consumes us is what we show to the world (**MAT 12:34**), let us not be so consumed within of darkness and despair that those are the only things that the world sees or hears from us. **PHIL 4:8 c/w MAT 5:16; 1PE 3:12-15.**

- VI. Our best defense against the rulers of darkness is obedience, prayer and pure worship. **1PE 4:17-19; HAB 3:2; 2CH 20:6, 12, 20-23.**