

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.