

Where Do We Go from Here?, Lesson 3

- ☑ What is a pandemic? What does the Bible have to say about them if anything?
- ☑ Multiply times throughout the Bible we find God using plagues to accomplish His purposes: **2nd Samuel 24:15**; Satan was allowed to send a plague on Job in **Job 2**.
- ☑ Jesus warns that pestilences will be one of the signs of the last days.

Matthew 24:1-8 Jesus gave us some key signs that lead up to the His second coming:

- 1) Deception by false Christs. Leading world religions all have a false Jesus as a part of their theology: Islam, Hinduism, Mormonism, Jehovah's witnesses, etc.
 - 2) Wars and rumors of wars.
 - 3) There would be disease and famine.
 - 4) There would be tribulation and persecution for God's saints.
 - 5) There would be a defection or falling away of all false believers.
 - 6) There would be the carrying of the Gospel to the whole world.
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- ✓ These cover what leads up and what is the first three and half years of the tribulation period, called "The Tribulation;" to be followed by the last three and half years, called "The Great Tribulation."
 - ✓ These signs build up over time, as the Bible describes: like a woman in labor.
 - ✓ In the same way, these signs will build and grow more frequent and intense over time until the fateful last of the last days leading to a catastrophic birth of sorts.
 - ✓ Is Covid 19 a sign of the rapture? No! But is it a sign of the second coming of Jesus? Yes!
 - ✓ So, a pandemic is a birth pain; birth pains don't get easier, they get harder and more frequent with time.
 - ✓ We should expect infectious disease outbreaks to become more frequent more intense and have an impact on more people as time progresses.
 - ✓ Just in recent years we have seen pandemics like HIV, SARS, Swine flu, but this most recent was much worse and widespread.
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- 1) It is a sign of the vulnerability of all of us.
 - ✓ We've been led to believe that with enough money and education we will not be vulnerable to things like this, not true!
 - 2) It has taught us a lesson about the credibility of the Bible.
 - ✓ We have believed the teachings just because they are in the Bible, but now these apocalyptic events seem to be knocking at our door.
 - ✓ The Bible predicts a war in which Russia and its coalition armies will converge on Israel to their destruction **Ezekiel 38:21-23**.
 - ✓ Ezekiel tells us that it will 7 months to bury all the bodies of that conflict!
 - ✓ In Revelation 8 we are told that 1/3 of the earth perishes by the plagues brought by demonic forces. It will take far longer than 7 months to bury that many dead.
 - ✓ When it comes to pandemics, we haven't seen anything yet!
 - ✓ Who could have believed that the world could be completely halted in a few weeks by a plague? Now we know!
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- 3) It has taught us about the uncertainty of life.
 - ✓ Did you expect your schedule to be canceled for an entire year, our churches to be closed for months, our children to be shut out of their classrooms, your workload to shift to your kitchen table?
 - 4) It has taught us about the sufficiency of Jesus.
 - ✓ This virus points us to Jesus. He told His disciples not to fear: **John 16:33**.
 - ✓ Jesus doesn't just overcome the event (tribulation), He overcomes the environment of that event (the world).
 - ✓ We found out that Jesus and the peace He brings was enough to carry us through this difficult time.
 - ✓ We didn't have answers, we had the Answer: Jesus.
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Where do we go from Here?

- 1) Prioritize our prayer life. We need to pray more and pray better.
 - ✓ Multiple armies were converging upon Israel and king Jehoshaphat prayed an amazing prayer: **2nd Chronicles 20:5-12**.
 - ✓ "Our eyes are on You, Lord." a great prayer!
 - 2) We sacrificially serve others – The best thing to do under pressure in addition to prayer is to quit thinking about yourself and think about others.
 - ✓ There is no better way to help yourself than by helping others.
 - ✓ Busy yourself with the concerns of others, don't just think about yourself. You are going to be fine because you have a Great Shepherd.
 - 3) Count your blessings, We're still here!
 - ✓ When we are feeling the pressures the signs of the times, we need to get our calculators out and start tabulating our blessings. **John 1:16; I Thessalonians 6:18**
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- 4) Stay calm and carry on. There is nothing that says we are living by trusting our Savior like being calm in the midst of a storm.
 - ✓ Don't fake it! Learn to live it.
 - ✓ "My peace I give to you." Learn to live in that peace and live by the peace.
 - ✓ **2nd Timothy 1:7** A lot of us haven't been so sound of mind through this pandemic, have we? That is clearly not from God.
 - ✓ **2nd Corinthians 10:5** Either we take charge of our thoughts, or they will take charge of us.
 - ✓ Don't give thoughts free run in your mind and don't let your imagination turn those thoughts in fears.
 - 5) Do the next right thing. We have to keep busy with what God has called us to do.
 - ✓ You can be exhausted in doing nothing; living a life without purpose, ministry or plan will lead to discouragement and fatigue.
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