

Truth to Live by in a Covid-19 World
Exodus 12

We don't have to look far in the Bible to see a plague. In fact, we've already read about several of them.

Now is not the time to be saying novel things. It is the time to reflect on what God has already said. I'm not going to say anything new but remind you of what you already know so that you remember that you know it and share it with your FRANs. (friends, relatives, associates & neighbors)

2 Peter 1:12 & 14 – “Therefore I intend to always remind you...though you...are established in the truth. And I will make every effort so that...you may be able at any time to recall these things.”

This is what we know. This is what is unchangeable.

First: God is Redeeming a People To and For Himself

12:1-3 - The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, ² “This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. ³ Tell all the congregation of Israel...

These instructions are specifically for Israel

43-45 - And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “This is the statute of the Passover: no foreigner shall eat of it, ⁴⁴ but every slave that is bought for money may eat of it after you have circumcised him. ⁴⁵ No foreigner or hired worker may eat of it.

The great news of the Gospel is that in a fallen, rebellious world, God has chosen to save people from themselves and the world, just as he saved Israel from Egypt.

This is the great plan of God from Eden to the New Jerusalem.

Even though some are more susceptible to the effects of Covid-19, it is ultimately in the hand of God.

13 - I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

29 - At midnight the LORD struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the livestock.

No firstborn child chose to be born first or born an Egyptian. This was the sovereign hand of God.

It is not anything about us that saves us – it is by his grace (Eph 2:8) and mercy (Titus 3:5) that God saves us.

This truth inspires incredible humility and great thankfulness.

God is redeeming a people to and for himself and...

In one way or another, “*we are being killed all the day long*” but “*in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*” Why? Because “*we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.... [and] nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*” (Romans 8:36-39)

Second: God is Sovereign Over All of Life

The death of the firstborn is the last of God’s plagues toward Egypt. He created each plague

- The Nile turned to blood
- Frogs
- Lice or gnats
- Flies
- Livestock
- Boils
- Hail
- Locust
- Darkness
- Death of the firstborn

As he redeemed Israel, he also judged Egypt.

29 - At midnight the LORD struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the livestock.

No plague visits the earth that God is not in control of.

Job 38:8-11 - ...*who shut in the sea with doors* when it burst out from the womb,⁹ *when I made clouds its garment* and thick darkness its swaddling band,¹⁰ *and prescribed limits for it* and set bars and doors,¹¹ *and said, ‘Thus far shall you come, and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stayed’?*

I want you to know this because God can miraculously stop viruses.

Third: God Uses Means to Accomplish His Will

3, 7, 15 – God provided very practical directions for Moses who then informed Israel.

Because Jesus is the truth, we have a high commitment to truth. This is why it is imperative to pay attention to organizations like the CDC, TN Department of Health, etc.

In Genesis,

- God used the confusion of language to disrupt construction on the Tower of Babel

In Exodus,

- God used a 'strong east wind all night' to dry the Red Sea

In the book of Numbers,

- The bronze serpent on a pole stopped the fiery serpents – Num 21:4-9
- The plague was stopped by obeying God – Num 25:1-9

Either way, it is equally miraculous.

Fourth: There is only one real salvation

Like Israel in Egyptian captivity. We long to be saved. But, in the process, we miss the real salvation.

John 8:31-35 - So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, ³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." ³³ They answered him, "We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, 'You will become free'? ³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. ³⁵ The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever.

Even in Jesus' day, the Jews were still looking for physical salvation.

My point is that everyone dies physically. You don't have to die spiritually.

This is our message to the world during Covid-19.

Conclusion:

Whether by natural causes, plague, fiery serpent, every Israelite who left Egypt eventually died. This includes Moses, Joshua and Caleb. **We** are all going to die.

In a pandemic, God makes that very evident and personal.

Hebrews 1:10-12 - *You, Lord, laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the work of your hands;¹¹ they will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment,¹² like a robe you will roll them up, like a garment they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will have no end.*

But there is one who has died and returned to life, and not just life for himself but for anyone who will repent of sin and place faith in him, Jesus.

27 - *And the people bowed their heads and worshiped.*

Missions exists because worship does not.

John Piper

Community Groups:

- 1 – Have you been able to keep up with your readings during recent weeks?
- 2 – If not, what may have hindered you from your reading?
- 3 - How can we keep our minds and hearts centered on Jesus during a time like this?
- 5 – What Bible texts come to mind for you as a help for yourself and others? Perhaps Ps 46:1, John 16:33, Phil 4:6-7, 2 Tim 1:7, 1 John 4:18 or Ro 8:28.
- 6 – In what ways does our text today give Israel hope?
- 6 – How does this text demonstrate Gods sovereignty over death?
- 7 – How does God’s use of the ten plagues inform our mental and emotional wellbeing?
- 7 – What do God’s instructions to Moses tell us about our responsibility to practically work during a crisis?
- 8 – What does Moses’s faithful repeating of God’s instructions tell us about transmitting truth during a time like this?
- 9 – Work together to form elements of prayers we should be offering during this time.
- 10 – What means can you employ to work with God to create shalom for your family, church and community?
- 11 – How can you turn a conversation about Covid-19 into a Gospel presentation?

12 – Spend time together this morning praying.