


AFTER
COVID-19
WHAT'S NEXT?

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Sandra had been looking forward to going to a party for one of her co-workers. It wasn't often that she had an opportunity to socialize with her friends from work. While at the party, Sandra noticed that one of her colleagues was coughing and wasn't looking well. She went over to her and talked to her for a few minutes.

About two weeks later, Sandra wasn't feeling like her usual energetic self. She developed a high fever, dry cough, fatigue, and was experiencing some shortness of breath. Was this the flu? She went to see her physician and was diagnosed with the Coronavirus, or "Covid-19".

Sandra was the inadvertent victim of the world's most recent pandemic. How serious could this become? Where did this disease come from?

On December 31, 2019, in Wuhan, Hubei Province, in China, the authorities reported a case of pneumonia of unknown cause to the World Health Organization (WHO). By January 3, 2020, cases totaled 44, and China's National Health Commission isolated and identified the virus as a novel coronavirus.

The word "novel" implies "new" because, according to some scientists, this coronavirus is the latest version of a virus that has existed for thousands of years. According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, coronaviruses are a group of viruses that cause respiratory tract illnesses.

In cases of the most vulnerable, such as the elderly, infants, or individuals with compromised immune systems, these viruses can be deadly.

The WHO called it "2019-nCoV". It is also now known as "Covid-19". According to the New England Journal of Medicine, the first case in the United States was reported on January 20, 2020, in Washington

State. Ten days later, 2019-nCoV was declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern by the WHO.¹

The coronavirus spread so quickly, globally, that on March 11, 2020 the WHO declared it as a pandemic.² Wikipedia defines a pandemic as, "a disease epidemic that has spread across a large region, for instance multiple continents, or world-wide. A pandemic is an epidemic occurring on a scale that crosses international boundaries, usually affecting a large number of people. A disease or condition is not a pandemic merely because it is widespread or kills many people; it must also be infectious."³

Three cases from this coronavirus strain had increased 13 fold in two weeks and tripled the number of countries affected by the disease. This isn't the first time that the modern world has been in the throes of a pandemic.

Do you remember the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory) outbreaks? In 2003, in China, SARS was believed to be responsible for 8,000 cases and about 800 deaths. These viral pathogens were a form of the coronavirus. They are deadly to the most vulnerable among us.

H1N1 was the first flu pandemic in more than 40 years. It struck the United States in April of 2009, and affected more than 60 million people. H1N1 was the cause of 274,304 hospitalizations and 12,469 deaths.

In 2014, the Ebola virus killed 11,000 people in Africa. The United States sent 3,000 troops to contain the disease.

And now, thousands around the globe have been exposed to and infected by Covid-19. Here is some data about the Covid-19 virus that we've gathered thus far:

- Between 40%–70% of the world's entire population could be infected by the virus.
- 80%–85% of the population will not know that they've been infected or will have only mild to moderate symptoms.
- It is highly contagious and contaminates through contact. Each infected person can infect 2–3 more people.
- While the flu has a mortality rate of 0.1%, Covid-19 has a 1.0% mortality rate, making it ten times more deadly than the flu. It has been projected that the mortality rate could even go as high as 3.4%.

- Shopping malls, bowling alleys, and amusement parks in several states have closed their indoor portions.
- The National Guard has been activated in multiple states to aid citizens during this pandemic.
- Covid-19 is now in all 50 states of the United States. The death toll in Italy has purportedly surpassed that of China.

In order to anticipate the conditions of a pandemic, in 2019, between January and August, the US Dept. of Health and Human Services under the Trump administration, conducted an exercise in Washington and twelve states (including New York and Illinois) under the code name "Crimson Contagion".⁴ This scenario imagined what an influenza pandemic would look like and how to address potential crises. The administration was determined to think ahead of the problems and to be proactive in its handling. Despite the efforts to capture the potential shortfalls, funding shortages, and equipment necessities, questions loomed large as issues that would be left unresolved in the event of a pandemic.

Will This Pandemic Ever End?

So far, you've heard the bad news, but the good news is on its way. We do know it will have an ending! Whether it lasts a few months, or a year, the number of deaths from the coronavirus will eventually decrease tremendously! Why? Thanks to modern science, anti-viruses are being developed and are being used successfully on people all across the world!

I think you might agree that our world will never be the same. It has been changed forever. Life as usual will take on a new meaning for most of us. Covid-19 brought planet earth to a standstill, shutting down bars and restaurants, factories, retail establishments, churches, professional sports, schools, etc., and brought the stock market to a screeching halt, dropping thousands of points in a matter of days. Yes, all of this happened in a matter of days!



I've never seen such pandemonium. Fear and panic seem to reign in the hearts of multitudes of people all around the world! Where do we go from here? What's next?

In order to answer these questions, I will have to refer you to the Bible. The Bible is a road map from the past to the future. There's a single word in the Bible that has only three letters. Its definition and significance are beyond words. This word is "SIN." For a moment, I'm going to replace the phrase "Covid-19 virus" with the word "sin."

You see, this is not the first time that the world came to a standstill. It happened in the book of Genesis when the serpent, the Devil, deceived Eve. According to the Bible, Adam and Eve, our first parents, lived in a world without sin. It was indeed a perfect world. There was no sickness, pain, sorrow, nor death.

The biblical account of this story is found in Genesis chapters 1–3. I will give you the short version here:

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth" (Genesis 1:26–28).

Then, Genesis 2:16–17 says: *"And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."*

"Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for

food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (Genesis 3:1–7).

"Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life" (Genesis 3:23–24).

"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Genesis 3:16–19).

We were created to live forever. No Covid-19 virus was possible because the world was in alignment with God's perfect order of life. But then one day the perfect world God created was forever changed. Why? Adam and Eve introduced a virus to planet earth called "Sin". It affected everything. Sickness, pain, sorrow and death all entered into this world through the virus of sin. Until this virus of sin came in, even the plants, flowers, and animals knew no death. What a beautiful world it was!

Imagine beautiful roses with no thorns, lions and lambs lying together in the fields. All of God's wildlife was working together in unison. But, best of all, Adam and Eve were able to commune directly with God, their Creator,

because sin had not yet entered into planet earth through disobedient man. In short, sin separates us from our Creator God. In fact, when Jesus was hanging on the cross to bear the burden of sinful man, He felt this separation even though He had never sinned. Matthew 27:46 says: *"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? That is to say, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'"*

Then, in Isaiah 59:2, we read: *"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you, that he will not hear."*

So what is so wrong about sin? It separates us from God. The only way we can get back to full communion with God is to ask Him to take away our sins.

How do we do that? The Bible says: *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"* (1 John 1:9).

Praise the Lord for His mercies!

So, in a nutshell, Adam and Eve disobeyed God. This disobedience or rebellion to God's Word was the beginning of the virus of sin that has dominated this earth for thousands of years. Disobedience to God's Word puts an end to a perfect world with no sickness, pain, or death. God told them that because of their disobedience, they would have to leave the Garden of Eden, and they would surely die.

The First Pandemic: Sin

In order to understand what sin is, we first need to take a look at what the Bible says about sin and its consequences to the human race. Let's look first at 1 John 3:4: *"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."*

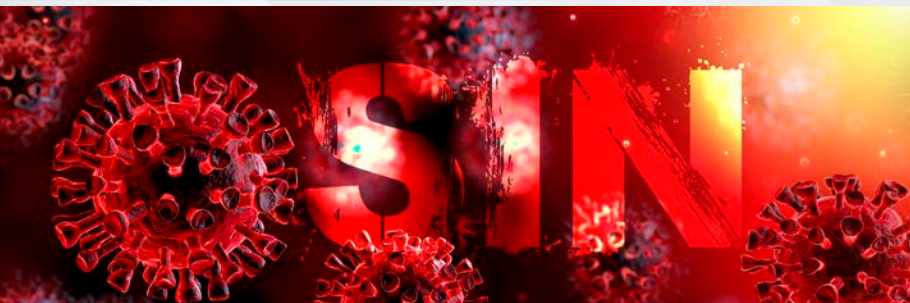
The Bible tells us that "sin is the transgression of the law", or in modern English, the "breaking" of God's law. In other words, when we sin against God's law, we are in rebellion against



the principles of life. Rebellion against God's law can only result in death.

We have two choices. Once we understand what sin is and how deadly it is for our physical and spiritual life, we either continue in our sin, or we ask Jesus to save us FROM our sins. The Bible explains the contrast between the two choices. Romans 6:23 says: *"The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

So, the Bible is clear: God cannot save us IN our SINS. He can only save us FROM our sins. In other words, once we accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of our life, our whole lifestyle will change.



Does this mean we will never sin again? The answer is no. The difference is that as a Christian, when we fall into temptation and commit a sin, Jesus is there to forgive us from that sin when we repent in our heart and mind. That's the beauty of the Christian walk. We don't walk the road alone anymore depending on our own humanity to save us. We can rest in the calm assurance that Jesus "has our back" should we stumble and fall.

If we compare this spiritual anti-virus with the physical anti-virus of Covid-19, we will see that once we understand the deadly effects of this virus and where it comes from, we will make some lifestyle changes. To ignore the advice of our health professionals can be the difference between life and death.

Next, we should ask: "Who, then, is guilty of breaking God's moral law, the Ten Commandments?"

Romans 3:23 gives us the answer: *"For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."* Yes, the Bible says that we all have sinned—every human being. Does that mean that we will

all suffer death? Romans 5:12 says: *"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."*

The answer is, all of us deserve to die as a result of sin. But praise be to God that when we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and confess our sins, He will forgive us and save us from the deadly effects of sin on this earth, at the second coming of Christ.

When Jesus died upon the cross, He took our sins upon Himself and suffered the death that we deserved. Because of this great sacrifice, we now can accept the free gift of salvation, giving us everlasting life. Jesus became our substitute by shedding His blood on the cross of Calvary.

We will never fully understand the plan of salvation on this earth, but *"We'll Understand It Better By and By,"* as the old song says. Here's the beautiful part about the cross. No one nailed Jesus to the cross. It was love that held Him to the cross. He could have called ten thousand angels had He wanted to. Yet, He chose to make the complete sacrifice—His life for ours.

In my humble opinion, no scripture describes this act of love better than John 3:16: *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."* Isn't that incredible? The Creator of the world suspended between Heaven and Earth on a cross, by choice, to redeem fallen man. 1 John 4:8 explains it this way: *"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."*

If we want to find the nature of our loving God, all we have to do is look to the Ten Commandments. They are a transcript of God's own character. This is who He is. If everyone lived by the Ten Commandments, there would be no crime in the world today. The Ten Commandments contain nothing that is bad for humanity. God's will and desire for our lives is that we should live long, healthy, and happy lives on the earth. Then, at the second advent of Christ, be taken to Heaven to live with Him forever.

In 3 John 2 we read: *"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."* God's love for us is a love story that will last for eternity.

Imagine for just a moment. Rather than destroy man because of rebellion against His Creator, God loved His creation

enough to make a plan of salvation to restore humanity to be heirs to His throne for eternity. Jesus's death was not in vain. He died that none should perish, but ALL could have everlasting life. The choice is ours. Will you accept this free gift of salvation by asking Jesus into your heart and mind?

As a writer or speaker, I would typically wait until the end of this little booklet to say this prayer, but I feel impressed by the Lord to pray for you just now.

"Father, I'm asking for Your healing and restoration in each of our lives and that You would receive us as we come to You on bended knee to ask Your forgiveness from our sins. I pray that each reader here will find peace in the midst of the trials that we are all going through right now. Help us to find solace in Your Word in Psalm 119:165: *"Great peace have they which love thy law and nothing shall offend them."* We ask these things in Jesus name. Amen and amen."

Psalms here is telling us that nothing shall hurt or offend us when we love God and keep His commandments. John 14:15 says: *"If you love me, keep my commandments."*

We just discussed that we can't keep them [the Ten Commandments] in our humanness, but when we invite the Lord into our lives, He will give us victory over the sin that the Devil has infected this world with.

Jesus is the anti-virus for you and me today. We belong to God. We have been bought with a price.

The verse in 1 Corinthians 6:20 says: *"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."*

Yes, when we submit and commit our lives to Jesus, He can bring us peace in the

midst of the storms of our lives, whatever they may be. Praise His Holy name!



Why do Bad Things Happen to Good People?

I'd like to address a question many people ask. "Why do bad things happen to good people?"

First of all, the fact that God created us does not make Him responsible for all the bad things that happen to us. Bad things happen to good people because God's creation, the human race, has been rebelling against Him for nearly six thousand years. God created man as a free moral agent. He gives us the choice to live forever or die.

Without God there is no life. Jesus says: *"I am the way the truth and the life"* (John 14:6). The result of sin affects us all. Let's explain it in the context of the Covid-19 virus. This deadly virus is no respecter of persons. The young and the old are dying of it, and every age in between. Yes, some age groups are more susceptible to acquiring the virus than others, but people of all ages who have been exposed by other humans are contracting it. Covid-19 knows no boundaries of nation, color, or culture. People from every ethnic background and virtually every country around the



world have “caught it” when they are exposed to it.

Likewise, sin is no respecter of persons. Everyone exposed to sin contracts it. Here is how the Bible explains it in Matthew 5:45: *“That you may be children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”*

In other words, two people can be caught outside in a sudden rainstorm. One is an 85-year-old grandma in poor health and the other is a murderer fleeing from a crime scene. Let me ask you, “Who gets wet?” The 85-year-old grandma in poor health, or the murderer fleeing from the crime scene? They both get wet from the rainstorm. This is precisely what the Bible is saying here in Matthew 5:45. Sin is a world-wide pandemic that knows no boundaries.

What about the question often asked by many: “If there is a God, why does He allow young babies to starve to death or die of cancer?” Is God to blame for all of the suffering in the world? Many believe He is.

For the answer to this question, let’s read the words of Jesus found in John 10:10: *“The thief (Satan) cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill and to destroy: I am come that they may have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”*

No one is exempt from the consequences of sin. Sin will finally come to its end at the second coming of Christ. Revelation 21:4 tells us: *“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”*

What an incredible promise! Yes, Jesus is the end of this global pandemic we call sin.

“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). What a great hope and future God has planned for His children!

Don’t be discouraged! Did you know that God has plans for you and your future? *“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end”* (Jeremiah 29:11).



Will There Be More “Pestilence” in the Future?

If the Bible is correct, and we, of course, believe it is, the answer is “yes”. Covid-19 is not the last pandemic that we will see.

Why do I say that? Matthew 24:6-8 says: *“And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.”*

Do you know the definition of “pestilence”? Pestilences are epidemics of terrible diseases, or pandemics. Covid-19 is a pestilence. Jesus knew that wars, famines, earthquakes, and pestilences would exist more frequently in the end times. He wanted to warn us that these are signs of the end and of the nearness of His return.

Additionally, the Bible predicts that there will be more crime, (Matthew 24:12), a breakdown of the family unit (2 Timothy 3:2–3), apathy toward spirituality, and scoffing as the end draws near (2 Peter 3:3–4).

All of these conditions will take place just before the return of Christ. In fact, I think you’ll agree that these signs are in place even now. Things are going to get worse before they get better. Yet, we don’t need to fear the future. You see, when you know Jesus, you don’t need to fear. Once you know Him for yourself, you will have peace about what the future holds, because you know the One Who holds your future.

As we watch the world deteriorating around us, we can take refuge in knowing that we should remember Isaiah 43:1–3: *“Fear not, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by your name,*

you are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned. Nor shall the flame scorch you. For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior."

Lastly, please remember what God says in 2 Chronicles 7:14: *"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."*

What an incredible promise from an incredible Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ! Won't you ask Jesus into your life today? All you have to do is to confess your sins, ask Him to come into your heart, and He will do it immediately. When you accept Jesus as Lord and Savior of your life, then you will want to show Him that you love Him by keeping His eternal Ten Commandment law of love. Jesus will give you the victory over the pandemic of sin.

Endnotes

1. [nejm.org: Michelle Holshue, Chas DeBoit, Scott Lindquist, Kathy Lofy. "First Case of 2019 Novel Coronavirus in the United States. March 5, 2020.](https://www.nejm.org: Michelle Holshue, Chas DeBoit, Scott Lindquist, Kathy Lofy.)
2. [techcrunch.com. Brian Heater. "Covid-19 Officially Declared a Pandemic by the WHO, as Deaths Pass 4000](https://www.techcrunch.com: Brian Heater.)
3. <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pandemic>
4. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/19/us/politics/trump-coronavirus-outbreak.amp.html>



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DISCOVER THE CURE FOR FEAR

No catastrophe in our lifetime has rocked the world like the Covid-19 pandemic. Within just a few days our normal activities and our economy have screeched to a halt. Fear and panic reign in the hearts of millions, and it seems as if life will never be the same.

Confronted by an invisible threat, many people are wondering if this is the new normal. **Will global pandemics become more frequent and severe? Why must innocent people suffer under such tragedies?**

The answers lie in understanding an infection that's been around much longer than Covid-19: the virus of sin. The Bible explains how we all contracted this deadly disease, but it also promises a cure. We can face the future with hope, even in these troubled times.