



CORONAVIRUS: SEVERAL THINGS TO CONSIDER

The news have been abuzz these last weeks with the infamous coronavirus and there is a lot of hype in the whole world about it.

I see several things to consider when talking about the coronavirus:

*The first is the virus itself which, even though serious, virulent and dangerous, may or may not be as lethal as portrayed, keeping in mind that we live in a world already full of viruses.

*Then we have the panic issue. The virus is one thing but another issue is the fear that comes from hearing continually from the media about its progress and propagation in the whole world, panic that is created and stimulated by the media.

*The third issue which for now is still on the horizon could be the vaccine issue: if a vaccine is finally developed for this virus, to what degree are we going to trust it and to what degree the government is going to impose upon us that we take it. Lots of people have mixed feelings about vaccines and their potential side effects.

*It is also very interesting to note, even though some utterly mock that perspective, that such epidemics, called pestilences, are predicted in the Bible, in different passages, as part of the final events before the second coming of Christ. Jesus said, referring to these times, “*There shall be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in diverse places*” (Mathew 24:7).

Sceptics will say and they will be right in a way: “Yes, but these kinds of things have always been happening but the media were not developed enough to let all the world know about it.” However, we can truly say that these last years, the pace of such events has been accelerating and their importance and impact on our societies and the world around us is steadily increasing.

To face the reality of a world filled with viruses and the spread of the coronavirus in particular, we have the promises of Psalm 91. We need to learn to walk daily by faith, trusting God for our protection and not waiting for a panic created by a new virus that is unleashed in the world.

Psalm 91: ¹*He who dwells* (a dwelling is a permanent place, not a place we visit from time to time; he who continually fellowships with God and hear His voice dwells in that place.) *in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.* ²*I will say of the LORD, “He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust.”* ³*Surely* (if you dwell in His presence) *He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence.*

⁴*He shall cover you with His feathers* (analogy of a mother bird covering her chicks) *and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler.* ⁵*You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, Nor of the arrow that flies by day,* ⁶*Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.* ⁷*A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand but it shall not come near you.* (If you are dwelling in the secret place.)

We have that tremendous promise and we should expect God to keep it, and to protect and deliver us because He is faithful to His Word. Isaiah 54:14 tells us: *“In righteousness you shall be established; you shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near you.”*

This should be our attitude and the way we live: “I am not going to let fear and panic created by the news get at me. I refuse to live in that fear, I choose to live in the secret place of the Most High. Fear is not the will of God for me.”

Even though it is important to stay informed of what is happening around us and in the world, we can choose to minimize our exposure to the news and the fear-filled flood of the media. Our soul feeds on what we read and hear, and the news media should not be the source where we feed our soul. We’ve got to be nourished by the Word of God and live in relationship with our Heavenly Father. That is where we will get our peace and our joy, in the midst of turmoil.