

DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of March 21, 2020

THEME: "God in Times of Crisis"

A PROMISE FROM GOD

Sunday **Read Romans 8:24-30**

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God and are the called according to His purpose." One thing Christians can be sure of is that God will use everything for the ultimate good! What may seem bad to us may actually serve an eternal purpose that is good! If the bad is because of things we may have done that are not in conformity with the commands of God, then that is on us. It could be the discipline of a loving Heavenly Father. We can be certain that in the big picture, such as the impending coronavirus, God will use it for His eternal good. How does that make sense? Well, one of the big things that God is now doing on His earth is the building of the Church Universal, that of which the Lord Jesus spoke in Matthew 16:18 when He said this: *"I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it."* The force behind all the evil in the world is God's enemy, the devil. He is the one who attacked Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden that resulted in sin, sickness, deception, corruption and wrong into the world. All the darkness of this world can be attributed to Satan. But God will continue, in the power of the Spirit, to build His Church. Perhaps this disease may be used of the Holy Spirit to get the attention of some to open their hearts to the Lord Jesus. Speaking of our Savior, He endured what many would call cruelty of God His Father, in that it was the plan of God to have His Son suffer on a cross to shed His blood for our sins!. Actually, it was the epitome of love, both His love and that of His Son, for all the people in the world. That is the message of 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."* That plan of God was the greatest act of love ever. The cross where Jesus died turns out to be the best thing ever for us!

POWER OF GOD

Monday **Read Psalm 29:3-11**

"The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty." Our God is all powerful and is always in total control. He can do anything He wants at any time He wants. His ways and His timing are perfect. He spoke the world into existence just by giving the word, as we read in Genesis 1:3-24: *"God said, Let there be light, and there was light...And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear, and it was so...And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind, whose seed is in itself, and it was so...And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind: cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind, and it was so."* We read in Genesis 11 how God exerted His power to confound those who were trying to build a tower to reach to heaven by bringing different languages into existence to bring confusion in their trying to communicate with each other. In the gospels, we read of many instances where Jesus healed people of various maladies by simply speaking. One such instance was when He healed the man who was lame from his birth; we read this in John 5:8-9: *"Jesus said unto him, Rise, take up thy bed and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked."* The final battle to end the rule of human leaders will be won by the voice of Jesus to destroy the invading armies against Israel. We read in Revelation 19:15: *"Out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations."* Our God is all powerful. If He chose, He could end this virus simply by giving the word.

PRESENCE OF GOD

Tuesday **Read Psalm 139:7-12**

"Whither shall I go from thy presence?" As the psalmist testified, God is omnipresent. Adam and Eve tried to hide from God, probably like many others thinking they may get away with something. But God knew where they were all the time. Jonah tried to hide from God and got on a

ship to flee the country, but God sent a storm and then a great fish to swallow him. God then had the fish spew him up so Jonah could get to the place God had in mind for him. God is aware of everything going on here on His earth; nothing escapes the eye of God as we read in II Chronicles 16:9. *"The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth."* Wherever we are, He is there. That is comforting!

PURPOSE OF GOD

WednesdayRead John 12:27-33

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself." We can be certain that everything that God does or that God allows is with an honorable purpose. He is holy, and He is loving. He loves righteousness and hates evil. It is God's desire to have fellowship and communion with people; and I might say with all people. That is just what we are told in the description of the apostle in II Peter 3:9, where we read this: *"The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."* If He does something that affects us, it is to try to get our attention. We can be certain that His allowing this worldwide virus is to draw people to Himself, just as it was the reason for Jesus suffering on the cross. That was a cruel experience, but He did it so people could get right with God. Jesus was willing to suffer a horrible experience because of the love of God. That gave all people the opportunity to get right with God because Jesus paid the penalty of our sin. That is what God wants now. Heaven is the cure for all diseases, because there will be no sickness, nor dying there. God's purpose in everything is to draw people to Himself by their faith in Christ as Savior!

PROPHECY OF GOD

ThursdayRead Matthew 24:4-7

"There shall be pestilences." When Jesus came to earth to be the Lamb of God to pay the penalty of sin for all mankind with His blood, He on several occasions mentioned that He would return, the next time to rule the world in a kingdom of peace and good will. He will take the throne of David in Jerusalem. His followers were curious as to when He would do that. Although He did not put a date on that, God has given us signs. Some of these truths about the plans of God for our future were given by the prophets, some by the apostles, and some by Jesus Himself. Among the many that Jesus mentioned like these recorded in Matthew 24 was that there would be *"pestilences."* The Greek word that is interpreted "pestilences" could have been interpreted "deadly infectious maladies." That is a pretty good description of this coronavirus. This well could be another of the many Biblical signs that are coming to pass in our days! Others mentioned by Jesus were there would be serious divisions of ethnic groups, such as social, racial, and political identifications. He said there would be a culture of hate. The apostle Paul, in II Timothy 3, mentioned that there would be *"perilous times."* Some of the details he gave implied such things family problems with rebellious children separations and divorces, homosexuality and abortions, and rejection of Biblical truth. Do these not describe things today?

PEACE OF GOD

FridayRead Colossians 3:14-15

"Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to whom you are called in one body, and be ye thankful." How should Christians react to all of this? It would be good for us to take this advice given by the apostle in his letter to the church at Colosse to allow God's peace control their hearts and minds! How is that possible? Faith! Faith in God gives us victory. We see that is how the Israelites got peace in the midst of all their trials in the days of the Old Testament. We see that is how the apostles got peace in the midst of some trying experiences in their time with Jesus as we read in gospel accounts. It is how believers throughout the centuries got peace when troubles came. It is a peace that only God can give, and it is experienced by faith in God. He is indeed omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. Praise God for human leaders trying the best they can. Praise God for His loving care!

PEACE OF MIND

SaturdayRead Philippians 4:4-8

"Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice...the Lord is at hand...Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God that passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus...Think on things of good report." Because of our faith in God, the Heavenly Father for all who have placed their faith in Christ as Savior, we can have peace of mind in times of crisis. As a matter of fact, that is the command we are given in Colossians 3:15: *Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to whom you are called in one body, and be ye thankful.* Yes, believers sometimes experience fear and anxiety; and, if we are honest, we will admit that maybe even with this coronavirus. Actually, some of what we might consider great Biblical saints experienced fear. Did not the angel have to tell Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the shepherds in the field to *"Fear not?"* How about the disciples on the ship with Jesus when the storm arose! Just as Jesus did then, He can still the storms for us. Let us remember the words of Jesus in John 14:1 to His apostles at a time when they were really upset. He said: *"Let not your heart be troubled."* We have a loving Father in heaven who is in total control.