

Fr. Perozich comments —

Since God is in control of all creation, diseases can be said to be part of His permissive will wherein He allows things to happen according to nature and man's exercise of free will, yet not always attributed to His providential will wherein God directly causes something to happen.

Since man is created with free will and born into a world injured by sin, man will suffer difficulties during life in this world.

The author does not make this Catholic distinction, and indeed calls COVID-19 part of God's providential will. That cannot be said with certainty. I am glad that I am Catholic and have a fuller understanding of the permissive and providential will of God

The origin of COVID-19 is speculated by some to come from a bio lab near Wuhan, China, by others from eating infected animals. It is transmitted by human contact.

Man lives in a biological, psychological, sociological, ethical, moral, and spiritual world. He needs to gather all of these aspects, especially the spiritual for his protection and for life on earth on the journey toward eternal life.

Christians are to live and to promote God's will for themselves and for the salvation of the whole world through belief in Jesus, the only Savior of the world.

I do not agree that God has sent the virus in His providential will as is stated in the article.

The fact that He permits the virus should be cause for recourse to prayer to Jesus, in the Bible, obeying the commandments, and reception of the Sacraments when they become available again.

*I do agree that it is time to take into account personal and national sins listed below, and to reform our personal lives and national life as Mr. Fischer states toward the end of the article, and to follow the admonition of the prophet Micah 6:8 **

You have been told, O mortal, what is good, and what the LORD requires of you:

*Only to do justice
and to love goodness,
and to walk humbly with your God.*

Coronavirus is the finger of God



By [Bryan Fischer](#)

March 27, 2020

From 1865-1867, England experienced a deadly viral plague among its livestock, an epidemic that wiped out "myriads" of that nation's cattle. The effects of this plague were felt in every household, rich and poor alike, as supplies of meat, cheese, milk and butter dried up. It consumed the nation's wealth. Bishop J.C. Ryle said, it was "as if gold and silver were snatched from us and thrown into the sea." There was, he says, a "curse of helplessness" upon the land.

Ryle wrote a [widely circulated pamphlet at the time](#), and I have adapted his thoughts for this column in connection with the coronavirus pandemic that is ravaging our economy, paralyzing us with fear, isolating us from our friends, and trapping us in our own homes. Although the virus cannot be taken lightly, it is likely that panic and hysteria will in the end do more damage to our economy than the virus itself.

How should we as Christian men and women view this pandemic? Politicians, of course, must deal with the politics of it, and our medical professionals and scientists must grapple with theories of therapeutic relief and prevention. **But as people of God, we must lift our gaze higher than theirs and seek to discern God's purposes in all this.**

It's first of all incumbent upon us to acknowledge that this pandemic comes from the hand of God. He is the one who has sent this plague upon us. As the magicians of Pharaoh said in the face of a global infestation of gnats, "This is the finger of God" (Exodus 8:19). If pagan occultists could figure it out, we should be able to figure it out too.

He is sovereign over everything that happens in heaven or on earth. His wisdom, power, and purpose providentially direct everything that happens

on earth. For us as believers not to accept this is theological folly. We must admit that the coronavirus is the finger of God.

One major crisis or catastrophe after another recorded in Scripture is attributed to the control of God. God was the one who sent the flood on the world in the days of Noah (Genesis 6:17), the famine in the days of Joseph (Genesis 41:25), the plagues on the land of Egypt (Exodus 7:5, 9:3), the tumors on the Philistines after they had captured the ark (1 Samuel 5:7, 6:3), the pestilence that afflicted Israel in the days of David (2 Samuel 24:15), the famine in the days of Elisha (2 Kings 8:1), and the great wind and mighty tempest in the days of Jonah (Jonah 1:4).

God, as Benjamin Franklin observed, "still governs in the affairs of men," and uses natural disasters, wars, and disease as instruments of his divine will. "Does disaster come to a city, unless the Lord has done it?" (Amos 3:6). The coronavirus is the Lord's doing. It may be nature run amok, that's not all it is. It is, indeed, the finger of God.

If God created the world, it is not absurd to imagine that he also governs it. If he formed it, it is not absurd to imagine that he also manages it. Just as a firm and loving father shows his highest love by correcting his children to protect them from themselves and their own folly, so God finds it necessary on occasion to discipline the creatures of his hand. Pain is his tool of discipline. He uses even evil things to accomplish his sovereign will. "Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?" (Job 2:10).

The Founders knew that men must stand before God as individuals on the day of judgment, to answer for what they have done in their earthly bodies. But nations are not like that. Nations are not eternal and must receive their reward and their judgment inside the borders of history.

The coronavirus is the finger of God, the chastisement of God on a wayward, unruly, disobedient, and stubborn nation. It is his judgment on us for our national sins. "The eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the surface of the ground" (Amos 9:8).

Our national sins are many. Our **first** and preeminent national sin is **abortion**. The blood of 63 million slaughtered innocents stains our hands and cries out to God from the ground. What Thomas Jefferson said of

slavery can today be rightly said of abortion. "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that his justice cannot sleep forever."

Our **second** national sin is **homosexuality**. We have normalized, embraced, and given sanction to behavior which is an abomination in the eyes of God. According to Paul in Romans 1, it is "shameless, dishonorable," and "contrary to nature." It is the sin which caused Sodom and Gomorrah to be consumed by the wrath of God.

Our **third** is **covetousness**, an insatiable and greedy lust for wealth that others have and we do not. We blindly pursue wealth as if it were the secret to happiness, and complain when our government does not give us more of other people's money. "Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience" (Ephesians 5:6).

The **fourth** national sin is rampant **sexual immorality**. We are awash in sins of promiscuity, adultery, prostitution, and pornography. We swim in a swamp of debauchery and have become afflicted with sexually transmitted diseases almost beyond number, because we have flagrantly ignored the truth that "the will of God is ... that you abstain from sexual immorality" (1 Thessalonians 4:3).

Our **fifth** national sin is **substance abuse** of alcohol and drugs, some of them even legal. We have obstinately persisted in defying God's command "not to get drunk with wine, which is debauchery" (Ephesians 5:18). Instead of allowing God's Spirit to control us, we have allowed other things to control us.

Our **sixth** national sin is **rejecting the authority of the word of God**. We have not only rejected God's word, we have ridiculed it and everyone who believes it. Yet judgment comes on any nation which rejects the revealed word of God. Zechariah says, "They made their hearts like flint lest they should hear the words of the Lord of hosts. Therefore great wrath came from the Lord of hosts" (Zechariah 7:12).

Our **seventh** national sin is forsaking God himself. We have abandoned the God who created us and sustains us and gave us this rich and bountiful land. "You have forsaken me, declares the Lord, you keep going backward,

so I have stretched out my hand against you and destroyed you" (Jeremiah 15:6).

So what are we to do? We should humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God and acknowledge that we are a proud and arrogant nation which is blind to our many faults.

We should each examine ourselves, and refuse to continue in what we know is sinful behavior. A nation's sins consist of the sins of many individuals. If each of us mends our ways, if we sweep in front of our own door, we can do our part to reduce the weight of sin our nation bears before God.

And while our politicians, scientists, and medical professionals work to stamp out this contagion, we can and should cry out to God with one heart and one voice to remove this judgment from our land. The men of Ninevah humbled themselves, confessed their sins, and cried out to God. He heard and forgave. "Call upon me," the Lord says, "in the time of trouble, and I will deliver you" (Psalm 50:15).

"Almighty God, who orders all things in Heaven and earth, and in whose hand is the life of man and beast, have mercy on us miserable sinners, who are now visited with great sickness and mortality. We have nothing to say for ourselves. We humbly confess that we deserve Your chastisement because of our many national sins. But spare us, Lord, according to Your abundant mercy. We beg you not to deal with us according to our sins. Withdraw this grievous plague from us, and restore health to our bodies and our nation. Above all, stir us all to true repentance, and increase true worship in the land. We ask all this in the name and through the mediation of Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with You and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory. Amen." (Adapted from Bishop Ryle's prayer.)

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