

Is There a Demonic Element to the Delta Variant?

Just when we thought it was safe to go back in the water ...
kaboom!

The Delta variant has now emerged as the new pernicious, predominant strain of the COVID virus. It is more contagious, causes more infections, leads to increased transmissions (in vaccinated individuals) and causes more severe illness.

People are tense in these apocalyptic times. What are we supposed to do about vaccinations, booster shots, mask mandates, children in schools, compulsory compliance, passports and on and on and on?

Christians need to rely upon our Good Shepherd. Listen to "Stressful Times and the Most Popular Passage in Scripture," remain fortified in faith and health, maintain hygiene, rebuff fear, research trustworthy medical information and resist demonic attacks.

"Be sober and watchful, because your adversary the devil walks around as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him firmly in the faith" (1 Pet. 5:8-9a).

In days of high anxiety, don't dismiss the component of demonic attacks. May we not cavalierly declare "God's Sovereign, I'll just suffer for His glory, never complain, develop character and trust Him in whatever comes my way. If it's sickness or premature death, I'll just give thanks" (and passively lie down on the inside). Jesus inquired of a longtime afflicted man, "Do you want to be healed?" (John).

Wait! Passivity, predestination and poor theology can derail you from deliverance, which is often for the desperate. The Bible teaches there are times when our physical bodies come

under demonic attack, and we need to be alert and aggressive in not succumbing. During His earthly ministry, Jesus was never passive!

‘Satan Is My Daddy’

Doing my daily prayer walk and evangelizing at our mall, a young woman strolled by with the above words emblazoned across her T-shirt. Did she realize what she was heralding?

We must take Satan seriously. When the apostle Paul was converted Jesus told him audibly to “turn [people] from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God” (Acts 26:18a). Subsequently he wrote: “Satan hindered us” (1 Thess. 2:18b) and that “a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me” (2 b).

Since Jesus Himself labeled Satan a “murderer from the beginning” (John 8:44b), might our archenemy have some involvement in spawning this insidious pandemic even as he promotes the massive slaughter of babies through abortion?

We know the devil is defeated, but through deception, he is ruthless in destroying lives. This includes attacks on our physical bodies.

Satanic Schemes

When COVID was starting, Charisma founder Steve Strang warned from Ephesians 6:10-13: “Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For our fight is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to resist in the evil day and having done all, to stand.”

Notice all the action verbs! May we not dismiss Satan's role in the toxic current confusion and catastrophic events of our day.

'New Levels, New Devils'

When Paul began breaking spiritual ground in Ephesus (Acts 19:11-16), seven men were driven away by demons who said they knew Jesus and Paul, but these other men were charlatans. Ask the question, "Am I known in hell because of the threat I pose to demons?"

This past year has been a significant time of battle for me with a mild bout of COVID and another episode with my eyesight (I lost sight in the left one years ago.) This coincides with my 50th year in ministry with new opportunities alongside a prophetic clarity in communication I haven't previously experienced. I assure you, I didn't take this lying down!

For those thinking, *God is in control; don't give credit to the devil*, consider the caution of C.S. Lewis. He said that some dismiss the devil to their peril, while others are preoccupied with him. Avoid both errors and extremes.

Lewis called us to biblical balance. "God is sovereign over Satan. The devil has no free hand in the world. He is on a leash and can do only what God permits." Remember the accounts in the Bible of Job's and Peter's testings, where permission had to be secured first in the Supreme Court of heaven before the attack?

Elements of Mystery and Sensitivity

There's an element of mystery to God's provision for healing and health. There are many reasons people experience sickness and disease, including violating biblical principles ("For this reason many are weak and unhealthy among you, and many die" (I Cor. 11:30)). Disobedience and carelessness bring consequences, although God is oftentimes merciful in redeeming

our situation once we repent.

At the same time, the Bible cautions us to display sensitivity to the Holy Spirit “lest Satan should take advantage of us. For we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Cor. 2:11). While it is true that healing and health are God’s normative will for His obedient and believing children, people can suffer with a “spirit of infirmity,” like a woman Jesus healed, of whom He said, “Satan has bound [her] these 18 years” (Luke 13:16b).

The whole Trinity is involved in combating the “thief” who Jesus said comes “to steal and kill and destroy” (John 10:10). “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him” (Acts 10:38). Christians can fail to engage in warfare and become what John Paul Jackson called “needless casualties of war.”

We Christians must stay on the offensive, resisting demonic attacks against our defeated foe. “And having disarmed authorities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them by the cross” (Col.2:15).

Our challenge is to resist him as we “fight the good fight of faith” (1 Tim. 6:12a).

The very passage directing us to be watchful and resistant to the devil’s devices then states, “But after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called us to His eternal glory through Christ Jesus, will restore, support, strengthen, and establish you” (1 Pet. 5:10).

Scripture exhorts us not to be “lazy” but “through faith and patience inherit the promises” (Heb. 6:12). Let’s follow God’s instructions to emerge victorious.

“Is anyone sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in

the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your faults to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man accomplishes much" (James 5:14-16).

Here's the Deal: With the delta variant frightening the masses, listen to the podcast on Psalm 23 (cited earlier) then read the following faith-building information on natural immunity.

"Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, even as your soul is well" (3 John 2).

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