

Handling conversations about pandemic diseases and sickness

Conversations that result from people being concerned, or even panicked, about something are an opportunity to meet people with love and the truth of Jesus. We can't answer questions about whether this is God punishing the world or the beginning of end times. However, we can talk about the love of Jesus and ask where He is in the life of each seeker.

When digging into these types of health-related issues, we always need to balance the competing concepts of God actively doing something versus simply allowing something as part of living in a world broken by sin. God may allow sickness for His own purposes, but sometimes disease, even worldwide pandemics, are simply the result of living in a fallen world.

There is no way to determine whether or not a pandemic has a specific spiritual cause, but we do know that God has sovereign control over all things ([Romans 11:36](#)) and will work all things together for the good of those who know and love Him ([Romans 8:28](#)). This may take well beyond this lifetime to become evident, but we can trust God's perfect love

Disease in the Bible

We see several examples in the bible of God using disease as a means for justice. But God's punishments always have the goal of repentance and restoration.

The Bible, particularly the Old Testament, describes numerous occasions when God brought plagues and diseases on His people and on His enemies "to make you see my power" ([Exodus 9:14, 16](#)). He used [plagues on Egypt](#) to force Pharaoh to free the Israelites from bondage, while sparing His people from being affected by them ([Exodus 12:13; 15:26](#)), thus indicating His sovereign control over diseases and other afflictions. God also warned His people of the consequences of disobedience, including plagues ([Leviticus 26:21, 25](#)).

It's sometimes hard to imagine our loving and merciful God displaying such wrath and anger toward His people. In [2 Chronicles 7:13-14](#), God said to Solomon, "When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land or send a plague among my people, if my people, who are called by my name, will 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." Here we see God using disaster to draw His people to Himself, to bring about [repentance](#) and the desire to come to Him as children to their heavenly Father.

In the New Testament, Jesus healed “every disease and every sickness,” as well as plagues in the areas He visited ([Matthew 9:35](#); [10:1](#); [Mark 3:10](#)). Just as God chose to use plagues and disease to show His power to the Israelites, Jesus healed as an exhibition of the same power to verify that He was truly the Son of God.

End Times

Various outbreaks of pandemic diseases, such as Ebola or the coronavirus, have prompted many to ask why God allows—or even causes—pandemic diseases and whether such illnesses are a sign of the end times.

The spread of sicknesses such as Ebola and the coronavirus are a foretaste of pandemics that will be part of the end times. Jesus referred to future plagues associated with the last days ([Luke 21:11](#)). The two witnesses of [Revelation 11](#) will have power “to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they want” ([Revelation 11:6](#)). Seven angels will wield seven plagues in a series of [final, severe judgments](#) described in [Revelation 16](#).

However, no one knows the time of Jesus’ return, so we must be careful about saying global pandemics are proof that we are living in the end times. For those who do not know Jesus Christ as Savior, disease should be a reminder that life on this earth is tenuous and can be lost at any moment. As bad as pandemics are, hell will be worse. The Christian, however, has the assurance of salvation and the hope of eternity because of the blood of Christ shed on the cross for us ([Isaiah 53:5](#); [2 Corinthians 5:21](#); [Hebrews 9:28](#)).