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Covid-2019 at the end of 2020

by Father Andrew

5-6 minutes

And there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows. (Matt, 24, 7-8)

Nearly exactly 0.1 (one in a thousand) of the UK population has now died with covid-19 (in an average year the death-rate is 0.94%, nearly one in a hundred). How many real excess deaths there have been is debated, since how many would have died anyway is unknown. Notably, however, although the death-rates in the UK, the US, Italy, France and Spain are very similar, the death-rate in Germany is about one third of them. This suggests that the definition of 'died with covid' is totally different there. In Germany all those who are listed as 'died with covid' died because covid played a major role in their death rather than a minor one.

Now that there are 35,000 infections per day in the UK, even according to official statistics, it is a matter of debate, what will happen first by next July: will all have obtained immunity or will all have been vaccinated? Last summer an immunologist from a famous London hospital informed us that his guess was that a third of the population had already been infected even by then. The degeneration of the virus into a new, more contagious, but less harmful strain is a sign that the end of it is coming; it is

always like that. Normality will return next year. Clearly, only the tiny minority with very low immunity has been tragically affected.

This largely means those already dying from serious illnesses, mainly the very elderly (the average age of death is 83), sometimes as the result of a poor diet and obesity, smoking, alcoholism and drug-taking, sometimes as the result of some tragic illness like cancer or diabetes, or else, fortunately very rarely, as the result of a genetically deficient immune system. These last cases are very tragic and account for 1% of the total numbers of deaths with covid and have largely occurred among those between 20 and 40 (the under 20s are basically not affected and 90% of them have no symptoms at all). This virus is ageist and the younger have suffered much less from it.

Nevertheless, there has been much tragedy and those who are vulnerable to the virus (probably 1% of the population) should take the utmost care. Others must behave responsibly, compassionately and considerately towards them. However, during the time of covid ten times more people than those who died with covid have, as every year, died of old age, illness and accidents. Some of these have died prematurely, as their treatment has been neglected by a covid-attacked health system that as a result of chronic underfunding has been in crisis for decades. Because governments have for decades refused to fund the training of healthcare staff, the NHS relies on cheap imports.

Thus the government policy of building and equipping emergency ('Nightingale') hospitals has been shown to be absurd – after all, there is nobody to staff them, which is why they have largely remained empty. Many have died by suicide at the prospect of no future, offered them by totally irresponsible media which have promoted despair. The suicides and frequent

depression and anxiety among the non-believing population should remain on journalists' consciences for the rest of their lives. True, however, many people switched off the media long ago and the impression is that journalists are largely talking to themselves in an incestuous feast of gloom.

Similarly, the government which has destroyed or damaged the lives of millions through its irrational lockdowns of the national economy. Clearly, as a result of government anti-democratic totalitarianism (not allowing the individual to choose how to live), irresponsibility, incompetence and sheer panic, it will take years for the country to recover. Western democracy is increasingly being seen as the myth it is. After the crass lies about Iraq and then Brexit, media and government alike are totally distrusted on covid. Few believe liars and the government and media alike have almost totally discredited themselves. The exceptions are the elderly and naïve, who still actually believe that the BBC tells the truth!!

The only real question is: will the virus bring repentance? Because if not, other pestilences will follow. This is a warning. Accept death as the only inevitable reality of human life and learn how to deal with it through faith and everything will take on a completely different perspective. Atheists find it very difficult to deal with this reality, as death is their taboo. That is why their reality is a living death, the zombified life of the undead. The taboo can only be overcome through faith, which alone brings hope. Until then Western societies will remain crippled by joyless faithlessness, cynical hopelessness and the sorrows that inevitably come to all atheist societies throughout history.