

April 16, 2020

Good morning, Everybody.

After 3 weeks of being sheltered in place, Linda and I decided to hazard a trip to the stores. We donned our nice masks made by Joy Collins' mom, and like Ahab and Obadiah, *divided the land* between us to see if we could find sustenance. Below is just before we left around 7:00.



My assignment was COSTCO. My glasses kept fogging up, and several times I had to lower my mask until they cleared because I couldn't tell what I was looking at. Now seeing this picture, I realize the problem, and why Linda didn't have it as well. Maybe the children could see if they can figure it out. I'm thinking that they will pretty quickly (smile).

Twice at the store I locked eyes with someone, and for a second or two we stared at each other curiously. *Do I know that person? I think I do, but. . .*

Finally our eyes would widen in recognition. The first person said; *I'm smiling behind my mask!* It was Jeanne Keck. It was so nice to see someone from church; even through the fog.

The second time I felt a little more confident, but still wasn't quite sure whether to speak or not. Then the person lowered her mask . . . a smiling Jan Patterson!

I didn't want to smear COVID-19 all over my phone, or I'd have snapped pictures of them as well. But just as you'd expect, their glasses weren't fogged. The ladies definitely know how to wear these masks. I'd suggest that any of you men ask your wives for tips before venturing out in one.

Well . . . enough goofiness (smile).

Personal Bible Reading

Occasionally someone asks about where in the Bible I'm reading. Psalms, of course, and for the last few days, the account of the plagues on Egypt. Early on the Lord allows Pharaoh to further persecute Israel by withholding straw but still mandating the full quota of bricks. Israel's foremen are beaten, they turn on Moses, and Moses himself turns to the Lord and complains that He has not delivered His people as He promised.

The Lord's response is eight verses of reassurance (Exodus 6:1-8). *I have. . . I will. . . I will. . . and you shall know. . . and I will give. . .*

Moses returns to the people and repeats what God has promised. *But they did not listen to Moses on account of their despondency and cruel bondage (v 9).*

Some years ago (I don't know how many), I had written next to this verse, *The explanation of why some are unresponsive to preaching.*

This could happen to some of us during this crisis. The plague is certainly God's dealing (*the finger of God*) with a world that has long and arrogantly refused Him

and His gracious ways. But undoubtedly it works hardship upon us as well. But we have the reassurances of His promises and His prophecies. We know the end. *He will . . . He will. . . and He will.*

Yet we may not respond, or even hear. The most emphatically reassuring passage, a Psalm 91 for instance, may have almost no affect whatsoever upon our hearts, *on account of despondency and cruel bondage*; our troubles and our terrors.

But by the time the Lord is finished, the Egyptians are gladly handing over their jewels and most precious possessions, and *begging* Israel to leave?

What did Cowper write?

*Judge not the LORD by feeble sense, but trust Him for His grace.
Behind a frowning providence He hides a smiling face.
His purposes will ripen fast, unfolding every hour.
The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower.*

Let's give the Lord time to work His will. He's never in a hurry, but He's never a second late. His way is perfect. His work is perfect. His timing is perfect. And the end will be just and holy.

Praying for You Today,

Pastor Minnick