





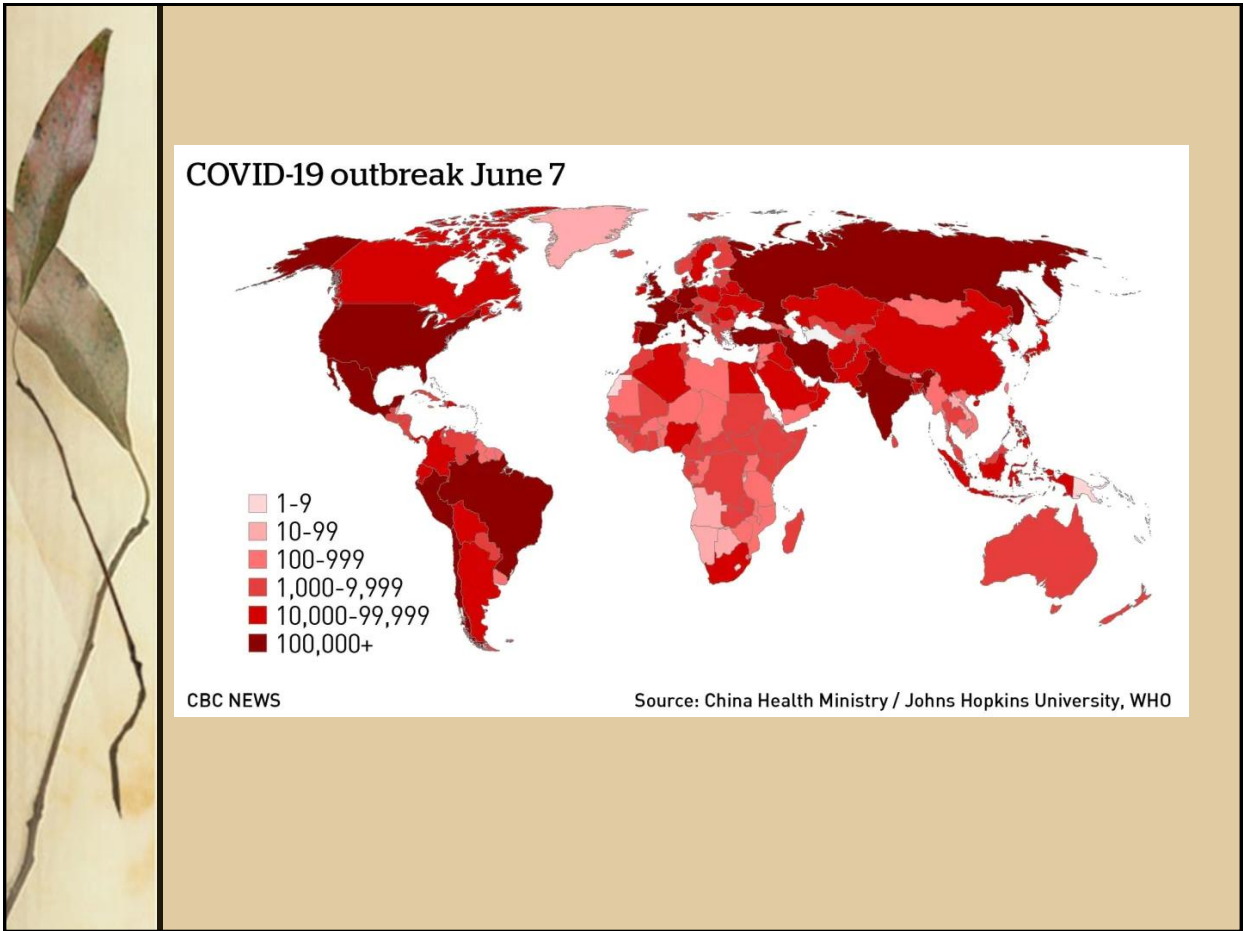
## Exile Quick Facts

- Exile is God's reset and purge button
  - *E.g., Garden, Cain, Israel, Judah, Corinthians*
  - Goal is repentance, purification, restoration
- Babylonian exile was final exile of the nation
  - <sup>NAS</sup> **2 Kings 24:14** Then he led away into exile all Jerusalem and all the captains and all the mighty men of valor, ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths. None remained except the poorest people of the land.
  - Glory of the Lord left temple forever (Ezekiel 10)
- Incarnation inaugurates the ultimate return from exile
  - <sup>NAS</sup> **John 1:14** And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.



## Today's Goals

1. How do we make theological sense of this pandemic?
  - <sup>NIV</sup> **Matthew 10:29** Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father.
2. How can we make the most of this pandemic?
  - <sup>NAS</sup> **Romans 8:28** And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.





## Two Theological Errors

1. This is God's judgment for specific sins.
  - a. Conservative: homosexuality, abortion
  - b. Liberal: racism, oppression of poor, environmental abuse
  
2. This just happened and is nothing more than a natural disaster with a purely scientific explanation





## God is Sovereign over Events

- <sup>NIV</sup> **Proverbs 16:33** The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.
- <sup>NIV</sup> **Amos 3:6** ... When disaster comes to a city, has not the LORD caused it?
- <sup>NIV</sup> **Isaiah 45:7** I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the LORD, do all these things.



## God is Sovereign over Nature

- <sup>NAS</sup> **Jonah 1:17** And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights.
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Jonah 4:6** So the LORD God appointed a plant and it grew up over Jonah to be a shade over his head to deliver him from his discomfort. And Jonah was extremely happy about the plant.
- <sup>NIV</sup> **Matthew 5:45** ... He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.





## God is Sovereign over Everything

- <sup>NAS</sup> **Psalm 115:3** But our God is in the heavens; He does whatever He pleases.
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Psalm 135:6** Whatever the LORD pleases, He does, In heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps.
- <sup>NAS</sup> **Daniel 4:32** ... the Most High is ruler over the realm of mankind, and bestows it on whomever He wishes. '...  
<sup>34</sup> "... I, Nebuchadnezzar, ... blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever; For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom endures from generation to generation. <sup>35</sup> "And all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, 'What have You done?'



- <sup>NAS</sup> **Psalm 147:12** Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion! <sup>13</sup> For He has strengthened the bars of your gates; He has blessed your sons within you. <sup>14</sup> He makes peace in your borders; He satisfies you with the finest of the wheat. <sup>15</sup> He sends forth His command to the earth; His word runs very swiftly. <sup>16</sup> He gives snow like wool; He scatters the frost like ashes. <sup>17</sup> He casts forth His ice as fragments; Who can stand before His cold? <sup>18</sup> He sends forth His word and melts them; He causes His wind to blow and the waters to flow. <sup>19</sup> He declares His words to Jacob, His statutes and His ordinances to Israel. <sup>20</sup> ... Praise the LORD!



## Do things *just* happen?

- No. Nothing, including Covid-19, *just* happens.



**If God is in control over all things,  
can we therefore discern his specific  
purpose in *each* adverse event?**



## Yes with an if, or, no with a but

- <sup>NAS</sup> **Luke 13:1** Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. <sup>2</sup> And He answered and said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered this fate? <sup>3</sup> "I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. <sup>4</sup> "Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? <sup>5</sup> "I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."
- Purpose is universal call to repentance.
  - <sup>ESV</sup> **Acts 17:30** The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent



## Examples

- <sup>ESV</sup> **Nehemiah 1:4** As soon as I heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven. <sup>5</sup> And I said, "O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, <sup>6</sup> let your ear be attentive and your eyes open, to hear the prayer of your servant that I now pray before you day and night for the people of Israel your servants, confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against you. Even I and my father's house have sinned. <sup>7</sup> We have acted very corruptly against you and have not kept the commandments, the statutes, and the rules that you commanded your servant Moses.



## Examples

- <sup>NAS</sup> **Isaiah 6:5** Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I live among a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts."
- <sup>NIV</sup> **1 Timothy 1:15** Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners-- of whom I am the worst [chief].
- <sup>NAS</sup> **1 John 1:9** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. <sup>10</sup> If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.




# Summary





## How do we make theological sense of this pandemic?

1. It is a reminder of universal sinfulness.
  - <sup>NIV</sup> **Romans 3:23** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God
2. It is a reminder God is not sitting idly by.
  - <sup>NAS</sup> **Romans 1:18** For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men
3. It is a call to universal repentance.
  - <sup>ESV</sup> **Acts 17:30** God now ... commands all people everywhere to repent
4. It is a pointer to God's universal love and mercy.
  - <sup>NAS</sup> **John 3:16** "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.



## How can we make the most of this pandemic?

- <sup>ESV</sup> **James 1:2** Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, <sup>3</sup> for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. <sup>4</sup> And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. <sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. . <sup>6</sup> But let him ask in faith, with no doubting ... <sup>17</sup> Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. <sup>18</sup> Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.
  - Rejoice in and take advantage of the opportunity to grow spiritually.



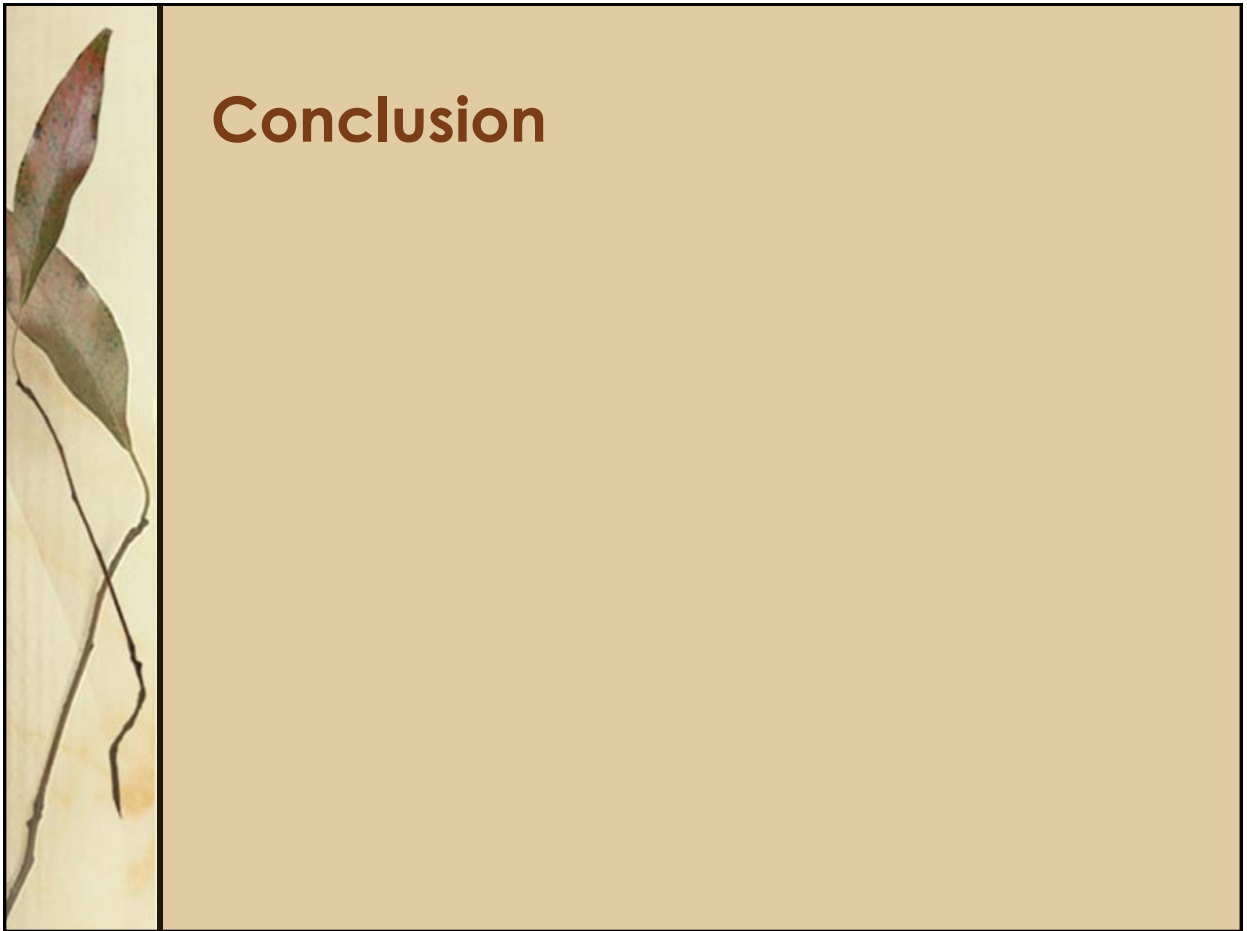
- <sup>ESV</sup> **Hebrews 12:6** For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." <sup>7</sup> It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? <sup>8</sup> If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. <sup>9</sup> Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? <sup>10</sup> For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. <sup>11</sup> For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

➤ Rejoice and take solace that adversity is the active display of your heavenly Father's love for you as a true child of God.



- <sup>ESV</sup> **2 Corinthians 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, <sup>4</sup> who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. <sup>5</sup> For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too. <sup>6</sup> If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we suffer. <sup>7</sup> Our hope for you is unshaken, for we know that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in our comfort.

➤ Rejoice in and take advantage of your growing ability to effectively minister to others in need.



## Conclusion



- <sup>ESV</sup> **1 Peter 1:3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. <sup>6</sup> In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, <sup>7</sup> so that the tested genuineness of your faith--more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire--may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. <sup>8</sup> Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, <sup>9</sup> obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.



- <sup>NAS</sup> **Romans 8:28** And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose ... <sup>31</sup> ... If God is for us, who is against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? ... <sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? <sup>36</sup> ... <sup>37</sup> But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.