

Well what is going on? No one can ever remember a situation like the one we find ourselves in today! Three and a half years of Brexit agony and now this! If you frequently watch the television and listen to the news on the radio you'll be persuaded to think that we are in a terrible crisis and need to take drastic measures in order to save lives – we are at war with an unknown and invisible enemy and yet...?

I have to say that I have never felt such a 'strange' peace! Others have said the same, maybe it's the slow down of society, less traffic, fewer people, less to do, shops, jobs and schools closing and sending employees and children home etc. Whatever it is, people are tending to do one of 2 things – panic, or remain at peace.

When my wife first came across panic buying the other day, it resulted in the following items being missing from the shops, presumably because those in front of her had taken them. They included bread, milk, onions and toilet paper! Since then, the panic has slightly subsided as people have clearly filled their larders to a self-satisfying level of security!

What was so important about those items? This is what has come to my mind as I've mulled it over:

Clearly bread is still for many a staple part of their daily diet. Yet what has God said about bread?

**Matthew 4: 1-4** *Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: '**Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.**'*

Bread seems to be one of the first things that people worry about – “where can we buy bread?” Yes of course God knows that you need to eat and the scriptures spell out the fact that he cares for us:

**Matthew 6: 25-27** *“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and **yet your heavenly Father feeds them.** Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?*

Or maybe you don't think that you are more valuable than the birds of the air? Perhaps you still think that at the end of it all, it's about the Law of the Jungle – ie. The strongest will win and God helps those who help themselves?

How did God deal with the Hebrews when they were wandering in the dessert looking for the Promised Land? God knew they needed feeding and didn't have the facilities to grow food so he arranged the first ever Home Delivery (there's nothing new under the sun by the way – home deliveries are God's idea – not by drones – but similar!) and with a really small carbon footprint!

**Exodus 16: 1-5** *The whole Israelite community set out from Elim and came to the Desert of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had come out of Egypt. **In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron.** The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the LORD’s hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death.” **Then the LORD said to Moses, “I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days.”***

So here we have a precious lesson!

Not only is God quite able to feed us on a daily basis – He also will provide enough on one day (The day before the Sabbath) – so as to cover the need for the ‘Sabbath day of rest’.

Is this an illustration of how much we should or shouldn't store up in our larders, fridges and freezers? (Have you ever wondered what would happen if there was a power cut that lasted for more than a few hours?)

Well this is not a new thing either – it happened to the Israelites even without the use of a fridge/freezer!

**Exodus 16: 20** ***However, some of them paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of it until morning, but it was full of maggots and began to smell. So Moses was angry with them.***

So that's the bread thing dealt with and we all know that Jesus is The Bread of Life so, – what about the milk thing?

Well the only things that come to mind about milk are these:

The Promised Land was a place the Israelites believed would be brimming with ‘Milk and Honey’ i.e. it would be very fruitful with no lack of rich food. However, you have to enter it first! And there were literally thousands who didn't make it in the time of the Exodus:

**Hebrews 3: 16-19** *Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies perished in the wilderness? And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.*

You can *want* all you like – but in the end it will not satisfy you. Yes I know that cow’s milk is necessary for children and some babies – but when you become an adult it is less necessary, sometimes problematical, and *spiritually* speaking – it’s something that we need to eventually leave behind:

**Hebrews 5: 11-14** *We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.*

And the onions?

Well that’s easy...you see, when the Israelites were being set free from slavery in Egypt it didn’t take long before they were moaning and thinking back to what they had back there in Egypt and strangely, onions were on that list! (Clearly something that some people crave for!)

**Numbers 11:4-6** *The rabble with them began to crave other food, and again the Israelites started wailing and said, “If only we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost—**also the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic.** But now we have lost our appetite; we never see anything but this manna!”*

Be careful what you crave for – because God is able to fill your garden with little birds called Quail! (I guess that might be slightly preferable to onions – but I’m not too sure right now!

And last but not least – The Toilet Paper!! Who would have guessed it as this is something the Israelites managed to do without for more than 40 years in the desert!!

So what is it with people in this modern world? Well I guess if you’re thinking of eating every day you probably associate toilet paper with a vital part of your living standards!

However, have you ever considered that the more you eat - the more toilet paper you need?! Have you ever wondered what it might be like to fast for 40 days and nights like Jesus did – I mean this must be one of the greatest under-statement in the New Testament:

**Luke 4: 1-4** *Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. **He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.** The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.” Jesus answered, “It is written: **‘Man shall not live on bread alone.**”*

At the end of them - he was hungry!!

So what was he doing and feeling like before the end of those 40 days? Jesus has already told us the answer to this somewhere else:

**John 4: 31-34** *Meanwhile his disciples urged him, “Rabbi, eat something.” But he said to them, **“I have food to eat that you know nothing about.”** Then his disciples said to each other, “Could someone have brought him food?” **“My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.** Don’t you have a saying, ‘It’s still four months until harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.*

So what is OUR food? What are YOU most worried about not getting enough of - or running out of? Do you feel like you have lost your privileges, been imprisoned, isolated, punished? Do you feel vulnerable, at risk, threatened?

For me, and others I’ve spoken to and observed, this is more of a STAYCATION than a LOCK-DOWN or IMPRISONMENT – I sincerely hope you can identify with that too, and that it continues to feel like that even as others might be fearful and loose hope as things develop.

I’m pretty sure it’s to do with trusting and being at peace with God and having already entered into his REST. The kind of rest that is related to having that ‘Peace that surpasses all understanding’

**Philippians 4 : 4-8** *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. **The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.** Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. **And the God of peace will be with you.***

The Peace that surpasses all understand – IS JESUS, and He knew everything that would happen to us in this world and in our lifetime – He is waiting for The Day when The Father says – Go and get your Bride – she’s READY and WAITING!

Stay safe and God Bless,  
Rob