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## THIS TOO SHALL PASS

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When I read a book, it tends to stay with me for a few days. I ponder the author's message and how what I read should impact my life. This week I read a book, a memoir, [The Story of Molly and Me](#), by Fran Gruss Levin. It's an emotional story of loss and reconciliation. Once I wiped my face and gathered myself, I sent a text to my nephew as we hadn't spoken in a few weeks, just to remind him that Auntie Kim loves him. I realized as I read, that I must now have a Covid-world view. I noticed that the author wrote about hugs and embraces and going to parties and dances, and with each reference, I thought, *can't do that anymore*, or *whew, careful with that*. The book is set in the 1960's, which is slightly before my time, so I was educated on a few things. It also surprised me that at one time contraception was illegal, in Connecticut, anyway. I saw on this morning's news that a senator has proposed that we limit the next stimulus to American citizens who are inoculated against Covid. I suppose the government can mandate anything with enough votes!

I didn't know that in 1968 there was a pandemic, but the author of the book was sickened with this virus and recalled the experience in the book. I thought the last pandemic was in 1918, as I wrote in [Blessed with Longevity](#), but I went to the CDC website and sure enough there was a pandemic in 1968 of the [H3N2 virus](#). Also known as Influenza A, it killed about 1 million people worldwide, about 100,000 Americans. About a decade before, there was another [pandemic](#). "In February 1957, a new influenza A (H2N2) virus emerged in East Asia, triggering a pandemic ("Asian Flu"). It was first reported in Singapore in February 1957, Hong Kong in April 1957, and in coastal cities in the United States in summer 1957. The estimated number of deaths was 1.1 million worldwide and 116,000 in the United States." The CDC also lists the [H1N1 virus](#), that I thought was more of an epidemic, as a pandemic, which is more widespread. My older son was diagnosed with it. He had a fever and some weakness, but on the same afternoon as the

diagnosis, he was ready to go outside and ride his bike. "From April 12, 2009 to April 10, 2010, CDC estimated there were 60.8 million cases (range: 43.3-89.3 million), 274,304 hospitalizations (range: 195,086-402,719), and 12,469 deaths (range: 8868-18,306) in the United States due to the (H1N1)pdm09 virus."

In their quest to validate the Bible, some have wondered if there is any reference to the Bubonic Plague in Scripture. Indeed there is in 1 Samuel 5:6. *The Lord's hand was heavy on the people of Ashdod and its vicinity; he brought devastation on them and afflicted them with tumors.* An article in the [Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine](#) states:

The story in *1 Samuel* is that the Philistines, having captured the Ark of the Lord from the Israelites, experienced an outbreak of 'tumours', and the affliction followed them as they moved the Ark from city to city. Concluding that the Ark was responsible for this disaster, the leaders decided to return it to the Israelites along with a guilt offering of five golden tumours and five golden rodents (*akbar*). But soon after the arrival of these 'statues' (probably small wooden models covered with gold) in Beth-shemesh seventy Israelites died in that city. Evaluating this epidemic, JP Griffin concluded that the outbreak was plague, with its associated buboes.

So, there you have it. Pandemics are not new. I survived H1N1 in 2009 and hope to survive Covid-19 today. Many of you have survived the pandemic of 1957-58, 1968-69, and the H1N1 in 2009. This too shall pass. As my friend adds, "it may pass like a kidney stone, but it will pass!" After 1968-69, hugs, embraces, going to the movies, parties, having people over for dinner all resumed, if it ever stopped! We will get through this. Even if they have to pay us to get vaccinated, this too shall pass.

Thanksgiving was different, very quiet, too quiet. About 10 minutes before we sat down to eat, my nephew walked in, surprising us all. Social distancing aside, I hugged his neck and handed him a plate, I was thankful to have my 3 boys at the table. I have done zero Christmas shopping, haven't put up the tree, but I hope Christmas is noisier than Thanksgiving. I hope to be in the presence of all of my little nieces and nephews. I hope to hear the rustling of wrapping paper, and the pure sounds of childhood as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ - during the pandemic of 2020. Amen.

~James 1:2-4

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.

Have a wonderful week!

Stay safe, everyone!

Kim