

Titanic Tragedies and a Triumph from Aprils Past Provide Perspective on Our April 2020

Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,... Psalm 46:2

This first week of Easter, I've been reflecting on Anniversaries from *Aprils Past*. I invite you to join me to:

(A) Put our present tragedies & troubles into historical perspective.

(B) Trust in and glorify God today through Jesus' Triumph one April Past.

Remember, on THE DEFINITIVE *April Past* [most likely April 3rd through 5th, A.D. 33] “that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scripture, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas and then to the Twelve.” 1 Corinthians 15:3-5

Remember, also:

- In April 1918 – The 1918 Flu (the "Spanish Flu") Pandemic was spreading; it eventually killed OVER 50 MILLION persons. The worldwide death toll from *this* pandemic was more than all of the military deaths from WW1 and WW2 combined. This pandemic, which completed its course just a century ago, was the deadliest pandemic in human history. Yet our most of our contemporaries, even people whose grandparents or great-grandparents lived in its shadow, have forgotten it.

- On Good Friday evening, April 14, 1865, President Abraham Lincoln was shot, and he died Saturday, April 15. *Five days after General Lee's surrender at Appomattox*, John Wilkes Booth shot President Lincoln in the Ford Theater. The “Great Emancipator” had just the previous month, in his Second Inaugural Address, declared: *“With malice toward none; with charity toward all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; ...”* Now Lincoln was assassinated, dead on Easter's Eve, Holy Saturday. *Do you think our Easter 2020 was challenging?* Sunday, April 16, 1865 was one of the darkest, most painful Easters in our nation's history.

- Late Sunday night, April 14, 1912, the RMS Titanic struck an iceberg; on April 15, the Titanic sank, and 1,514 people died. At about 2:20 a.m., April 15, the mighty Titanic sank. *Because of the problems of not enough lifeboats and the absence of a good evacuation plan --* 1,514 persons died. Remembering the Titanic Tragedy begs oft-used but still relevant questions that connect to Biblical Wisdom: Where's your lifeboat? Is everyone on your team prepared for a Titanic disaster?

- Black Easter Monday, April 13, 1360. In just an hour on Black Monday evening, a hailstorm killed 1,000 English soldiers and 6,000 horses belonging to the English army besieging Chartres, France; the catastrophe altered the history of the 100 Years' War and much of Western European History. English King Edward III became convicted that he was being punished for pursuing war during Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. He quickly renounced his claim to the French throne and accepted peace terms.

- *Speaking of France, I also recall that April 15, 2020, marks the 1st Anniversary of a tragedy that dominated our news a year ago but that receives little press this year – given the current tragedy of the COVID-19 Pandemic: the fire that destroyed that much of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, April 15, 2019.*

So, let's ask God for historical *and* spiritual perspective on our current grief and trials. ***Yes, without a doubt, this April is full of grief, loss, and major concerns for the future.*** (1) The official numbers on people who've been infected with COVID-19 likely are far short of the true numbers. University of Gottingen researchers say the number of people who've been infected is probably already in the tens of millions worldwide. Likewise, the official worldwide fatality numbers probably greatly understate the true total. Meanwhile, in the U.S., as of Good Friday, the total number of deaths from COVID-19 passed the 10,000-person mark. (2) The economic costs to our national and local businesses, workers, and governments have already been major. Further, we will face huge issues with the re-opening and restoration efforts in coming months. (3) In addition, adding to our current tragedies, deadly storms swept through the U.S. South on Easter Sunday and Monday 2020, bringing destruction and deaths.

Again, yes, we should pray earnestly for God's help in this April is full of grief, loss, and major concerns for the future. However, let us pray also to learn from faithful disciples who, before us, lived in hard Aprils Past: a great cloud of witnesses who trusted in and honored the Lord.

In this hard April, trust in Jesus and in his perfect love and perfect atonement. In that most important April Past -- He suffered everything, that He could lead us through our present trials on our way to enjoying everlasting life & joy with Him. "But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 15:57

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