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The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in an international crisis across the globe. Its severity in terms of contagion levels forced government officials to essentially put a 'pause' on society. This meaning that all non-essential businesses were temporarily closed, in addition to a 'stay at home order' enforced in a multitude of cities. In specific, the L.A. County 'stay at home order' has been extended throughout August and potentially even longer. The deadly virus originated from a wet market located in Wuhan. A 'wet market' is one that sells and trades a variety of exotic animals. Due to the handling and treatment of these animals, experts would describe a wet market to be the 'perfect place to spread disease'. All it takes is for one infected animal to come in contact with a human, which in turn results in a domino effect within humans. COVID-19 has already affected over five million people worldwide, and over 1.5 million in the United States alone. An argument can be made that COVID-19 has been the worst outbreak in recent history. When comparing it to outbreaks in the past, it was head and shoulders the most contagious. Although it may not have the highest death rate, it has taken more lives than any other outbreak due to its high level of contagion. The reason for the contagion levels being so high is because of the ability to be asymptomatic but still be able to transmit the virus. There is approximately a two week incubation period where an individual is often uninformed that they could be infected. This is COVID-19's most frightening aspect, as this is a time period in which

a carrier could be most contagious. This virus has not only killed people, but also put millions of U.S. citizens out of their jobs. In addition to COVID-19 currently affecting everyone in modern society, it also projects to have an everlasting effect. It will most definitely be a topic of discussion for years to come, as future generations will be taught about it in school settings.

Clearly this virus has changed people's everyday routine and lifestyle, including mine. I no longer can physically socialize with my friends/family, go to the gym, go out to eat, etc. Initially, I did not take the COVID-19 as seriously as I should've taken it. The event that turned this nightmare into a reality is when the first NBA player was diagnosed with the virus in early March. Consequently, this led to the NBA temporarily suspending its season. This decision helped shed light for me on the severity of the virus. COVID-19 required me to adapt to a different lifestyle, and adapt fast. For me personally, being quarantined at home has its pros and cons. First off, this virus has restricted me from being as physically active as I'd like to. Prior to COVID-19 I engaged in sports on a daily basis, thus maintaining a high endurance. Although it may not be the same level of exercise, I go on bike rides and walks with my family as a substitute to my usual exercise. In addition, another adaptation in my life has been the change in school setting. I have always been used to going to class and engaging in intellectual conversations with my classmates and teachers. Taking courses online has never been an easy thing for me, but this virus has assisted in my ability to adjust to this type of schooling. Another change in my weekly lifestyle was not being able to attend temple on Saturdays with my friends and family. Instead, I have been praying with my dad at home which has helped bond us more on a spiritual level. As a result of this virus, I have been strictly following the 'stay at home orders' given by our county's government. As tempted as I am to socialize with outside family and

friends, I restrict for the health and safety of my immediate family. Another unfortunate consequence of this virus is that my summer trip, and many other summer trips for that matter, have been cancelled. Instead of traveling Israel on 'Birthright' with my closest friends, the future seems uncertain at this point as the end does not seem too near.

As stated before, many people are without a job because of this widespread virus. Although my parents are still currently employed, their work environment is completely different. My father, Robert, works as a contractor giving him the responsibility to oversee all aspects of a given project. As a result of the virus, my dad spends more of his time in his personal office rather than on the job site itself. Additionally, if he were to go to the job site he is to be dressed in gloves and a mask. On the other hand my mother, Sherry, works as a dental assistant. Because of this virus she took over a month break from work, before returning to work this week. Her return is a result of her dental office opening back up with stricter health guidelines and policies. However, it is a much different work environment than before. My mom has to change her gloves and mask on an hourly basis. On the other hand, my sister Daniella has been laid off from her job position at a law firm. She has been working there for a couple years now and is expected to be re-hired once the smoke clears. Currently, she has applied for unemployment, and is receiving income in that manner for the time being. She is one of many, as over 36 million Americans have filed for unemployment due to the coronavirus outbreak. This is notated as the biggest unemployment spike in the history of the United States. Although COVID-19 has caused detrimental effects on my family's workplaces, it has allowed us to spend more quality time with one another. Prior to this virus I would usually only see my parents at night due to their strenuous work schedules. As a result of this quarantine, our family finally has

the time to truly get to know one another. It has allowed me to connect and spend quality time with my immediate family. It made me appreciate their presence and our everyday conversations more so than I ever did before. I acknowledge that some people may not be as fortunate as I am to be embedded in such a loving family, as well as living in a home with a sense of stability. I can only imagine the traumatic daily life experiences of individuals who might be living in a toxic household, or an overpopulated area.

COVID-19 could change the world indefinitely, potentially reordering society and the way in which it functions. We already discussed its temporary effects such as ‘stay at home orders’ and the suspension of professional sports leagues. An additional temporary effect is the loss of jobs and money by a wide majority of society. The stock market is currently on a downward trend, making it vulnerable and risky to engage in. People are having trouble making money to be able to pay for rent, food, supplies, etc. The more disconcerting aspect of the outbreak is its potential permanent effects that could negatively alter the structure of society. For starters, it will be a long and difficult process for many businesses to successfully resume functioning. For example, how long would it take until actors, cinematographers, directors, and producers can effectively work on a set to create a movie together? Some people might be of the new mindset that in-person communication is dangerous, preferring to work online. This is where the app ‘Zoom’ has come into play, as many different businesses and schools use its application in order to communicate. In a way, COVID-19 put American citizens through a reality check. More and more people are starting to become cautious and better managing their hygiene. Nowadays, you see retail stores, restaurants, and a variety of businesses with hand sanitizer located at their front entrances. Clearly this effort by our society to increase safety

procedures is a by-product of the virus, but also it could be a trend of things to come to prevent tragedies similar to this one. This essentially brings all Americans together, rather than the usual split of democratic and republicans. Throughout the years, American society has been divided into two groups; reds and blues. The virus is a 'common enemy' for the two parties, which can potentially unite them as one. COVID-19 may result in a complete paradigm shift for American culture. What we once considered 'normal' may not be the norm any longer. For example, voting might become an online process rather than in-person voting booths. This paradigm shift typically comes as a result of national catastrophes like COVID-19. For example, the 9/11 terrorist attacks resulted in the TSA enforcing much stricter flight policies. Although COVID-19 may be present temporarily, its collateral damage on society is everlasting.

Similar to COVID-19, the smallpox disease was one of the most devastating diseases in our world's history. Smallpox wiped out up to 20 to 25 percent of the population at the time being, while COVID-19 has already killed 300,000 and counting. In totality, smallpox killed approximately 500 million people. The immense amount of deaths due to smallpox was due to a lack of adequate health resources, as well as lack of caution. Both of these horrific events have had many negative impacts on the world. The act of social distancing was used during the time of the spreading of smallpox disease and can be compared to how because of COVID-19 we are using the same precautions as we did then. Another way in which we could compare these two events is that they both required people to quarantine and stay in your home for a certain amount of time in order for the spread of the disease to die down. In essence, society's goal during time periods like these have been to 'flatten the curve'. Additionally, if you become sick from these diseases, people are often oblivious to the fact that they have contracted it because they both are

initially asymptomatic. The symptoms of both usually do not show until the later stages.

Unfortunately, both diseases have affected millions of impoverished people that don't have stable houses, almost making it impossible for them to provide for themselves and their family.

One thing that we will eventually find out about COVID-19 is if its longevity is comparable to that of smallpox. Smallpox was seen throughout a multitude of different centuries, and we can only hope that we do not see the same trend with COVID-19.

In conclusion, COVID-19's overall impact is far greater than the people it infected. The virus is approaching a half of a million deaths worldwide, 90,000 being in the United States. While the lives of those lost should obviously be commemorated, put in perspective of how many people those deaths may have affected. We have to take into account that any given individual has a certain set of friends and family that care for them. If we approximate that one death affects about ten people on an emotional level, that is nearly one million people who are mourning the loss of a loved one. Looking at the bigger picture, COVID-19's impact is not limited to the people who it infects, or even to the people who are close to the infected. It will most definitely change societal norms and how society functions, in order to help prevent this from happening again. Many people might have more appreciation for each moment in life, as this virus showed that anything could be taken away from you in any given instance.