

## Getting the Nod

Pre-Sermon Video: [Bring It to Him](#)

We are living during some very strange times. Who would've thought that a world can be held captive by a virus the size of a millionth of an inch? And look what it has done...cities are shutting down and taking drastic steps to contain the spread of the Coronavirus. And what about our churches? We have taken drastic steps as well. We have cancelled our face-to-face large group meetings for the immediate future and have moved almost all of our ministry online. Christian Education classes and small groups are scrambling to learn all about Facebook Live and Zoom. I'm sure feel that the name "Zoom" truly describes the learning curve in this season of unrest.

And we as families and individuals have been asked to quarantine ourselves to conquer this dilemma! Who would've thought just 8 weeks ago that masks would be on everyone's shopping list?

I guess that's what it takes to contain a global pandemic like the Coronavirus. But something we must remember, even if every Christian was quarantined to their homes for the next several months in the worst possible scenario...**you can't quarantine the Gospel.**

**Even the Apostle Paul agrees with this...** NLT | 2 Timothy 2:9 **And because I preach this Good News, I am suffering and have been chained like a criminal. But the word of God cannot be chained.**

The Gospel is an unstoppable contagion that **doesn't hurt, it heals.** It **doesn't destroy, it transforms.** It doesn't **bring death, it brings life.** And you can't put it on hold! It's too important! That's why we provide this ministry to you!

**Transition:** So, let's get serious about this quarantine until everything reopens. **Let's not just survive it... redeem it!!!** **Our message is found in Exodus 12 today, turn there if you can.**

## Connecting Us



**Illustration of the movie "Outbreak";** In 1995, Hollywood produced a popular movie called Outbreak, starring Renee Russo and Dustin Hoffman. How many of you remember seeing this movie? **This, now classic movie, was in the top 10 movies viewed on Netflix in the month of March.** It tells the story of how a monkey got a contagious strand of the Ebola virus. This infected monkey scratches a man. The man sneezes in a movie theater. The camera follows the particles coming out of his nose through the theater into the open mouth of an unsuspecting movie watcher and boom...the outbreak begins!

**There's a scary scene in the movie Outbreak where a military epidemiologist talks about the spread of the virus.** Standing in front of a large virtual map, he says, "The infection will start here" (pointing to a single red dot). "Within 12 hours it will spread this far" (the red covers a larger portion of the map). "Within 24 hours it will spread this far" (half the map is red). "And within 72 hours it will infect the whole of the United States" (the map is flooded with red.)

Followers of Christ, when you watch that scene you can't help but think of Acts 1:8 where Jesus told his disciples how the Gospel would infect the world (in a good way!). He said...

NLT | Ac 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

**So, praise God that the Gospel message is more contagious than the Corona virus.** The difference is, that the Gospel doesn't kill you, it transforms you! It doesn't make you ill, it makes you well. It doesn't lock you down, it frees you up! **That's good news about the Good News!!!**

**But it doesn't change the fact that we are quarantined and facing some unique problems...** and for some of our neighbors some very dangerous issues. Our elderly are being held from their loved one and are depressed and disappointed; those that are vulnerable to violence are stuck at home imprisoned in their fear; Children are instructed to stay separated from their friends; parents are having to multi-task beyond the already established chaos; and we could create another Mount Everest just out of our frustrations!!! **Does anyone listening know the personal definition of “Stir Crazy”? I think I can hear many of you shouting... “MY LIFE!!!!!!”**

**Two weeks ago I spoke about “Four Things That Jesus Does to Create a Fearless Heart”** and believe that those **four things can help all of us who trust Jesus Christ survive.** Just as a reminder:

1. Jesus has not left you and will show up in the least expected times.
2. Jesus' Easter story piles up enough ammunition to conquer your doubts.
3. Jesus will open our minds to scripture in a more powerful way.
4. Our lives will become greater testimonies because of this uncertainty.

**Transition:** But we don't want to just survive in these days... we want to redeem the time in these days!

## **God's Take**

**So, how can we redeem this quarantine time? There are several biblical stories where some of God's people were staying inside:**

- **Paul** was in chains during the time he was writing his epistles.
- **Elijah** had delivered God's message of a drought coming to the crooked and evil King Ahab and then hid in the Brook called Cherith where he was fed by ravens and drank from it.
- **Joseph** was wrongfully imprisoned for a few years because of the lies of Potiphar's wife.
- **Noah was quarantined in the ark** not knowing when the flood would be over.
- **Jonah was quarantined** in the belly of a large fish.
- **Job** was stuck in his house because of the grief and boils on his body.

**If there's anything we have all learned from our quarantine... which was also true of these biblical characters... is that there's plenty of time to think and wonder what is next.**

**There's another Bible story that speaks of a quarantine... just an overnight story... but nevertheless, it was an intense time for God's people. It was God's people facing Pharaoh and the Death Angel.**

### **A Brief Background in Exodus:**

- **Moses gets his marching orders from God at a burning bush** and along with Aaron face Pharaoh.

- **A longer story shortened**, after Aaron's rod becomes a serpent and devours Pharaoh's... the plagues start coming. Water to blood; frogs everywhere; lice; flies; all the livestock of Egypt dies; Boils; Hail; locusts; and darkness for 3 days.
- **The last plague was the worst of all...** God would send a Death Angel over all the land of Egypt that would kill the first born of every family and even the animals.
- **This would prove to set God's people free... but they had to endure a night of quarantine.** There was a great cry that night for death hit every house and field.
- **But the death angel didn't harm the Jews because of God's great plan of redemption. This memory has forever been celebrated by Jews and Christians. It is called "The Passover". They were redeemed that night of quarantine!**

Now, how does this apply to us and our several week stay at home restriction? I want us to look at five God-Instructed reasons why the Jews weren't harmed that night and what we should learn from them as we REDEEM our time while going stir-crazy. These reasons are found in Exodus 12.

NLT | Ex 12:21-28 Then Moses called all the elders of Israel together and said to them, "Go, pick out a lamb or young goat for each of your families, and slaughter the Passover animal. 22 Drain the blood into a basin. Then take a bundle of hyssop branches and dip it into the blood. Brush the hyssop across the top and sides of the doorframes of your houses. And no one may go out through the door until morning. 23 For the LORD will pass through the land to strike down the Egyptians. But when he sees the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe, the LORD will pass over your home. He will not permit his death angel to enter your house and strike you down. 24 "Remember, these instructions are a permanent law that you and your descendants must observe forever. 25 When you enter the land the LORD has promised to give you, you will continue to observe this ceremony. 26 Then your children will ask, 'What does this ceremony mean?' 27 And you will reply, 'It is the Passover sacrifice to the LORD, for he passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt. And though he struck the Egyptians, he spared our families.'" When Moses had finished speaking, all the people bowed down to the ground and worshiped. 28 So the people of Israel did just as the LORD had commanded through Moses and Aaron.

### (The Five God-Instructed Reasons) How Can We Redeem Our Quarantine Time?

We must take time to...

#### 1. Pick the Lamb.

- a. "Go, pick out a lamb or young goat for each of your families, and slaughter the Passover animal.
- b. Literally, this lamb would make the difference between life and death that night. Without it... a Jewish family had no protection. **They had to pick a lamb to be redeemed!**
- c. **Just like that Passover in Egypt, Jesus is our Passover Lamb. Without Jesus we cannot make it to heaven and find redemption!!!** NLT | 1 Pe 1:18-19 For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And it was not paid with mere gold or silver, which lose their value. 19 It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God.
- d. **Application:** Family and friends of Heritage Church, **PICK THE LAMB AGAIN! Rededicate yourselves to Jesus again! Rededicate your family to the Lord again.**
- e. Joshua 24:15 should become our motto at this time... NLT | Jos 24:15 ...But as for me and my family, we will serve the LORD."

f. **PICK THE Lamb again... for without Him you have no chance to be redeemed.**

## 2. Purify your values.

- a. **Then take a bundle of hyssop branches and dip it into the blood. Why hyssop?**
- b. According to the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia and Harper's Bible Dictionary, It was a small shrub about 27 inches high with small white flowers which was used in ritual cleansings and purifying for not only doorframes... but also lepers. It was also what the Roman Guard used to give Jesus a vinegar-soaked sponge.
- c. **Application:** Take this time to reevaluate your biblical values in regard to sin; in regard to spiritual devotion; eliminate the habits that stand between you and a vibrant relationship with Christ. (Pornography and other temptations; marital values grown stale; family spiritual leadership; pursuing holiness instead of shallow happiness.)

## 3. Pray the perimeter

- a. **Brush the hyssop across the top and sides of the doorframes of your houses.**
- b. Once inside their houses, the Jews prayed and ate a sacred meal together as they listened to the wails and sorrow of those not protected by the Passover Lamb.
- c. **Application: Now is the time to take your prayer life to a new level!** pray for your family and for those who are not under the protective hand of God. Now is the time to share sacred moments with your families! (Pray against the enemy; for souls; for leaders; pray for a fresh vision that the whole world will see!!)

## 4. Promote God's council

- a. **And no one may go out through the door until morning. 23 For the LORD will pass through the land to strike down the Egyptians.**
- b. The Jews knew better than to step out of the house that night... for that would bring on ultimate destruction for them. The families took God's council and stayed safe.
- c. **Application: Now's not the time to be making it up as we go!!!** Refamiliarize ourselves with God's Word and its warnings. (Don't play around with sinful things)

## 5. Preserve the story

- a. **Then your children will ask, 'What does this ceremony mean?'**
- b. **Every new generation has to reboot and retell the story of God! The church has kept the story alive because the future depends on us preserving and telling it.**
- c. **Application:** Take the time in quarantine to retell the story at night time prayers; dinner tables; family time outside; and every opportunity that the Lord gives us!
- d. **Reinforce that story with visible worship and intimacy!!**

**Transition: Don't just survive this quarantine... redeem this quarantine!!! Step out in faith...**

## Conclusion

How much faith did Noah need to drive the first nail; did David need to search for smooth stones; did Job need to keep scrapping his scabs; did Daniel need to walk the steps into the den of lions? Use this quarantine to ask God for that kind of faith!!! Let's pray...

Prayer:

- **Lord, we pick the Lamb again.**
- **Ask you to purify our values as we pray for our homes and families and church.**

- **We choose your council and your Holy Spirit's leadership.**
- **Help us to clearly and passionately tell your story over and over again.**
- **Preserve your church in these days... and lead many souls and homes to your loving grace and mercy.**