

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

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I wrote this sermon the day after Hurricane Irma devastated Florida and two weeks after the Hurricane Harvey damaged the Houston area of Texas. When I saw the panic among the people forced to quickly flee their homes and how ill prepared they were, the Holy Spirit laid it upon my heart to deliver a message what Christians need to do at such a time like this. **Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**

PREPARING FOR THE EXODUS

God commissioned Moses to bring the Israelites out of Egypt. According to the Bible, there were 600,000 able bodied men, including women, children and the elderly, it would amount to about 3 million people. **Exodus 12:37**

This mass evacuation took place when God's angel killed all the firstborn in Egypt at midnight not protected by the blood on the doorposts. To make it worse, they were supposed to leave in the middle of the night. **Exodus 12:29-33**

God did the following things to prepare His people:

1. The Israelites were not scattered all over Egypt; they were located in Goshen.
2. Moses told them several months prior that they were going to leave Egypt and made themselves ready.
3. God told the people to prepare themselves financially. **Exodus 11:1-3**
4. They were told precisely when they would leave and they needed to be fully dressed with shoes on their feet. **Exodus 12:11-12**
5. The people made ready their flocks of animals, and as they left Goshen, the Egyptians gave them even more gold and silver. **verses 32-36**

PREPARING FOR THE FAMINE

God creates events and at the same time He prepares His people for what is coming. This is what happened when God told Abraham that He would build a nation of his descendants with an incubation time in Egypt of 400 years. **Genesis 15:13**

It turned out they stayed in Egypt for 430 years. **Exodus 12:41**

God did not instigate the scheme that Joseph be sold as a slave and sent to Egypt; this was the evil intent of his jealous brothers. **Genesis 37:18-28**

Joseph suffered for 13 years as a slave in Potiphar's house and then as a prisoner.

God used this horrible situation and turned it around for good. **Genesis 45:4-8; Romans 8:26-31**

God decreed a seven year period of great harvest, followed by a famine of seven years. Pharaoh was given a dream that only Joseph could interpret. **Genesis 41:14-32**



God told Joseph exactly how Egypt should prepare for the famine. **verses 33-49**

Once Joseph had been established as the prime minister of Egypt, God moved upon him to bring his father, Jacob, and the rest of his family to Egypt. **Genesis 46:27**

JESUS' TEACHING ON PREPARATION

At the time of Jesus, it was the father of the groom that paid for the wedding and hosted the wedding feast. On the day of the wedding, the bride and bridesmaids had to be ready for a 24 hour period since the groom could come at any time during that time period.

Jesus taught that it was prudent to have extra oil for the lamp since no one knew the exact hour the groom would arrive. Once the groom had picked up his bride and her entourage, they went back to the father's house, who stood at the door and handed out wedding garments to all the guests. **Matthew 25:1-13**

A Christian can be ready for the groom by getting saved and preparing for life on earth.

Jesus knew Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed after he had ascended to heaven. He did not say what year it would happen, but He did tell them that the destruction would occur in the future. **Matthew 24:1-2**

When the Roman army under the command of Titus surrounded Jerusalem in 67 A.D., all Christians in Jerusalem fled into the hillsides and escaped death when the Romans took Jerusalem in 70 A.D., a large number of Jews residing in Jerusalem were slaughtered. The Romans made no distinction between men, women and children.

Jesus warned Christians that one day there would be a new temple in Jerusalem; it would be the temple of the Antichrist. When we see it come into being, the Christians living in Israel and Jerusalem are to flee. **Matthew 24:15-22**

DISASTERS

It is prudent for Christians to prepare for bad times whether it is an earthquake, tornado, hurricane, fire, famine or war. Today's society is vastly different from the living conditions 2,000 years when Jesus walked on the earth.

Back then manufacturing and agriculture were localized and there was no global economy. Each city manufactured what it needed in form of shoes, clothing and dwelling places. Food was grown locally around each city. Heating in the winter was accomplished by burning wood and light was supplied by oil lamps.

Thus, each city was self-supporting, and if there was a catastrophic event in one city, it did not affect others. Water was drawn from local rivers, creeks or wells. People had outhouses where they took care of their personal needs.

People living in the United States and Western Europe are totally dependent upon electricity. Cities are no longer self-supporting; food is brought in from farming areas to distribution centers, and then trucked to the local stores. Local stores only stock enough food to last for 3 days.

Clothing, shoes, furniture and all other appliances are manufactured around the world. The heating and cooling of our homes is done through electricity, including running our refrigerators and freezers.

Most cities do not have a transportation system that covers all its suburbs and we depend upon personal automobiles for transportation. The fuel needed to run our vehicles is trucked into each city from a refinery that can be quite a distance away. Each service station depends upon electricity to pump the fuel.

We no longer have personal outhouses; instead, we have toilets that are hooked up to a sewer system and our waste ends up in a sewage plant. Fresh water is pumped from wells, lakes or rivers, cleaned in a water treatment plant and then piped to residences, offices, manufacturing plants, etc.

What we have seen in Texas and Florida should make us take notice. Damage from a hurricane, tornado, fire or earthquake will damage buildings and streets, but it will also knock out electricity, and this means that nothing in our cities will work.

People were not prepared and stores were sold out of basic necessities in just a few hours. Many were not organized and ready to evacuate. The roads turned into a huge parking lot once a few million cars clogged the roads leading out of the cities.

Sitting for hours in these traffic jams caused many to be stranded when they ran out of fuel and service stations could not keep up with demand. These evacuees had not planned to stay for 15 hours in their vehicles. Most had no food with them and bathroom visits consisted of doing your business on the side of the road. How many people had toilet paper and wet wipes with them?

Once the hurricanes subsided into tropical storms and it was safe to return, most people could not return to their homes, but were stuck in shelters or in other cities that were not damaged. The cost of living in a motel or hotels adds up, not to mention buying food from restaurants.

It is estimated that some 8.5 million people in Florida are without electricity and that it will take up to three weeks or more to get the power restored.

Even though FEMA and other aid organizations are on site to help, people are still going to suffer for a while because our nation is dependent upon electricity and oil.

PREPARING FOR DISASTER

How should we prepare small scale natural disasters and even larger events like war?

There will be wide scale electricity outages and banks will be closed, ATM's won't work and credit cards won't be accepted as payment.

God told the Israelites to get hold of cash (gold, silver and jewelry) as soon as possible. Very few people operate in cash today. I started some time ago to build up a cash reserve. My goal is to have enough that I can operate for a few weeks after a catastrophic disaster.

People in Florida had a rude awakening when they realized cash would be needed if they wanted to buy food or other commodities. Merchants were adamant that credit cards or debit cards were no longer being accepted as payment.

People living in the cities need to prepare differently than those living in the rural areas. It is difficult to stay in a home or apartment building with no electricity since there is no heat or air conditioning and the food in refrigerators and freezers will spoil. Toilets will be useless because there is no water pressure in the pipes, and unless people have stocked up on bottled water, there will be nothing to drink. The sin nature will prevail and looters will seek out whatever their hearts desire.

LIVING IN CITIES

The following items should be stocked by every person living in a city.

- ❖ You should have good flashlights, an ample supply of batteries, candles, matches and possibly kerosene lanterns.
- ❖ Five cases of bottled water.
- ❖ A minimum of 20 gallons of fuel for your vehicle.
- ❖ Canned goods that can be eaten without having to be heated up.
- ❖ Dry food like rice, oatmeal, dried fruit etc.
 - Millions of people in Florida were isolated for more than a week and those who did not prepare had very little to eat. Also stock up on healthy snacks, which can be eaten if you have to spend a long time in your car.
- ❖ A sufficient quantity of toilet paper and diapers if you have small children. Don't forget soap, shampoo, toothpaste and other toiletries.
- ❖ You should also have a suitcase or backpack filled with extra clothes such as underwear, socks, shirts, pants and sweaters. When disaster occurs, you will not have time to start packing.
- ❖ If a disaster takes place in the winter, you should have appropriate cold weather clothing such as boots, jackets, gloves, rain gear, etc.
- ❖ Don't forget to bring cash. If the disaster is of such a magnitude that you are not able to get home for a long period of time, cash will ensure that you can get food and supplies.

If there is an earthquake, you will only have minutes to leave your place. If you are pre-packed, you can be in your car in less than five minutes and headed to a safe location.

WHERE TO GO?

When disaster hits and electricity is gone, your cell phone will not work, meaning you cannot use GPS to navigate. You should obtain paper maps which are detailed enough that you can find your way. Select a site beforehand; it is too late once a disaster has occurred.

Find a rural place that will be your destination in an emergency. If you have family living in the country, you need to make plans with them for a temporary set up. Don't just drop in on them. If you do not have family, try to find someone who is willing to take you in either for free or paying rent.

Purchase a simple tent, heavy duty sleeping bags and pads. A small BBQ grill, a frying pan, a pot and cooking oil should be part of your cooking gear. Don't forget plates and utensils.

A shovel is also useful for digging a latrine pit for your family.

Once you have selected a site, visit it beforehand and examine the terrain. Since bridges and roads can be damaged, locate different roads that lead to your place and have an alternative route to get there. Practice driving to your place of refuge until you are familiar with the different routes so that you can drive there even in the dark and bad weather.

ARMING YOURSELF

As Christians, we are under the protection of the Lord, but that doesn't mean we cannot arm ourselves. The constitution grants us the right to be armed, and if lawlessness breaks out, the government won't be able to protect you. Jesus told His disciples to arm themselves. **Luke 22:35-38**

The only reason the World Government fears the American people is the fact that a large portion of people have firearms and know how to use them. If law and order breaks down after a disaster, it is up to each family to protect themselves. Not only that, once people are out in the wild, there are animals to contend with and a gun can save you from being mauled.

This means that you need to have firearms and ammunition in your possession, but in order to be able to use it in an emergency situation, it is necessary to practice until you know how to properly use your weapon. It is also prudent to have an axe to secure wood for your fire along with a knife.

BE READY

The other choice is a government shelter; however, once you are there, you are under their control and can't leave until they say so. In such a shelter, you will live with thousands of other people in a noisy atmosphere and have no privacy.

The goal is to be ready, get out of town quickly and have a site prepared in advance. If you belong to a church group or you have some other Christian fellowship groups, it is possible to plan for a disaster evacuation together and gather as a group. A bigger group will certainly help deter looters and others from attacking you.

DEALING WITH FREeloadERS

There will always be irresponsible people, including Christians, who will not think about the future and make preparations. When there is a crisis, they will use guilt to rely upon somebody else's hard earned provisions. Has the Bible spoken about this issue? Yes, we are not to be a sluggard. **Proverbs 6:6-11**

Jesus never told the wise bridesmaid's to share their extra oil. **Matthew 25:1-9**

The apostle Paul said that if a man refuses to work, do not give him food. **2 Thessalonians 3:10-12**

God is not a socialist. If people want to fail, God will let them do so. People have a free will. If people walk with the Lord and put aside money for future needs, the Bible does not say they are obligated to share with freeloaders who have lived a sloppy and careless life, spending money on frivolous things, and then demanding that the prudent share of their toils. I am not going to share my resources with people who wasted their lives and then want a free lunch.

LIVING IN RURAL AREAS

If you live in a rural area, but it is in a flood zone, this won't be a safe place for you and will be necessary to find an alternate site where you can relocate should flooding occur.

Most people living in the rural areas have their own well for water. When the electricity goes out, so does your access to water. Be sure that you have a large generator. Run it from time to time and make sure it is in good working condition with a 30 day supply of fuel.

Unless the generator is very large, you won't be able to run all your appliances and lights. Have an electrician install a plug-in to your electrical system, that way you selectively run your well, refrigerator and freezer by turning off the incoming power line from the electric company.

Try to have a natural gas cooking stove and you will be able to cook like normal. If and when people arrive at your property, you will have the means to feed and house them until the crisis is over. Make sure you are stocked up on necessary food supplies, including water, in case an earthquake takes place and your well caves in.

Most people who live in rural areas own firearms. Given the anarchy that arises during prolonged disasters, it is prudent to have an ample supply of ammunition.

Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!

Do you have an ear to hear with?