**R792\_Rumination for Apr. 05, 2020 by K.C. Ung**

The **T**heme: **Stay Afar to Be Safe.** berita-bethel-ung.com

The **T**ext:*He said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou…and worship ye* ***afar off.***Exo. 24:1

The **T**hots:

Intro. The second of a three-fold advisory given by the Government of Malaysia

 in the Movements Control Order (MCO) to contain the spread of COVID\_19 virus is:

**Stay Away from One Another** **to be Safe** – be at least a metre away!

Many “religious” followers refuse to follow this advice and continue to gather in groups believing that their god will better protect them and will heal them when they cry to him as a group, the bigger the better!

Tragically it works the other way round and many get infected with the disease because of their close proximity.

In the Bible, in an early dispensation, God Himself asked His people, Israel, to worship Him from **Afar Off**!

However, this was changed in a later dispensation, when He exhorted His people, the Church, to **Draw Near**!

**C**onsider the **C**ircumstances then:

1. **Come not Near; Worship God Afar Off.**
2. Moses was not **A**llowed to come near God. Exo. 3:4, 5

*When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him…Draw not nigh hither:*

*put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.*

1. Moses was to worship God from **A**far off. Exo. 24:1

*He said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou…and worship ye afar off.*

1. The **R**easons:
2. **G**od was too **G**reat and **G**lorious for any to **G**aze on Him. They could not **G**o near **G**od!
* *And He said, Thou canst not see My face: for there shall no man see Me, and live.* Exo. 33:20
* *The LORD said unto Moses, Go down, charge the people, lest they break through*

*unto the LORD to gaze, and many of them perish.* Exo. 19:16-21

1. They were **S**inful and must be **S**anctified to approach Him. Exo. 19:22
* The Priests were **C**autioned: *Let the priests also, which come near to the LORD,*

 *sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break forth upon them…*

* Isaiah **C**onfessed: *Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips…*

 *for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts*. Isa. 6:5

* **Stay Far Away to be Safe.**
1. The **R**esolution of the problem. Then Jesus came to **R**esolve the Situation. Jn. 1:18

*No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father,*

*He hath declared Him.*

1. The **R**econciliation: II Cor. 5:19

*To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself,*

*not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*

1. **Now Draw Near to Worship God. Jn. 4:23-24**
2. **The Change.**

*But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father*

*in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.*

*God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.*

* 1. **The Church:** Now both Jews and Gentiles can **Come Near** to Worship God. **Eph. 2:14-18**

***For He is our peace, Who hath made both one,***

*and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;*

*And that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:*

*And came and preached peace to you which were* ***afar off****, and to them that were* ***nigh****.*

***For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.***

1. **The Confidence: Now Draw Near to Worship God. Heb. 10:19-25**
2. Our New **C**onfidence: *Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest*

 *by the blood of Jesus…*

1. Our New **C**onsecrated Way: *By a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us…*
2. Our New **C**hief Priest: *And having an high priest over the house of God;*
3. Our New **C**onduct:
4. ***Let us******draw near*** *with a true heart in full assurance of faith…*
5. ***Let us*** *hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for He is faithful that promised;)*
6. ***Let us*** *consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:
Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is;*

 *but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

*Nearer, draw nearer, Till my soul is lost in Thee;*

 *Nearer, draw nearer, Blessèd Lord, to me.* Fanny Crosby

**REFLECTIONS FOR THE WEEK R. 792**

1. Certain religious groups and cults believe that in the time of crisis as in the current pandemic of COVID\_19 that has smitten the world the likely reason is their god’s judgment on the people of the world because of their sin. So they need to gather in as big a group as possible to cry out in repentance for their god to forgive them, in disobedience to their government’s ruling for them not to gather as such but to practise social distancing and stay at home in order to prevent contacts with one another to prevent the spread of contagious Covid\_19.

Would God advise likewise to contain a contagious disease from spreading and guarantee the health of the community? Consider the following instructions in Leviticus chapters 13 and 14 with regard to anyone suffering from a contagious disease:

 [**Note**: All quotes are taken from the Holman Christian Standard Bible (HCSB)]:

1. The **I**nstructions: The Infected should see a priest.

*When a person has…a disease…he is to be brought to Aaron the priest…* Lev. 13:2

[Note: For the “priest” read a “doctor” or “medical officer” in our present context.]

1. The Infection: If it is “unclean” or contagious, it must be treated as such. Lev. 13:3

*The priest will examine the infection…after the priest examines him, he must pronounce him unclean…the priest shall pronounce him unclean: it is a plague.* Lev. 13:22

1. The **I**solation or quarantine of the infected for fourteen days. It is a plague! Lev. 13:4

1st. Stage – 1st week: *Then the priest shall* ***shut up him*** *that hath the plague* ***seven days****:*

2nd Stage – 2nd week: the confirmation of the disease. **14 days in isolation** in all. Lev. 13:5
*And the priest shall look on him the seventh day: and, behold, if the plague in his sight*

*be at a stay, and the plague spread…then the priest shall* ***shut him up seven days more.***

*All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean:*

***he shall dwell alone****; without* [i.e. outside] *the camp shall his habitation be.* Lev. 13:46

1. The **I**nhibitions: Lev. 13:45

*And the (person) in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare,*

*and he shall* ***put a covering upon his upper lip****, and shall cry,* ***Unclean, unclean****.*

* The person’s clothes are contaminated, so are his head and hair. And he needs to cover his nose and mouth with a mask to prevent the spread of the decease further.
* The people must socially distance themselves away from him, as he cries out “*unclean*!”
1. The **I**mposition: Lev. 13:59

*This is the law of the plague…in a garment of woollen or linen…to pronounce it clean,*

*or to pronounce it unclean. Then the priest shall command that they empty the house…*

*and afterward the priest shall go in to see the house:* Lev. 14:36

* All his apparel and all that the patient touches is “unclean”; where he stays is also unclean.
* Beware of his spit or droplets. They are infectious. He must thoroughly wash himself.

*And if he that hath the issue spit upon him that is clean; then he shall wash his clothes,*

*and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.* Lev. 15:8

1. The re-**I**nstitution process:

*And when he that…is cleansed…; then he shall number to himself* ***seven days*** *for his cleansing, and wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in running water, and shall be clean.* Lev. 15:13

The above Instructions in Leviticus concerning the Control of Movements of an Infected person in the Community are not much different from the ones which are now imposed on our community by the Government to control the spread of COVID\_19.

Imagine that God had all these controls already in hand thousands of years ago for His people!

In the midst of all these infectious diseases the Lord still told His people to trust Him because He was the Jehovah *Who health thee*. They need to obey Him. Exodus 15:26 *He said, “If you will carefully obey the LORD your God, do what is right in His eyes, pay attention to His commands, and keep all His statutes, I will not inflict any illnesses on you that I inflicted on the Egyptians. For I am Yahweh Who heals you.”*

Is what is happening to this world, God’s judgment upon their rejection of Him in so many of their institutions, relations, constitutions, etc.? Then the solution is to return to Him. **REFLECT**

1. While in this world, let us seek to obey the Government and help contain COVID\_19

from spreading – Stay at Home; Keep your Distance from one another and be safe.

At the same time, **draw near to God** that He will keep you safe. **REFLECT**.

**Points To Ponder:** *In times of Crisis, must we come to a Place to Worship God*

*or Can we Worship Him in spirit and in truth where we are in times like these?*