

... AS IT WAS IN THE DAYS OF NOAH ... (MT. 24:37)

What have you been thinking as you have listened to the news recently? The strikes by the aggrieved workforces. ... The energy companies' wealth at the expense of many who are struggling. ... From the highest family in the land to the most common, from the lawmakers to the lawbreakers, from those whose job it is to show good examples and lead by just and righteous legislation. ... Even to those in religious leadership who shamefully deny, disregard, and defy God's Word. ... Don't you have sympathy for how Asaph wrote in Ps. 73, and for Habakkuk when he pleaded, *Hab. 1:2* O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! even cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save! ... ⁴the law is slacked *L... almost to the point it is non-existent*, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth *L... the courts hand out judgments which are no punishments at all*. ... We also hear the despair from Jeremiah, *Lam. 3:8* when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer. ... It is the same lament John heard in the Book of Revelation, when the saints of God cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? (Rev. 6:10)

When a nation respects God, He will bless and reward that nation for Righteousness exalteth a nation. However, when a nation persists in exchanging the glory of God for their own images and idols, He will give them over to their rebellious unbelief and they will be as a 'reproach', a disgrace. ... Sin is the shame which tears nations down! (Prov. 14:34; Rom. 1:21).

Following the times of the Judges, the people had slipped into the condition where every man did that which was right in his own eyes (Judges 21:25). ... They had abandoned God and replaced Him with their own laws and standards. Sadly, such has been the dismal pattern throughout history. However, God in His mercy always keeps a people faithful to Himself, a remnant.

Around us today we see the pattern of evil intensifying. That which we count decent and right is increasingly judged as wrong and outdated. Free speech is for those who cultivate arrogance, but it is withheld from those who dare question its egotism. ... How *do* you stop this decline? *Is* it possible to stop it?

On the authority of Scripture, I do believe the Word of God teaches a brighter future, the likes of which this world has never experienced since creation. Throughout the history of the Bible, God's people have often been rescued, not only from the brink of self-destruction, but also from the attempts of their enemies who sought their demise. ... For example, they could have been

destroyed by the cruel Egyptian Pharaoh, or they could have been slaughtered by the Philistines as they entered the Promised Land, or they could have perished under the evil King Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon. The Medo-Persian empire could have wiped them out, as could the Greek Empire, and the Roman Empire, and the Muslims, and the Crusaders, and Hitler ... and yet, through every period of history, God has always kept His people!

We are to be encouraged! That was not 'by luck' or 'chance', but that is because God is working out everything to His plan for the ages. ... After the Lord Jesus had explained this 'end-time' plan to His disciples on the Mount of Olives, He concluded by reminding them of the past, ^{Mt. 24:37} as *the days of Noe* were, so shall also *the coming of the Son of man be*, ³⁸ For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, ³⁹ And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away ... He was teaching them, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

Earlier in the chapter He was telling them how dreadful judgments will afflict the earth and the heavens as His return approaches. He then showed them how the generation preceding His return would be immersed in increasing opposition to the will and name of God. He compared this with the abominations in Noah's day, when ^{Gen. 6:5} GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil *continually*:

The society in Noah's day was so shamelessly corrupt, it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart (Gen. 6:6). ... God was *distressed* at how His creation had become, and they provoked Him to judgment, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them (v.7).

He *could* not and *would* not allow their contempt to continue, ¹¹ The earth also was corrupt [*rotten, ruined*] before God, and the earth was filled [*to the brim*] with violence [*lawlessness and unjust gain*]. ¹² And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. ... Violence, boasting, pride, self-adulation had taken them beyond the 'point of no return'.

Yet, even in those days God retained a faithful remnant of men and women, like Noah and his father Lamech, and his grandfather Methuselah. But by the time the Flood came, all but eight people out of the earth's population remained faithful to God, - Noah, his wife, their three sons and their three wives.

If Noah was here today, we could hear Him say, “We had people doing *that* in our time, and we also had *that*. That’s how they used to conspire and contrive in my day. ... But wait a minute, *that* is new! *That* is *worse* than we ever saw. Society has surpassed what happened during my time for your people are treating God’s Law and His righteousness with utter contempt, going beyond what they did in my day, and God *cannot* and will *not* allow it to continue! ... And the Lord Jesus adds, **Mt. 11:24** it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment.

The epistle of Peter warns of an unprecedented judgment from God which will be unleashed prior to the return of the Lord Jesus, surpassing the Flood, and Sodom and Gomorrah. Peter wrote, **II Peter 3:3** Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts [*greed, desires, obsessions*],⁴ And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.⁵ For this they willingly are ignorant of *lit escapes their notice for they conceal and deny*, that by the word of God the heavens were of old [*long ago*], and the earth standing [*was formed out*] out of the water and in [*by*] the water:⁶ Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water [*during Noah’s time*], perished:⁷ But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word [*God’s command*] are kept in store, *reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men*. ... That’s what God says is coming!

Noah warned the people of his generation by preaching the righteousness of God (II Peter 2:5), but they would not listen. The flood is coming, and will **Gen. 6:17** destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die. ... They would not listen ... only Noah was listening and trusting in the promises of God,¹⁸ But with thee [*Noah*] will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons’ wives with thee. God saved *them* ... How? Through grace for Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord (Gen. 6:8). Only by God’s grace were Noah and his family saved.

And Jesus announced as it was in the days of Noah, that is how it will be leading up to His return, **Gen. 6:5** the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ... Take a look at Revelation chapter sixteen which describes the judgments to be unleashed preceding Christ’s return, **Rev. 16:1** I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. ... He will pour out His wrath upon those who reject Him, but no matter how they are afflicted, they refuse to repent (Rev. 16:9,11,21). They will continue to blaspheme and curse God’s name like never before! ... And then God will give them over to a foul and filthy reprobate mind to do those things which render

them beyond the scope of His grace. Paul described to the believers in Rome, **Rom. 1:32** Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, *but have pleasure in them that do them.* ... That is the hatred for God which will precede the return of the Lord Jesus.

... And in those days God's people will be despised as never before, **Mt. 24:9** Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And of course, such a wicked world produces leaders to suit its own agenda and its own kind ... and they enact laws to facilitate their sins, which takes them further from God until there is no way back. During those times, Paul warns his readers, **II Thess. 2:3** Let no man deceive you ... for they will certainly try, as Jesus said, **Mt. 24:11** many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many ... ²⁴ ... false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. ... God pre-warns us. Again, writing to the church in Thessalonica, Paul told them, **II Thess. 2:3** that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first ... And that was what Jesus had said, the love of many *[professing believers]* shall wax cold (**Mt. 24:12**).

And then the 'man of sin' is revealed, **II Thess. 2:3** the son of perdition *[destruction]*, ⁴ Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God ... Paul prophesies this wicked man will have no shame in his opposition and hatred of God. ... For a while, he will 'strut' on the world's stage, and hold its inhabitants spellbound.

... And during the times in which Noah lived, the people around him were 'strutting' as if they had not a care in the world, and answerable to none. God had no place and no say for the hearts of the people were so turned against Him!

Even though Noah loved his people, he also knew God was justified in His judgment, and he remained faithful for those next one hundred and twenty years, during which he built the ark and warned his people. However, no one listened. His warnings fell on deaf ears. ... Nonetheless, he preached the same message to the same people and he received the same response ... **Gen. 6:22** Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he. ... And when the judgment drew near, **Gen. 7:1** the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark ⁴ For ... I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth. ... And it happened, as God said it would. ... And Noah was saved.

God's promises are steadfast and sure, and that is why His people are not without hope during these perilous times leading up to our Saviour's return. ... We are not told exactly when it will be, but we are told of the circumstances approaching it. It will be in a moment, instantaneously, suddenly ... we are to be ready and looking for it for that is what the Lord Jesus commands us, *Mt. 24:42* Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. ... ⁴⁴ Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

That is how we are to be ... like Noah ... waiting, and watching and working until He comes. Peter wrote to encourage us, *II Peter 3:17* beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. ¹⁸ But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever.

The Lord *will* save His people and He will descend from Heaven with a shout that will awaken the dead, and we shall rise to meet Him in the air and be with Him forever! ... So, when you look around, and you see the world sinking deeper into its own chaos and confusion ... and you see all the burdens and problems seeming too hard to bear, and you are tempted to complain like Asaph, Habakkuk, Jeremiah, and others, ... here is something to remember and encourage you

It will be worth it all when we see Jesus!
Life's trials will seem so small when we see Christ.
One glimpse of His dear face, all sorrow will erase.
So, bravely run the race till we see Christ.

Through the gates to the city in a robe of spotless white,
He will lead me where no tears will ever fall;
In the glad song of ages, I shall mingle with delight,
But I long to meet my Saviour first of all.

What a day that will be when my Jesus I shall see,
And I look upon His face, the One Who saved me by His grace ...
And forever I will be with the One Who died for me,
What a day, glorious day, that will be!