

THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS

Message Three

The Life and Work that Changed the Age

Scripture Reading: Heb. 11:7; Rev. 11:15; Gen. 6:3-9, 11-16, 22; Matt. 24:37-39, 42; Luke 17:26-27; 1 Cor. 15:10; Heb. 4:16; 2 Tim. 3:1-3; 1 Pet. 3:20-21; 2 Cor. 6:1; Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:12; 2 Pet. 2:5

**I. The church life is today's ark to terminate the present age and bring in God's kingdom—
Heb. 11:7; Rev. 11:15; cf. 1 Thes. 1:1, 9-10:**

- A. The Lord's coming (parousia) will be like the days of Noah; this indicates that when the Lord's parousia is about to come, the situation on the earth will be like the days of Noah—Gen. 6:5, 11-13, Matt. 24:37-39, 42; cf. Luke 17:26-32.
- B. The people at that time were befuddled by the necessities of life—eating and drinking, marrying and being given in marriage; because of man's lust, Satan uses the God-ordained necessities of human life to stupefy, occupy, and befuddle man to keep him from God's interest—Matt. 24:38-39:
 - 1. Just as in Noah's day, the people will not know that judgment is coming; the believers, however, should be watchful, for we do not know on what day our Lord will come—Matt. 24:39, 42.
 - 2. These conditions of evil living portray the perilous condition of man's living before the Lord's coming—Luke 17:26 (note 2).

II. Noah inherited all the spiritual blessings from his forefathers, including Adam's way of salvation, Abel's way of worshipping, Enosh's way of calling on the name of Jehovah, and Enoch's way of walking with God—Gen. 6:9:

- A. Because Noah found grace in the eyes of Jehovah we are told that he walked with God—v. 8.
- B. Noah came from a godly family and learned from his forefathers all the godly things; thus he came to realize his need for grace—v. 2; cf. 1 Cor. 15:10.
- C. No one can stand in such a generation; we need grace in order to face the situation of the flesh—Heb. 4:16; cf. Rom 5:17.

III. While Noah was walking with God and God was happy with him, God opened His heart to him and revealed His secrets to him—cf. Gen. 18:17; Exo. 33:17; Psa. 25:14:

- A. God gave Noah what was nearly an all-inclusive revelation, a further revelation which none of Noah's forefathers saw—Gen. 6:14-16.
- B. God showed him the true situation of his generation—6:3-7, 11-13; Matt. 24:38-39; Luke 17:26-27; 2 Tim. 3:1-3.
- C. Noah saw a vision of God's building—the ark is a type of Christ, not only the individual Christ but also the corporate Christ, the church—1 Peter 3:20-21; cf. Gen. 6:11-21.
- D. Today's ark, which is God's way of terminating this evil generation and bringing in the kingdom, is the local churches.

IV. Noah's work was a work that changed the age—2 Cor. 6:1; Matt. 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:12:

- A. Noah was a herald of righteousness, preaching righteousness—2 Peter 2:5; Gen. 6:22; 1 Peter 3:20.
- B. God told Noah to build an ark and Noah built the ark according to God's revelation—Heb. 11:7; cf. Gen. 7:13-16.
- C. We are building the ark, not only for our own salvation, but also for the salvation of others; we are building the ark of salvation for the accomplishment of God's purpose.

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FOCUS: *Noah received from God a twofold vision: first, he saw a vision of the condition of the age he lived in and the destiny of that age; second, he saw the vision of the building of God. He carried out this vision with a twofold work of the age—he was a herald of righteousness and a builder of the ark. We also need such a twofold revelation and a twofold work—preaching the gospel and building up the church according to the vision of the age and the work of the age to change the age.*

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Message Three—Verse Sheet

The Life and Work that Changed the Age

Scripture Reading:

Heb. 11:7

By faith Noah, having been divinely instructed concerning things not yet seen and being moved by pious fear, prepared an ark for the salvation of his house, through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

Rev. 11:15

And the seventh angel trumpeted; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.

Gen. 6:3, 5-9, 11-16, 22

- 3 And Jehovah said, My Spirit will not strive with man forever, for he indeed is flesh; so his days will be cone hundred twenty years.
- 5 And Jehovah 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.
- 6 And Jehovah repented that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him in His heart.
- 7 And Jehovah said, I will blot out the man whom I have created from the surface of the ground, from man to beast to creeping things to the birds of heaven; for I repent that I have made them.
- 8 But Noah found favor (grace) in the sight of Jehovah.
- 9 These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generations; and Noah walked with God.
- 11 And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.
- 12 And God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth.
- 13 And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and now I am about to destroy them with the earth.
- 14 Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make rooms in the ark and shall cover it within and without with pitch.
- 15 And this is how you shall make it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits.
- 16 You shall make an opening for light for the ark, and you shall finish it up to a cubit from the top; and you shall put the entrance of the ark in its side; you shall make it with lower, second, and third stories.
- 22 And Noah did this; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.

Matt. 24:37-39, 42

- 37 For just as the days of Noah were, so will the coming of the Son of Man be.
- 38 For as they were in those days before the flood, eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day in which Noah entered into the ark,
- 39 And they did not know that judgment was coming until the flood came and took all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.
- 42 Watch therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord comes.

Luke 17:26-27

- 26 And even as it happened in the days of Noah, so will it be also in the days of the Son of Man:

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27 They were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day in which Noah entered into the ark and the flood came and destroyed them all.

1 Cor. 15:10

But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary, I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which is with me.

Heb. 4:16

Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.

2 Tim. 3:1-3

- 1 But know this, that in the last days difficult times will come.
- 2 For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boasters, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,
- 3 Without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, savage, not lovers of good.

1 Pet. 3:20-21

- 20 Who had formerly disobeyed when the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared; entering into which, a few, that is, eight souls, were brought safely through by water.
- 21 Which water, as the antitype, also now saves you, that is, baptism, not a putting away of the filth of the flesh but the appeal of a good conscience unto God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

2 Cor. 6:1

And working together with Him, we also entreat you not to receive the grace of God in vain.

Matt. 16:18

And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

1 Cor. 3:12

But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble.

2 Pet. 2:5

And did not spare the ancient world but guarded Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly.