

Noah's Calling

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[Genesis 6: 5-14] Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7 So the Lord said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." 8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. 9 This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. 10 And Noah begot three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. 11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. 12 So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. 13 And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth. 14 Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make [g]rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with pitch.

We read about Noah and his children in Genesis chapters 6 to 10. Noah was the eighth generation of Adam, the first man. According to the biblical dating system, Noah was born in the year 1056 creation and the great flood started in the 600th year of Noah's life, which was 2348 B.C. The entire human population living at the time perished in the flood except for Noah and his family. Therefore, Noah is the common ancestor of all humans in the world regardless of color or race. Many Christian leaders view that today's world conditions are similar to those of Noah's era. That implies that the end-times are near. Lord Jesus also stated that the world conditions near His return will be like Noah's days.

[Matt 24: 36-39] 36 But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only. 37 But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Most people interpret the meaning of verse 36 as "we do not have any idea as to when the Lord returns because only God the Father knows." But we need to accept His sayings literally and interpret that the 'day and the hour' are in God's control, but perhaps the year could be known to us.

Noah knew in what year the great flood would happen because God had told him in the past. Before the planned year of the flood, God had told Methuselah and his grandson Noah of His plan to destroy the world with a global flood. And they were given the calling to preach God's message of repentance to the evil world. In other words, God gave a mercy period of 120 years for them to repent.

[Genesis 6: 3] And the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

I believe Methuselah and Noah proclaimed God's message of warning and of calling for repentance in full without hiding anything. Do you think they might have hidden their knowledge of the 120 years of mercy period from the people? I don't think so. For 120 years from the time they were given the calling from God until the flood, they were faithful in preaching the message warning people and calling them to repent. Despite their faithful ministry, people ignored their message and did not seek a way of salvation, and perished. Noah's grandparents, parents and close relatives who believed God's message must have obeyed the call of God's message. And they all died before the flood except Noah's family of eight who was saved in the ark.

The people listened to Satan and his angels rather than to Noah's message. During the last four years of the mercy period, they were watching Noah and his sons cutting down gopher trees, trimming them, and building a huge ship (called 'an ark' because of the rectangular shape). Yet, they did not inquire about seeking a way to be saved from the impending flood. When the ark construction was completed and the chosen pairs of animals came miraculously to the ark from all over the known world and entered the ark in an orderly fashion, they did not

repent although they watched with interest. On the last day, when the clouds gathered and Noah's family entered the ark for the last time, and God shut the door from the outside, the evil, hard-hearted people still refused to believe that they would all perish.

[Genesis 7:13-16] On the very same day Noah and Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark— 14 they and every beast after its kind, all cattle after their kind, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, every bird of every sort. 15 And they went into the ark to Noah, two by two, of all flesh in which is the breath of life. 16 So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the Lord shut him in.

Through the prophet Daniel, God foretold the world when the Messiah would come to this world and what things will happen in the last times through the so-called 'Seventy-week Prophecy' in Daniel 9:24-27. And Lord Jesus referred to this prophecy of Daniel and spoke to His disciples about the end-times as follows:

[Matt 24:15-21] Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), 16 "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. 17 Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. 18 And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. 19 But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! 20 And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. 21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Jesus spoke of several signs to occur before His second coming so that God-inspired wise saints could know the season of His coming but not the exact date and time. Telling the believers that we cannot know the timing of His second coming comes from either lack of knowledge or an irresponsible attitude of the teachers.

However, it is not my intent to present my thesis about the timing of the Lord's coming. It is the believers' responsibility to study the scripture, meditate on it, and be instructed on the topic. They should diligently study the events in the world and activities of significant groups that purport to control world affairs and contrast them against the prophecies in the scripture to judge how near we are to the end-time timeline. People in Noah's era could witness the near completion of Noah's large ship before their eyes. People in our era can also witness the near completion of God's plan before the end-time judgment and be warned of its timing.

When most people in the world around them were deeply immersed in the teachings and culture of Satan and his followers, Noah and his family made it their profession to live according to the standards and principles of Jehovah God and were not tainted by the immoral, wicked crowd. Since warned by God about the 120 years of mercy period, Noah's family must have daily spoken to their neighbors about God's warning of the coming great flood of destruction. And they lived a righteous life and became a shining example to the evil world. Therefore, God referred to Noah as 'righteous' and he found grace in God's sight. In other words, he and his family were saved when all the rest of the world perished in the great flood of God's wrath. True righteous children of God will also be saved from the coming wrath of God which will punish and destroy all unbelieving, wicked people of this world. That is why Lord Jesus said the days of His coming will be like those of Noah's era.

The world conditions today are as evil as the world of Noah's era if not worse. Our ancestor Papa Noah is a shining torch to all righteous people of today. And we can all become torch bearers like Noah and be found righteous before God when He visits the world in His wrath. When your Christian journey becomes difficult to bear when you find yourself so lonely and you see the world so deeply immersed in sin and depravity, let us think of Papa Noah, how he preached the message of God's warning for 120 years, built the massive ship of salvation with his hands, and were helped and encouraged by God daily. And let us take courage as he was so that we can also fulfill our calling. When we see Papa Noah in heaven, we will gladly share with him our life's story with its struggles and triumphs. And may we all enter into the Lamb's wedding ceremony as His bride when the trumpet calls us out of this evil world. Amen.

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