

# GNITN

## #514

### Build An Ark

#### An Interesting Meeting

Yesterday I was out and about with my wife and we stopped to get something to eat before we got gas for our car. I was wearing a t-shirt I got from my visit to the Ark Encounter in Kentucky which simply said, "Faith Like Noah." A gentleman walked in to the station at the same time as us and asked about my shirt. I quickly discerned that he shared our faith when he asked me what the shirt meant and I told him we're living in the last days and the shirt meant we need to be ready for God to return and he affirmed that and added more comments, one of which was that he was ready to get out of this world and all of its problems. Whether he was referring to the Rapture, he never said, but I told him I was picking up what he was laying down and he smiled. It was a nice encounter and I wasn't embarrassed to talk openly about my faith with him. But this conversation got me thinking about these famous words by Jesus just before He was crucified: *When the Son of Man comes, it will be the same as when Noah lived. 38 In the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking. They were marrying and being given in marriage. This kept on until the day Noah went into the large boat. 39 They did not know what was happening until the flood came and the water carried them all away. It will be like this when the Son of Man comes. (Matt 24:37-39, NLV)*

Without getting into the whole not knowing when the rain would come being a foreshadowing of the Rapture of the Church, I got the thought that just as Noah prepared for the Flood by obeying God, we too should be asking Him what we should be doing right before He comes for His bride and He told me three words: build an ark.

#### More Things, Too

I'd be remiss if I didn't set the stage for that short but powerful phrase because it will justify why an ark is needed. Jesus, who at this time had access to all the knowledge of the future since He was divine, fully man and fully God, peered into our times and made the comparison to the days of Noah. Are we seeing the similarities? I think we are if we're willing to do some research on how things were in those days just before the Flood devastated the earth. In just the first 1,000 years of human existence things had gotten out of control. So much so that God told Noah that he actually was sorry He actually created mankind:

*The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination and intention of all human thinking was only evil continually.*

*6 And the Lord regretted that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved at heart...The earth was depraved and putrid in God's sight, and the land was filled with violence (desecration, infringement, outrage, assault, and lust for power).*

*12 And God looked upon the world and saw how degenerate, debased, and vicious it was, for all humanity had corrupted their way upon the earth and lost their true direction.*

*13 God said to Noah, I intend to make an end of all flesh, for through men the land is filled with violence; and behold, I will destroy them and the land. (Gen 6:5-6, 11-13, AMPC)*

That word "violence" shows up and oftentimes we gloss over that, but the inference is that life was cheap and expendable. The word used here is *chamas* (*khaw-mawce'*) and means *cruelty, damage, false, injustice, oppressor, unrighteous, violence against, done*. These words are filled with current examples all around us. And realizing that men and women were incessantly thinking of ways to be violent and depraved from the moment they woke up to when they closed

their eyes to sleep it was a harsh time to live in. For God to see a world that He wished He'd never created is very strong condemnation. And Noah lived during it.

### **They All Saw It**

Another interesting fact is that Adam, the first man lived long enough to see these times since he lived 930 years. The flood happened a mere 39 years later. Think about that. Adam was alive when Noah was told that God was going to destroy the world by flood. Can you imagine how Adam felt? He had to live every day knowing what his sin caused. He, like us today yearned for the day that one of the children born would be the messiah just as he heard all the way back in the Garden of Eden, which also still existed then. It probably saddened him that he wouldn't see the earth redeemed and mankind redeemed in his life, but he also knew that a Godly man would keep that hope alive. Did Adam see the ark being built? That's up for debate, but he knew that an ark was going to be used to allow mankind to have another chance. But getting back to the point, the first man knew just how far God's creation had fallen and it must have grieved him. He was around when the first murder occurred and it hit home since it was one his own child that killed another of his children. He then endured seeing more and more murders until the blood cried out from the ground to God Himself who finally had enough. And if Adam could have seen into the future to our day, he would have warned us to listen to Noah and do what we could to warn those around us and ask for forgiveness. And he would tell us that are redeemed to offer that same hope to our generation.

### **There Was Room**

If the ark at the ark encounter is built to scale, then it had more than enough room for anyone wanting to be spared from God's judgment. God actually kept the door to the ark open for 7 days until He closed it. Noah and his family were already inside when the first drop of rain fell from the sky signaling that the great deluge was starting. The point is that anyone could have decided to believe Noah who was chosen in no small part because he was an evangelist. And a lot of people could have been spared. But we know that in hindsight, they went right on with their normal lives of sin until they saw the door supernaturally closing. Do I think they suddenly had a change of heart and rushed to the ark at the last second? No, I think they laughed and mocked Noah and his family until the waters carried them away. Most likely they thought they could find a piece of wood to hold onto and could just ride out the storm. However, their false hope of surviving in their own strength would be dashed quickly. And the saddest part was that they had plenty of time to repent and avoid the wrath of God because Noah preached every day to anyone who would listen and most likely did so for 125 years. Unfortunately, no one heeded that call.

### **What Is God Telling Us Today?**

Just as God gave instructions to Noah to build an ark, God is telling us to not just wait until it is time to get out of dodge as it were. And while we don't know the exact wood used to make the ark, we know that is was able to create an ark more than able to survive the judgment coming. And it was sealed to make it even resistant to the constant waves that would batter it for the 150 days it floated on the surface of the flood waters. If we are to be ark builders today, we must have a faith that is sturdy and durable, able to remain strong under even the harshest tests that a harsh environment of sinful and fallen man will put on it. And it must be a visible ark so that others can know it is there if they are so inclined to take advantage of it. It must also be available when the time comes so the door needs to be open for all to even look around inside. People need to have a choice so the ark needs to be promoted even where people appear to be rejecting it the most. But the question then is, how do we build an ark today?

## **We Are Living Testaments**

*[No] you yourselves are our letter of recommendation (our credentials), written in your hearts, to be known (perceived, recognized) and read by everybody.*

*3 You show and make obvious that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, not written with ink but with [the] Spirit of [the] living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts. (2 Cor 3:2-3, AMPC)*

So what ark are we building? Paul the Apostle told his Corinthian believers that their lives are an example of their ministry just as valid as any written letter or business card. Which means how we live is a crucial part of God's plan to touch a world that is distracted and deceived by the lust of their eyes, the lust of their flesh and the cares of their world. The ark God is building is you and how you live out your life for all to see. Does that put pressure on you? You betcha. But like the ark Noah built, the materials God provides are durable like the gopher wood and coated in spiritual pitch that can't be penetrated by the waters of sin. You are perfectly crafted and built up with the help of Holy Spirit just as much and Noah and his sons were anointed for their job and even like the artisans who were tasked with building the Ark of the Covenant (see **Exodus 31:2-4**). Are we perfect? No, but we are saved by grace and are examples of people who when they fall short are forgiven and given the chance to get back in the race. I like how the author of the book of **Hebrews** puts it:

*Since we have such a huge crowd of men of faith watching us from the grandstands, let us strip off anything that slows us down or holds us back, and especially those sins that wrap themselves so tightly around our feet and trip us up; and let us run with patience the particular race that God has set before us.*

*2 Keep your eyes on Jesus, our leader and instructor. He was willing to die a shameful death on the cross because of the joy he knew would be his afterwards; and now he sits in the place of honor by the throne of God. (Heb 12:1-2, TLB)*

Just like Noah when faced with constant criticism and the pressure of getting the ark done in time, we should live our lives knowing that our example is also our biggest supporter and tells us that what He started He will complete:

*And I am sure that God who began the good work within you will keep right on helping you grow in his grace until his task within you is finally finished on that day when Jesus Christ returns.*

**(Phil 1:6, TLB)**

God is building an ark in these last days, and He will surely complete it.