

The Bible Guys

of Yesterday and Today

August 2009

175

*Neither do I
condemn thee...*



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The People of Truth
A Holy Nation

Know Your Enemy

By David M. McNabb

Two things are vital to winning any type of competition. First, you need a strategy: a game plan. You need a good understanding of the goal, and some idea of the direction you are going, and which plays you are going to make to achieve that goal. In team competition, it is important that all members of the team understand the goal, and their individual function that, when combined with the efforts of their teammates, will ensure victory.

Second, you need to know your opponent. To develop a strategy against your foe, it helps to know their tactics. What type of plays do they typically run? What are their strengths and weaknesses? Do they give some sort of indication of what they are planning when they execute their plans?

These two things are important whether you are discussing war, football, chess, poker, track, auto racing, or any other competitive activity. In cards, one sometimes "tips their hand." This means that they hold their cards in such a way that someone else has an opportunity to view what they are holding. The opponent now has a distinct advantage, because he knows not only his own cards, but those of his rival. This mistake could end up costing the hand.

Since both of these elements are key, you need to do everything in your power to keep your opponent ignorant. The less they know of your strategies, strengths and weaknesses, the more of an advantage you have. The only time that it is irrelevant for your opponent to know your tactics is when you are so totally dominant that with or without the added information, there is no possible way that your maneuvers can be contained.

Of course, every human finds himself on the field of a great conflict. It is not a battle of flesh, or a competition for some monetary prize, but a competition for the souls of mankind. There are two sides: the family of God, and the family of Satan. (The word Satan means adversary.) Every one of us is on one of these two sides. There are no neutral parties. There is no de-militarized zone.

If we have repented of our sins, and confessed the Lord Jesus, believing with our hearts, we move to the Lord's side. We become soldiers in the army of the Lord. Through the Word of God, He equips us with those things which we need to engage the enemy and emerge victorious.

The two keys to victory are most certainly found in God's Word. God has a plan: a clear strategy. Paul said that he was "a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness; In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began; But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me according to the commandment of God our Saviour" (Titus 1:1-3).

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The work that God makes

By C. Elden McNabb

“He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that GOD maketh from the beginning to the end” (Eccl. 3:11).

GOD created Adam and Eve and began filling the earth with mankind. GOD gave them dominion over the whole earth. But they disobeyed Him, and lost their immortality, and GOD exiled them from the beautiful garden which He had given them, but He promised them a “seed” which would rectify all of the problems which that sin would cause.

But that was not the beginning, for “In the beginning GOD created the heaven and the earth.” Neither was that the beginning. The real beginning was thousands of years before, when the routine of heaven was disrupted by the rebellion of the great angel Lucifer: the Anointed Cherub that covers the throne of GOD (Ezek. 28:1-19). He began a revolt which ended in a war which took the lives of a third of the angels of heaven. He fell to Earth and “made the fruitful place a wilderness” (Isa. 14:12-17).

The beginning in Genesis 1:1 was the beginning of the repair of all that damage. There was much more to it than simply replacing the angels that fell. He had to do it in such a way that the angels which did not fall would be able to understand that the punishment which GOD employed was justified. So GOD left Satan at liberty to work his wickedness among mankind. Satan began with the lie about the fruit, and has unceasingly corrupted GOD’s creation. Now the end of the Grace Age is upon us; the marriage of the Lamb is at hand, and Satan is angry, and is launching a great campaign to stop it.

It came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, GOD saw that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. So GOD sent a

flood and destroyed all but eight of them.

As men began to multiply upon the earth once more their sins increased also. So, about three hundred and fifty years after the flood, **about two thousand years after the creation of mankind,** GOD found Abraham, a man of faith on whom he could depend, and chose him to be the father of His people. **Thus began the second 2,000-year period of mankind upon the earth.**

By that time the descendants of Noah had become very idolatrous. Even the descendants of Shem had begun to fall into that idolatrous lifestyle (Gen. 31:17-35). GOD saw it, and called Abraham out from among them. GOD gave them covenants and promises, *including the promise of a special son.* He promised them that they would ultimately be given the land of Canaan upon which they stood. He told them how they would first go down into Egypt and that they would come out again, a great people, and inherit the promises.

Two hundred and fifteen years later, Jacob went down into Egypt with his family, a mere 70 persons. Another two hundred and fifteen years after that, they left Egypt with a standing army of 600,000 warriors (Exodus 1:17). The very day when the time of the promise was fulfilled, GOD led them out of Egypt with this testimony, “A Syrian ready to perish was my father and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous” (Deut. 26:5).

When GOD brought them out of Egypt, He took them directly to Mount Sinai, and entered into a covenant with them, the equivalent of the marriage covenant between a man and a woman (Ex. 34:10, 28; Rom. 7:2-7). They had hardly made that vow before they demonstrated their lack of faith in their new husband, refusing to obey Him and enter Canaan and possess it. They broke that covenant again and again, and, at least once, GOD “divorced” them, and then offered to take them unto Himself again (Jer. 3:6-15). Therefore, about 950 years after they came out of Egypt, about 600 B.C., Israel was

swept away by the kings of Assyria. Only the Kingdom of Judah remained. About 496 B.C., the kingdom of Judah was taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, and there was no sovereign state of Israel again until A.D. 1948.

During the next seven years after the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, Peter “confirmed the New Covenant with many” (Dan. 9:27), and finished building the Church of GOD. **Then he and The Twelve ordained “seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom,”** and set them over the business of the Church, in the fulfillment of Proverbs 9:1-2, and GOD put His glory upon them (Rom. 2:6-11). “And the Word of GOD increased” (Acts 6:1-7).

Shortly after that, Jesus returned to earth briefly and was seen of Peter (Simeon), then of The Twelve: after that he was seen of above five hundred of the ministers at once (1Ki. 9:1-2, 23; 1 Chron. 4:42). After that, He was seen of James (His brother); then of all the apostles. “And last of all,” Paul said, “He was seen of me also” (1 Cor. 15:1-8; 9:1). Jesus finished His visit, appointing Saul (Paul) to establish the work of taking the Gospel of Redemption to the Gentiles. That he might be GOD’s “salvation to the end of the earth” (Isa. 49:6).

The majority of the descendants of Abraham failed to grasp the reality of their visitation by Jesus Christ. And all but that remnant, in Romans 9:27-28 and 11:1-8, perished. **Thus began the third and last 2000-year period** of the rulership of the sons of Adam upon the earth.

It took only about 350 years for the leaders of the Gentile Christians to adopt much of the ancient idolatry which the sons of Ham, the son of Noah had developed those many years before. The process had actually begun shortly after the death of Paul (Acts 20:29), and during the administration of Jude (Jude 1:3-13). By the fifth century A.D., the worship of Cush: the father, Nimrod: the son, and Semiramis (Rhea): the mother of the gods, had become venerated by the powerful Church of Rome.

The larger numbers of Christianity were taught, and controlled by the prelates of Rome for a thousand years or more. But when the printing press was invented, in the fifteenth century it soon became instrumental in the teaching and learning process of the truth of the Holy Scriptures, and the power of Rome began to gradually wane. However, those who left the canopy of the Roman Church often did as Jacob's wife Rachel did when they left the house of Laban. She grabbed her father's gods and hid them in the "stuff," and took them with her. Even so the Protestants of the world carried much of Catholicism with them these hundreds of years.

In recent years, the zeal of the Lord has almost vanished from "the kingdom of heaven." As it is written, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold" (Matt. 24:12-14). GOD has again demonstrated "to the world, and to angels, and to men" that the wickedness of the world will contaminate all of the people of the world, even those who believe in Jesus Christ and are born again, as long as Satan is free to influence them.

The Bible was placed in the hands of the general public, and together with the rapid disbursement of multitudes out of Europe to a continent unaffected by the religions of the world, created a great opportunity for "righteousness and true holiness" to take root, and spring up, and flower, in preparation for the coming of the Bridegroom.

We have seen Christian groups of all kinds develop in the world. They have manifested well the natural diversity of the children of the great GOD. Some diversity is needed, as is revealed by the fact that the Bible calls for an "Election: the Church, the Bride the Lamb's Wife," and the bride's maids, and the guests at the "Marriage of the Lamb."

The development of the "kingdom of heaven" from the late 1800s until today has been phenomenal. A revival of the "Holiness Movement" began in North Carolina, in 1886, followed by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in that same area,

in 1896. The transformation of Christianity was as much as, or more than, the "Reformation" had been in the 16th and 17th centuries. Great revivals swept the U.S.A., and around the world. However, the last sixty years has witnessed almost the entire "kingdom of heaven" fulfilling Matthew 25:1-13. The kingdom of heaven has gone to sleep, and the light of the gospel has become very dim. And *now, midnight has come, and the cry is being made, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him."*

Please listen carefully to that quote from Matthew 25:1-13. That passage clearly, and emphatically states that when the people of the Lord begin to think that the time of the coming of the Lord Jesus is near, He will be a little later than they expected, and they will become spiritually sleepy, and forget about it.

That began to happen at about the end of WWII, in 1945. By 1952, when I finished high school, a large percentage of ministers were preaching that Jesus would return at about A.D. 2000. In that 48-year period, Christianity, all over the world, became more and more unconcerned about the coming of our Lord. It was actually strange to listen to the silence that gathered as the year 2000 approached. If there was any expectation concerning the Lord coming at that time, it was clouded by the "Y2K fury" of the moment.

A few weeks after that turn of the millennium was behind us, I was at a minister's prayer breakfast, in northwestern Massachusetts. During that meeting, there was extensive discussion about the plans "we should be making" about the thrust of our Gospel work for the next hundred years. I had known since 1996 that the Lord would come by 2012, so I asked them if maybe we should just plan for the next 12 years. I got some smiles and chuckles. By March, 2006, I realized that Jesus would actually come near the time of the Autumnal Equinox in 2010.

Nine of those 12 years have gone by, and a about a year ago we were informed that the Stock Market had just experienced a serious collapse. Then, in mid-September, President

George Bush made a revealing statement which he did not explain, in which He said, "I need this \$750 Billion" to accomplish what I want to do in the next two years. I believe that he was talking about the establishment of the One-World-Government which has been the plan since the United States established the United Nations in 1945. You can learn what that event will mean for the world, and for you, by reading Revelation 13:1-17.

The only way to avoid all of the agony and darkness of that terrible time is to believe Jesus' words in Matthew 24:37-39, and find the messenger of the Lord (Mal. 3:1-6). "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, *marrying and giving in marriage* [they were intermarrying with the descendants of Cain] until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; *so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be.*"

Paul said, "By faith Noah, being warned of GOD of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Heb. 11:7).

And Peter said, "GOD ... spared not the old world, but saved *Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness*, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly" (2 Peter 2:4-5). He boldly foretold that the forerunner of Jesus, this time, will be a man with seven men like those who Peter and the apostles ordained in Acts 6.

The narrative of the epic of Noah is a direct prophecy of the time of our preparation for the coming of Jesus, and "our gathering together unto Him" (2 Thess. 2:1). In Hebrews 10:1, Paul said that these things are "a shadow of good things to come." They are a prophecy of the final days of the Grace age, and of the final preparation for the coming of the Bridegroom and the Marriage of the Lamb. We are already beginning to see the fulfillment of those days. Very soon "the enemy shall come in

like a flood” (Isaiah 59:19), and GOD is preparing to “raise up a standard against him”: a holy nation in which “the Son of David” shall sit upon “the Throne of David,” in “The Tabernacle of David,” to rule the world for 1,000 years (Isa. 9:6-7; Isa. 16:1-5).

From the death of Abel, GOD has tried to keep His people from marrying unbelievers, and He sent the flood because the descendants of Seth had done that very thing. GOD’s children are still marrying unbelievers, and the effect, on whatever the organization, is always negative. The free movement of the Holy Spirit is hindered, and the spirituality and knowledgeability of the entire Church diminishes. Yes, GOD is still very unhappy with it.

When the time of the flood drew near, GOD found a man He could depend on to do the necessary work, and to teach that little remnant the ways and the will of GOD. GOD warned Noah of the coming calamity, and just before the flood came, GOD told him to get his wife, and his sons and their wives, and every species of the animals into the ark, *and He told him when it would begin to rain*. Even so, GOD shall fulfill this allegorical prophecy by raising up a man to direct the preparations for the return of Jesus. Then, at the critical point, Jesus will tell that prophet when to go in to the wedding, *before the door is shut, and the enemy shall come in like a flood*.

The time for preaching the Gospel of redemption is almost over. Remember that when the Bridegroom comes, He will no longer be sitting at the right hand of the Father, pleading our case. He is coming to unite with His bride and to begin to take control of the whole world, “King of Kings.”

We now anxiously await the gathering together of the Lord’s faithful, in the unity of the faith. GOD is ready, and we are here today, urging all of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, to assemble together, and search the Holy Scriptures until we can find “the Unity of The Faith.” It may be that we can go in to the Wedding together, the Lamb, and the Bride the Lamb’s wife, and the guests (Eph. 4:8-16). The Lord GOD Almighty is good, and worthy of all praise. 

Know Your Enemy

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The plan was made before the foundation of the world. God has a clear purpose for the heavens and earth, and for all that is in them. Angel, man and beast are all performing their duties and executing God’s plan as He has ordained. There is nothing in the Word of God that shall not be accomplished. Likewise, there is nothing done that He has not foreseen and declared aforesaid.

The heavens suffered loss with the rebellion of Satan and those angels which followed him. God worked out His plan to seek and save that which was lost, and created the worlds, setting in motion the execution of His plan. With a clear plan, purposefully laid out in His word, and with ongoing instruction – or coaching – the Lord’s team can hit the field with confidence.

The enemy, too, has a plan. His goal is to overthrow the Sovereign God, and usurp the throne. His desire is to subvert God’s will, to divide God’s people, to steal, kill and destroy, all in an effort of achieving his goal. His first coup attempt in heaven failed, and he has been plotting his return since his exile.

The battle on Earth began when Satan orchestrated man’s rebellion against God. God tipped His hand, and made the enemy aware of His plan. He said unto the serpent, “Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: ***And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel***” (Gen. 3:14-15). God promised that one born of a woman would be the champion of mankind’s salvation. God tipped His hand, and Satan was peeking.

Satan, thinking that he had acquired some secret information, hatched a plan to thwart God’s plan. Satan was determined to destroy or corrupt anyone with any potential. He attacked the patriarchs, the

judges, the kings, and the prophets. If he could not get them to fall by way of temptation, he would incite riots and have them murdered. The problem was, however, that God had specifically told Him his plan. It was not some slip of secret information, but rather a deliberate act: an essential part of God’s strategy. Ultimately, Satan’s attempts to destroy the champions of God led to his greatest defeat. Because he did not understand fully God’s redemption plan, he attempted to destroy each of God’s servants. Playing into God’s plan, Satan sent Jesus of Nazareth to the cross, spilling the blood that provided for the redemption of the very souls he had set out to destroy. In an attempt to foil God’s plan, he had instead fallen prey to it, for he can do nothing against the truth, but for it.

Before Jesus came, another exemplary man – considered by Satan to potentially be the prophesied Savior which was for to come – was Job. God chided Satan with regard to this righteous man. He said, “Hast thou considered my servant Job, that *there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?*” You can almost hear him suggest, “Is this the one I said would bruise your head?”

Apparently, Satan had had his eye on Job for quite a while, and ***had*** considered Job as a potential champion. He responded to God, saying, “Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face” (Job 1:9-11).

God allowed Satan an opportunity to attack all that pertained to Job, but not Job’s body or life. Job lost his children, and all of his possessions, but maintained his integrity and faith in the Lord.

Satan returned to the Lord, and the Lord was quick to point out the victory which Job had gotten over the enemy’s initial attack. It was at this point that Satan tipped ***his*** hand, and revealed what he feels is his ultimate

weapon: his weapon of mass destruction. He said, “Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face” (Job 2:4-5).

You see, Satan knows humans. He knows what makes us tick, and what buttons to push. This is vital information which he uses to his own advantage in this war for souls. In his encounter with God, the devil revealed his tactics, tipping his hand to us. He showed us that when all else fails, he will call upon his ultimate weapon: control of people’s health.

He knows that people will do anything they can to avoid bodily injury or death, and that if he can obtain the authority over people’s well-being, if he can have authority over their health, the people will surrender to his wishes entirely.

Today, there are forces trying separately to secure the control of the system of health care. First, they attempt to convince everyone that they cannot live without the services of the medical professionals, then they exercise control over the access to them. This diabolical plan is the method being used to achieve the goal of total human subjugation, knowing that they will do anything to survive.

However, the grace of God allows us to stand as Job, and retain our integrity in spite of the threat of harm – or worse.

Mandatory government health care is not a modern invention. In the book of Daniel, we read about the 3-year preparation for the wise men that would stand before the king. For those years, they would get their daily portion of the king’s meat and wine. It was required that they consumed their portion, but Daniel and his companions refused to be defiled. The prince of the eunuchs feared for his life, because if these men did not eat, and became unhealthy as a result, his own life would be in jeopardy. They must eat. So Daniel asked for the prince of the eunuchs to indulge him, and give them vegetables to eat and water to drink for ten days, after which, he could decide what they should do.

After ten days, Daniel and his companions appeared healthier on the diet of vegetables and water than did the others who ate the provisions from the kings table.

Are we going to compromise our principles, and yield our bodies to the control of the state, or are we going to rely on the Lord? Solomon said, “Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones” (Prov. 3:7-8).

But, behold! The days of Jeremiah’s prophecy are upon us. “Why do we sit still? assemble yourselves, and let us enter into the defenced cities, and let us be silent there: for the Lord our God hath put us to silence, and given us water of gall to drink, because we have sinned against the Lord. *We looked for peace, but no good came; and for a time of health, and behold trouble!*” (Jer. 8:14-15).

As the webs of our adversary are woven around us, let us seek to put the hope of our health in the name of the Lord. May we ever remember the example of Daniel, and of the founding fathers of the United States, who, with “a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence,” stood for righteous principles against seemingly insurmountable odds, and, finding grace in God’s eyes, were delivered by His mighty hand and stretched-out arm. Oh, that we might be partakers of that same grace, and love the Lord with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind, and with all our strength, that we might live.

Let us declare with David, “Preserve me, O God: for in thee do I put my trust;” “In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness” (Psa. 16:1; Psa. 31:1). Amen. 

Neither do I condemn thee

By Joel McNabb

One morning Jesus went to the temple, and a crowd of people came to him. As He taught them, the scribes and Pharisees brought a woman taken in the act of adultery before

Jesus, wanting to try him to see if he would adhere to the law of Moses. They said, “Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?” (John 8:5). These sly old foxes (not knowing that he was the Son of God: the word of God made flesh) thought that they had the best of Jesus. As they pushed the matter, Jesus, paying them no attention, bent down and began to write with his finger on the ground. The scribes and Pharisees felt they were being ignored, so they continued to press Him about how He would deal with this woman. When Jesus had finished writing, he rose up and said, “He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.” Then he stooped down and wrote on the ground the second time. While this may seem like a simple thing, I see it as one of the greatest things that Jesus did. John did not tell us what Jesus wrote, and I have asked believers the question, “What did He write?” I have heard several different answers, but no one could really say.

As He wrote the second time and they heard what He had said, the words convicted their conscience, and they all left one by one, from the oldest to the last. Jesus stood up and saw only the woman in front of Him. He asked her who was left to condemn her. She replied, “No man, Lord.” Then Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.” **Herein is the key to knowing what Jesus wrote on the ground.** He told those that were standing there ready to kill this woman in a heartbeat, that only if anyone had not sinned, could they be able to carry out the sentence for that crime. John tells us in 1 John 3:4, “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” So, what did He write on the ground? God gave Moses the Law to show us what sin was. On Mount Sinai God wrote the law with His finger on tables of stone and delivered them to Moses. When Moses came down from the mount and saw the children of Israel in the sin of idolatry, in his zeal for God and the Law that God had just given him, he cast the tables of stone to the ground, and it had to be

written again by the finger of God. **So I submit to you that Jesus wrote the Ten Commandments with his finger in direct fulfillment of this prophecy** (John 8: 1-11; Ex. 31:18; 1 John 3:4; Deut. 9:18).

Jesus here shows the great love and compassion for which He was sent into the world. Even the Scribes and Pharisees knew that they were not without sin, though they were the ones who kept of the law. If you are a believer today, I am sure that at least once in your life you have heard John 3:16. The following verse tells us that God did not send His son into the world to condemn it; but to save it through Him. There are many out there that have been turned off to God, Jesus, and church because they hear all the “thou shalt” and “thou shall not.” The burden and condemnation that some Christians place on those that are living in sin is a far cry from why Jesus came to earth. If the Law of Moses could have made those that were given it perfect, then God would not have needed to send His Son (Heb.7:19). Why is it today that so many different denominations and Christians believe that if you do not teach and believe like they do, you are going to hell? Yes, strait is the gate to life, and wide is the gate and broad the way to destruction, and so many today are on that road with no hope (Mt. 7:13-14). What most Christians fail to see is that we are not in the Day of Judgment yet, but they will still judge and condemn. Did not Jesus say, “Judge not, that ye be not judged” (Mt. 7:1). We see Jesus telling the woman caught in adultery “go and sin no more”, not “my sentence is.” Jesus did not even have to explain what he wrote on the ground. The word spoke for itself. Our job as preachers and believers is to plant the seed and to warn the sinners with the word of God; and let them hear or not hear. “Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus” (Col. 1:28). “He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (Jn. 3:18).

Some believers today tell me that it is too difficult to living a holy life. I tell them to just say no: be strong and resist the devil, and he will flee from you. The enemy is only out there to steal, and to kill, and destroy what God has given. When you feel weak and ready to give up, remember that, in reality, the way of sin is the hard way. We see it every day, with the things that please the flesh so easily accessible, but only bringing sorrow.

“If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? And if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?” (Jer. 12:5) Simply put, if you say it is hard to be a believer when there is no pressure to try to keep us from serving the Lord, what will you do when it is not so easy? If you have difficulty serving God in the land where we are free to worship the god of our choice and the government does not keep you from it, what will you do when they begin to tell you where, when and whom you can worship? Will you be as the stony ground in the parable of the sower, hearing the word of God and receiving it with joy, yet not having root in yourself, and when tribulation or persecution comes you are plucked up and go back to your old ways (Mt. 13:20-21)?

Those who do not truly hear and heed the word of God condemn themselves. David said, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Ps.119:11). Being a true believer is a work. Jesus said, “Take my yoke upon you and learn of me.” How many believers have a Bible and really use it and apply it to their lives, or read the Bible more than once a week? Of course it is hard if you do not know what you are doing, and have never read the instruction manual. Have you ever been given a job that you have never done before? The task before you may seem impossible, but with instructions, and especially with illustrations, the job is more easily accomplished. That is what God’s word is: illustrated instructions in righteousness, so that we will not be caught off

guard or be found lacking in the way of life.

Jesus told us that His coming would be as the days of Noah. We think Jesus was just saying that life will be going on as usual, and one day He will come back. But there is more to the story on Noah than having our same old, same old life going on as usual. Noah was warned of God that there was a flood coming and to get ready for the flood by building an ark that would save all who would choose to hear the preaching of Noah. According to most, we are supposed to miss it and be caught up to meet the Lord, leaving those left behind wondering what has just happened; that all we have to do is believe in Jesus Christ, and we will be saved from all that will come. It seems very simple. There is no need to watch and wait.

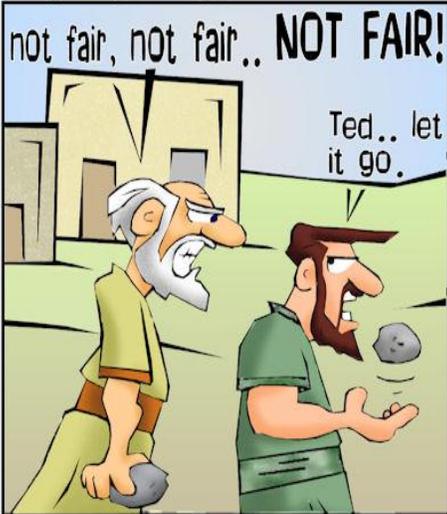
Noah was not just a carpenter, boat builder, or a zoo keeper, but a “preacher of righteousness.” To those that saw what Noah was doing and heard what he had to say, he looked very foolish, and they chose not to believe what he was saying. After all, no one had ever seen a flood, or even rain before. But Noah believed it was going to rain, and a flood was coming, because God said it. “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith” (Heb.11:7). It did not matter to Noah if it had never rained before or that those around him mocked. God said the rain was coming and a flood would destroy all that were not in the ark. He believed and will receive a crown of righteousness for his faith. Those who were disobedient to the message and refused to hear the word of God were stuck outside the door, crying for mercy.

Many years later, after His crucifixion, Jesus went to hell and preached to those that were sometime disobedient in the days of Noah, while the ark was being built, showing that they were not all wicked sinners, but many were merely disobedient children (1 Pet. 3:20).

Jesus came to earth the first time in mercy. He showed us the way to order His kingdom, and to establish it like God has planned, without condemnation. "And in mercy shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hasting righteousness" (Isa. 16:5). The word of God will convict the hearts of men and they will either hear the words of life, or they will not, and will suffer the consequences. If we are to be that kingdom, then we too must have mercy upon all. I, for one, have not seen the book of life, which will not even be opened until Jesus has reigned on the earth for a thousand years.

Jesus told Pilate that his kingdom was not of the this world, and that if it was, then would his servants fight. His kingdom is yet to be established; and if we do not have mercy that can be seen, we will never see that kingdom. This does not mean it will not come, only that we will not see it. At this moment in time, the call is still out for whosoever will to come and drink of the water of life freely, but that work is almost done. And with mercy, knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men as Noah did, assured that the flood is going to come on all those that are disobedient to

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



Casting the 'first stone' was like throwing out the first pitch at a baseball game... until Jesus new stoning guidelines sucked the fun out of good stoning for Ted and Fred. **John 8:1-11**

*The Harvest is the End
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God's word, believer and unbeliever alike. Paul said, "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (2 Cor. 5:11; Col. 1:28).

The world hates us. Worse still, the Christian world will hate us as well. The Jews of Jesus' day, and the Romans which took his life, are the example of what it will be like when Jesus comes the second time. The religious leaders of our day will be the same way; they will not receive the word of truth and will esteem it as foolishness. They have already made their own rules and regulations, just as the Jews in the Messiah's day made a law that any man who says he is the son of God must be put to death. Today's Christians do the same, who would dare say that God has branding

as a false prophet anyone shown them the times and the seasons of our Lord's return. They kill them with the words of their mouth, having no mercy. When Jesus leaves the throne of mercy, there will be no time for repentance. Every man will receive according to the works done in this flesh, whether good or evil. Many will say, "we have done all these works in your name", and the King will say, "Sorry, I never knew you."

For a sweet, merciful Saviour, these may seem hard words. I ask you today to have bowels of mercies as God has, and maybe you will obtain mercy and will not be condemned for unbelief. The Lord bless and keep you and lead you in the path of righteousness for His name's sake. Amen.

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