

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—vv. 39, 42.
  - 2. These conditions of evil living portray the perilous condition of man's living before the Lord's coming—Luke 17:26 (footnote 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 Pet. 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 Pet. 2:5; Gen. 6:22; 1 Pet. 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.

**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.*