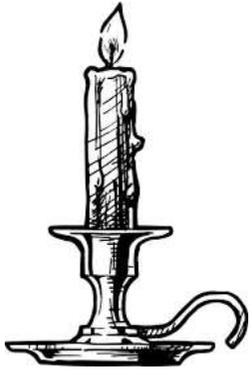


Wednesday, 3rd February 2021



THE CANDLESTICK

As the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be (Mt. 24:37)

Have you ever wondered what it must have been like for Noah? For the first six hundred years of his life, he knew nothing but dry land. He lived an ordinary existence until one day, the Lord came and spoke directly to him, telling him He was going to destroy the earth, and for Noah to be saved, to escape God's judgment, he had to build a sailing vessel.

God gave Noah the exact dimensions for the ark, and how it was to be constructed (Gen. 6:14-16). Any deviation from God's plan would have been disastrous, so, Noah began crafting the vessel as he was instructed. He began building it before his sons were born because it took him one hundred and twenty years to construct it ... and his children were not born until he was five hundred years old (Gen. 5:32), and the Flood came in his six hundredth year (Gen. 7:6).

At the commencement of those one hundred and twenty years before the Flood, Noah went and searched for the wood to build the ark ... not just *any* wood, but *gopher* wood, - good, solid timber! The ark was to be made of the best of the best and was to be about 440 feet long (about the length of sixteen buses), 72 feet wide, and 43 feet high. It was a large construction for one man to build ... but it would not have been likely to have taken him one hundred and twenty years. That's a long time to build a boat! Granted, it seems he was building it on his own ... but it is still a long time!

Among his other duties, he was 'a preacher of righteousness' (II Peter 2:5). He had only one message ... that God's judgment was coming upon the earth.

Now, 'not a lot' of people would have heeded him for he would have been seen as eccentric. After all, who would take so long building a boat, with such precision, in the middle of the countryside?! Also, the message he was preaching was in no way suitable for the lifestyle of the people among whom he lived. On the one hand, Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God (Gen. 6:9), while on the other hand, God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth (Gen. 6:12).

When the building of the ark was finally completed, and the last 'Gospel message' had been preached to the Godless people, the Lord said to Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation (Gen. 7:1) ... Also, take with you all the animals I instruct for in a week's time, said God, I'm going to open the heavens and make the rain pour upon the earth incessantly, - without a break, - for forty days and forty nights ... and everything which is not in the ark with you will perish! Noah, you have warned these people, and you have witnessed before them, and they refuse to listen and repent ... They had their opportunity, but wasted it, And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth (Gen. 7:10).

One week before it rained, Noah and his wife, Shem and his wife, Ham and his wife, Japheth and his wife all walked up the 'gangplank' and in through the only entrance (v.13), and when they were safely inside, *the Lord* shut them in. They were in the only safe place! And seven days later, the rain began, and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered ... And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man ... and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark (Gen. 7:17-19,21,23).

It was an absolute disaster when God judged the world in the days of Noah, but Noah and his family were saved ... What would it have been like for Noah and his family in the ark, with all those animals, for one hundred and fifty days?!! (Gen. 7:24)

In the darkness of the clouds, and the continuous rain, the sun would have been hidden from their view ... and yet, in preparation for when the sun *would* shine, God had already instructed Noah, A window shalt thou make to the ark (Gen. 6:16). ... Noah, it will be dark, and cloudy, and dismal ... but Noah, build that window in the ark, and keep looking up! Keep looking up for a day will come when the rains will stop. Yes, you will be in that boat with all those animals, and your family ... and 150 days might seem and feel like a long time 'shut in' and in 'lockdown'... but Noah, you have been saved from my wrath and judgment upon the unbelieving world ... and Noah, you need to keep looking up and out through that window.

What happened? ... When the rains eventually stopped, and the ark was 'bobbing' gently on the waters, Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made: And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth (Gen. 8:6,7). ... That was the purpose God had for that

window in the ark! When Noah was building the ark, it took an extra effort and skill for he had to carefully construct the window, and seal it, and strengthen it. ... He did not know *why* at the time, but God knew for it would serve His purpose of informing His servant all the dangers outside would soon be over.

After the raven, Noah sent out a dove (Gen. 8:8), but she returned because there was no place for her to make her nest, - there were no trees poking out of the water, - ... and so she came back through the window again, and into the safety of the ark, to Noah and his family, and all the rest of the animals. A week later, Noah sent the dove out again and this time she came back with an olive leaf in her beak (v.11). Another week later, he sent her out again, - through that window, - and she did not come back, and that was the last he saw of her (v.12)!

Through that window, Noah had seen and heard the ‘pounding’ of the rain against it, but it did not break nor crack because he had constructed it according to God’s design. If he had made a ‘little tweak here’ or a ‘little tweak there’, it would have let the water in and they all would have drowned. But Noah lived by God’s directions, and as he looked up and out through that window, he could see the rains starting to decrease, and he could see the clouds beginning to part, and the sun starting to shine again. ... Isn’t God good?! ... Through that window facing Heavenward, Noah and his family were looking for and awaiting the hope of a new earth.

In these present times, all we can see around us is disobedience and rebellion against God, much like the times of Noah. COVID-19 has not brought people any closer to God, for they continue to stubbornly flaunt and reject His mercy. And no less than the Lord Jesus warned, as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, 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 (Mt. 24:38,39).

That is the great and blessed hope we have, - the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ. ... And as we look through the window of God’s Word, we can make out the signs His return is fast approaching. And so, as Noah did, keep looking through the window and keep watching for our God has promised, unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall (Mal. 4:2).

What though the way be lonely, and dark the shadows fall,
I know where'er it leadeth, My Father planned it all.

The sun may shine tomorrow, the shadows break and flee,
'Twill be the way He chooses, my Father's plan for me.

I sing through shade and sunshine, I trust what e'er befall,
I sing, for I cannot be silent, My Father planned it all.

He guides my faltering footsteps along the weary way,
For well He knows the pathway will lead to endless day.

A day of light and gladness on which no shade will fall,
'Tis this that last awaits me, My Father planned it all.

“He knoweth the way that I take; when He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold” (Job 23:10)