



# PREPARING TO STAND

Number 57 — March, 2012

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“In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord.” SW 3-21-1905

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## DON'T BE DECEIVED

by Jim Buller

“Take heed that no one deceives you.” (Matthew 24:4.) This warning is the first thing Jesus says in response to His disciples questions about end-time events. His answer continues with what is known as the *Olivet Discourse* of chapters 24 and 25 of Matthew. And if we look for it, we will find that warnings about deception are a common theme throughout the prophecies and parables of these chapters.

For example, in Matthew 24:37 Jesus states, “But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.” Were the people in Noah’s time deceived? —Yes, they were! If they had not been deceived, they would have believed the message God gave Noah, and entered the ark. But as 1 Peter 3:20 tells us, only “eight souls, were saved” from the waters of the flood. Because of their deception, they probably said something similar to what Peter later describes the people in the end-times as saying. “Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.” (2 Peter 3:4.) Their deception blinded them, and they “did not know until the flood came and took them all away.” (Matthew 24:39.)

We find another warning in Proverbs 3:5-6 that is closely tied with Jesus’ warnings of deception in the *Olivet Discourse*. It says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths.” Rather than trusting the message God sent through Noah, the people before the flood relied on their own understanding. When we rely on our own understanding, Satan can easily get us to heed some other ‘voice’ —in the same way as he has been doing ever since he deceived Eve at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

James 1:22 adds to this by saying, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” If, rather than trusting and following Gods instructions, we respond to what we see happening around us according to own understanding, we can potentially even deceive ourselves!

In the last part of the *Olivet Discourse* we find four parables which describe people in the last days. In each of these parables, there is a group who deceives themselves by leaning on their own understand. They *think* they are doing ‘enough,’

but in the end they are rejected and cast out because what they did was not adequate. (See the parables of the Faithful/Unfaithful Servant, the Ten Virgins, the Talents, and the Sheep and the Goats, in Matthew 24:45-25:26.)

To further illustrate the potential of being deceived by leaning on our own understanding, let's suppose before the flood, there was an eccentric fellow who heard Noah's message, and thought, "You know, building a boat isn't such a bad idea! If there is a flood, I'll be safe in my boat. And if there isn't, I can make lots of money doing commerce on the high seas." So he starts building a boat.

If we were to take a quick glance at this possibility, it might just look like two crazies out building their boats, and most of the people back then probably just let it go at that. However, let's suppose that we were one of the few who recognized that there *was* some kind of crisis coming, and that *we* needed to do something to prepare. Would we join one of these two in their preparations? If so, which one? How could we tell the difference? Or would we maybe start build our own boat? How could we be sure we were not being deceived into making the wrong preparations, or deceived into thinking our preparations were adequate—but then end up not surviving the flood?

Hebrews 11:7 tell us, "By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark ..." Noah was preparing "by faith," and therefore Noah was the only one who made it through the flood and into the next world. So what does it mean to be preparing "by faith?"

Romans 10:17 tells us "faith" comes from hearing the word of God. But as we already noted from James 1:22, we must be "doers of the word, and not hearers only" or we deceive ourselves. Therefore, to be preparing "by faith," we must be *acting according to God's Word*.

God didn't just tell Noah *what* was going to happen and then leave it up to him to decide how to prepare, God also gave him detailed instructions regarding *how* he should prepare. Noah was building "by faith" because he was preparing according to these instructions. And because he had prepared according to God's instructions, unlike any of the other boat builders of his time, he alone was saved from the devastation of the flood. In the same way, if we are going to "endure to the end," and "be saved," (see Matthew 24:13), like Noah, we also must be preparing not only for *what* we have been "divinely warned" about, but also be making our preparations in *the way* God has told us to make them.

Jesus' *Sermon on the Mount*, (Matthew chapters five through seven), also contains warnings about deception. (Notice particularly Matthew 7:13-27.) This sermon concludes with one of these warnings in the familiar parable of the wise man who built his house on the rock. However, in spite of being well known, this parable contains a couple of frequently overlooked, but very important messages. The first, is that *a storm is coming*. If there were no storms, then there would be no need to build on the rock, (and Jesus probably would not have even given us this parable). It may have been a while since there has been a storm, but that is all the more reason to build on the rock! It would be very foolish indeed to conclude that because there hasn't been a storm for a long time it must not really be necessary to go the extra distance to get to the rock, and then spend the extra time and energy building on it—because a storm *is*

coming! The second often overlooked message in this parable is that the *only* ones who will survive the storm are those who have not only *listened to*, but also *acted according to* Jesus word.

Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall. Matthew 7:24-27

Today there are a lot of ‘crazies’ out there ‘building their boats!’ Both the internet and the media are full of people making preparations to survive various versions of The-End-Of-Life-As-We-Know-It. What about us? Are we going to lean on *our* own understanding and do what seems right to *us*? (See Proverbs 14:12.) Are we going to conclude like some have that all this preparation is just craziness. Are we, like many others, going to listen to ‘some other voice’ telling us how we should prepare? Or, are we going to “trust in the Lord,” seeking out and following *His* instructions?

If we are going to survive the storm, we need to answer two questions as we search the word for God’s instructions: (1) What have *we* been “divinely warned” about? And (2) *how* have we been told to prepare? May God’s answers become deeply settled inside us so that we will be able to correctly evaluate all the other ‘voices’ trying to find their way into our minds—including that ‘voice’ which comes from within our own hearts. May we also “be *doers of the word*, and not hearers only.”

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## 2 Peter 3:10-13

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

## John 6:27

Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.

## Matthew 6:33

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

## HYPOTHERMIA AND OVERHEATING

It is dangerous for the body's core temperature to either rise above or fall below normal. Due to age or physical condition this can happen even though the weather may not necessarily be too hot or too cold. Since both of these conditions can affect one's mental judgement, it is important to watch out not only for yourself, but also for those with you.

### Hypothermia

There are four general ways heat is lost from our bodies. Radiation, which is giving off heat to cooler surroundings; Convection, heat loss due to wind-chill; Conduction, losing heat by being in contact with something cold, such as the ground; and Evaporation, heat lost due to evaporating moisture. If more heat is being lost, from any combination of these, than the body is producing, it will lead to Hypothermia.

### Hypothermia Symptoms in order of increasing severity:

- Shivering
- Poor Coordination, Stumbling
- Intense Shivering
- Exhaustion, and Feeling of Deep Cold
- Thick Speech
- Memory Loss, Confusion, and Irrational Poor Judgement
- Decrease in Shivering followed by Ridged Muscles
- Bluish Puffy Skin
- Slow, Weak or Irregular Pulse
- Death

### Treatment of Hypothermia

The person who has hypothermia may not realize the danger they are in. So when things cool down, watch the people with you for symptoms. Even if they think they are OK. do something to reduce heat loss and/or warm them up if necessary. You can prevent further heat loss by removing wet clothing, adding extra layers of dry clothing or bedding, and getting the affected person into a shelter. Add Heat by huddling around the affected person, putting them in a warmed sleeping bag, and if they are conscious, give them warm liquids to drink.

### Heat Problems

In general, there are two problems associated with over heating:

**Heat Exhaustion** —caused by losing too much body fluid and/or electrolytes. The person usually feels very tired, their skin is pale and sweaty. Let them rest and cool off in a cool shady spot, and give them fluids and electrolytes, (salt).

**Heat Stroke** —the body's temperature getting too high. This is a much more serious condition, as Heat Stroke causes disorientation, irrationality, and eventually death, so

watch those with you for symptoms. The skin is usually hot, red and dry. Cool the person down as rapidly as possible. Watch them closely and seek medical help as Heat Stroke tends to throw off the body's heat regulating mechanisms.

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