

# PREPARING TO STAND

Number 74 — September/October, 2013

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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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## “JUST IN CASE” ???

by Jim Buller

A few years ago I was teaching a wilderness survival class at a youth summer camp. One afternoon, I was talking with another staff member, who, when not at camp worked for an Adventist organization that is at the fore-front of taking the Gospel to the world. If I remember right, he was at the camp teaching another class on a missions related subject.

In the course of our conversation, he made a comment to the effect that it was a good thing that I was teaching the kids wilderness survival just in case they ever got stuck out in wilds someday. I was dumbfounded. It was just a casual conversation, so I didn't want to go ballistic on him, and I tried hard not to show it on the outside, but inside I was screaming! “Brother, don't you believe the prophecies? You should know better! Is wilderness survival really something we should learn ‘just in case’?”

Unfortunately, it was one of those situations where you just don't know how to say what you really want to say—at least not in a tactful way. So I don't remember saying much at the time. But that conversation, has continued to bother me. And from my observations, I've realized that many other people, who probably consider themselves end-time Christians, feel essentially the same way about the subject of wilderness survival. Evidently they must not ever expect to actually *need* these skills and knowledge, but it's still something good to know ‘just in case.’

From time to time I have addressed this issue, but I haven't been fully satisfied with what was said. And it is only recently that I feel I have a ‘good,’ concise, nonthreatening response for when this attitude is encountered in a conversation again. So I thought I'd share these ideas with you.

When someone asked, “Hey Noah! Why are you building the ark?” would he have responded, “Oh, I thought it would be good to have one just in case there is a flood”? —Of course not! So how *would* he have answered this question? Let's look at Hebrews 11:7.

By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he

condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

He was building the ark because he had been “divinely warned.” *God* had told him there was going to be a flood, and to build an ark in preparation for it. God even told him exactly how he should build it. See Genesis 6:13-22. Notice also the following from, *The Signs of the Times*, February 27, 1879.

Noah did not hesitate to obey God. He urged no excuse, that the labor of building that ark was great and expensive. He believed God, and invested in the ark all that he possessed, while the wicked world scoffed and made themselves merry at the deluded old man.

Because of his faith in the divine warnings, Noah was willing to invest “all that he possessed,” including the major portion of his time and energy in preparing the ark. As a result, “He gave the world an example of believing just what God says.” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 95.) Noah took the divine warning seriously. Building the ark was *not* something he was doing ‘just in case.’ In fact it was what his life and his witness were all about.

We find a similar example in Matthew 7:24-27, in the parable of the wise man who built his house on the rock. This wise man was willing to spend the extra time and effort, and to go the extra distance to build on the rock because he believed there *would be a storm*. The foolish man evidently didn’t believe it was worth this extra effort, so he built on the sand. In the same way, the antediluvians must not have believed there was going to be a flood either, as they neither joined Noah in preparing the ark, nor got on it when the time came to do so. So what we do is evidence of what we believe. (See James 2:14-26.)

So, what have we been divinely warned about? Among other things, the prophecies describe a time when God’s faithful people will “flee to the mountains,” “dwelling in the most desolate and solitary places.” (Matthew 24:15-16, *Great Controversy* page 626.) Notice that it said we would be “dwelling” in the deepest wilderness we can get to —unlike the short-term situations with a tough-it-out-until-you-can-get-out approach portrayed in the survival shows on the media.

Brothers and Sisters, if we truly believe Jesus is coming *soon*, then we must also conclude that the events foretold in the prophecies will happen even *sooner*! Or, are we deceived like the unfaithful servant in Matthew 24:45-51, saying in our hearts, “My Lord delays His coming,” and not expecting these things to happen in our lifetimes?

A storm *is* coming! If we would “endure to the end” and be “saved,” (Matthew 24:13), like faithful Noah, we must be preparing both spiritually *and* physically. To be sure, what we do to prepare *must* be done according to God’s word, for there are many other voices out there telling us to lean on our own human understanding, and do otherwise. (See Proverbs 3:5-6.)

In the same way that the antediluvians needed Noah’s faithful witness, the world needs our witness today. Our preparations, or lack of preparations, for both country living and for surviving in the wilderness will be evidence of our faith. What we do and say will show whether or not we take our “divine warning” seriously. Therefore, these preparations should not be something we are doing, ‘just in case.’

Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. . . .  
Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of  
man cometh. Matthew 24:42-44.

God gives no one a message that it will be ten or twenty years before this earth's history shall close. If it were forty or one hundred years, the Lord would not authorize anyone to proclaim it. He would not give any living being an excuse for delaying the preparation for His appearing. He would have no one say, as did the unfaithful servant, "My Lord delayeth his coming," for this leads to reckless neglect of opportunities and privileges to prepare for that great day. Every soul who claims to be a servant of God is called to do His service as if every day might be the last. . . .

Let everyone to whom the Lord has given light from His Word be sure to make a right use of that light. Let all be guarded that they do not presume to feed the flock of God with food that is not appropriate for the time.

Talk of the speedy appearing of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. Put not off that day. God has given no one light to say, "My Lord delayeth his coming." Let the inquiry be made, Shall I stand at the right hand or at the left hand of the Judge at that day? . . .

It is essential that all shall know what atmosphere surrounds their own souls, whether they are in copartnership with the enemy of righteousness and unconsciously doing his work, or whether they are linked up with Christ, doing His work, and seeking to establish souls more firmly in the truth.

Satan would be pleased to have anyone and everyone become his allies to weaken the confidence believers have in one another, and to sow discord among those who profess to believe the truth. Satan can accomplish his purposes most successfully through professed friends of Christ who are not walking and working in Christ's lines. Those who in mind and heart are turning away from the Lord's special work for this time, those who do not cooperate with Him in establishing souls in the faith by leading them to heed His words of warning, are doing the work of the enemy of Christ. . . .

This is the day of the Lord's preparation. We have no time now to talk unbelief and to gossip, no time now to do the devil's work. . . . So long as the people of God are in this world they will have to meet conflict and trouble and deception, because many choose the attributes of Satan instead of the attributes of God.—Manuscript 32a, 1896 (Manuscript Releases, vol. 18, pp. 58-62).

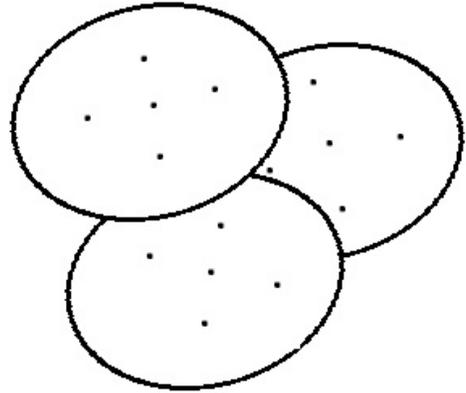
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## **HARDTACK**

Up through at least the mid to late 1800s 'hardtack' or 'hardtack biscuits' were a common food both on ocean voyages, and on the trail. It was used because it is nutritious, relatively easy to make, and if kept dry, it will keep almost indefinitely. There are many different recipes for hardtack, but, in it's simplest form, the one I've been using for years now is:

- About 2 cups / 500 ml Whole Wheat Flour (it's really not necessary to measure the amount)
- About ¼ to ½ teaspoon / ½ ml Salt (the salt can even be omitted if necessary)
- Enough Water to make a stiff dough

Preheat the oven to about 375E F. Mix the flour and salt in a mixing bowl, then add enough water to make a stiff dough. Spread some flour on a flat surface, and knead the dough a little, until it is smooth and not 'sticky.' (If the dough is 'sticky,' just add a little more flour while kneading it.) After kneading, roll out the dough to about ⅛ in / 2-3 mm thick. Then, with a biscuit cutter, or just use the top of a glass, cut out circles that are about 2½ in / 6-7 cm diameter. Place these circles of dough on a cookie sheet, and bake until they are golden brown —about 20 minutes. Remove from the oven, and if possible, place on a rack to cool. If you are wanting to preserve them for future use, put them in a sealed container as soon as they have cooled, as they will keep best if they are kept 'bone dry.' I have some hardtack that I've kept for several years now, and other than tasting a little 'old' they are still good.



As it's name implies, hardtack is quite hard —so don't just bite down on one! Break them in pieces, and chew them with your molars. This is one reason for making them on the 'thin side.' There are those who do make them thicker, soaking them in a hot drink or soup before eating them, but we haven't found this to soften them much.

Some people use white flour rather than whole wheat, but we prefer the healthy texture, nutrition, and taste of the whole grain flour. A nice variation would be to use equal parts of whole wheat flour, corn meal, and oatmeal for the flour mixture. Just about any other flour could also be used or mixed in as well. One of the best batches we've ever made was when we added some sunflower seed meal. Sweeteners can also be added. If you are planning to use them soon after baking, oil could be added to the recipe which would make them softer and more 'chewable,' but oil tends to decrease their 'shelf life.' They can also be cut into squares or rectangles rather than circles, and 'dimples' can be poked into them to keep them from puffing up while baking. So feel free to experiment with this basic recipe.

Hardtack is an excellent 'emergency food.' As long as it is kept dry, it won't spoil. It isn't easily crushed in a pack. And, because of it's hardness, it isn't something you should want to just pick up and snack on in a non-emergency. So, in theory it should still be there for a 'real emergency.' However, probably due to its wholesome goodness, we have found that we frequently end up eating it anyway! So, back to the kitchen, to make another batch of hardtack!