

PREPARING TO STAND

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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

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU ABSOLUTELY *KNEW* THAT YOU WOULD NOT HAVE TO GO THROUGH THE TIME OF TROUBLE?

by Jim Buller

What if you *knew* that you would not have to go through the end-times? What would you do? Suppose you found out that one of the prophets had mentioning you by name, and given the place and date of your birth, and also given your parents name, so there would be no question it was *you* that they were talking about, and then stated that you would not go through the Time of Trouble. Would you say, ‘Whew! I’m sure glad I don’t have to worry about that anymore! It’s such a relief that I don’t have to spend any of my time or money preparing.’ And then go on with your life as usual without giving much thought to the end-times? Oh yes, you would still consider yourself one of God’s people, and believe that we are living in important times. You would still be involved in evangelism, tell people that ‘Jesus is coming soon,’ and encourage them to ‘get ready to go to heaven.’ But you wouldn’t concern yourself about moving to the country, getting a garden set up, or learning wilderness survival. Is this how you would respond? Or would you still help other people prepare physically for the end-times, as well as helping them prepare spiritually?

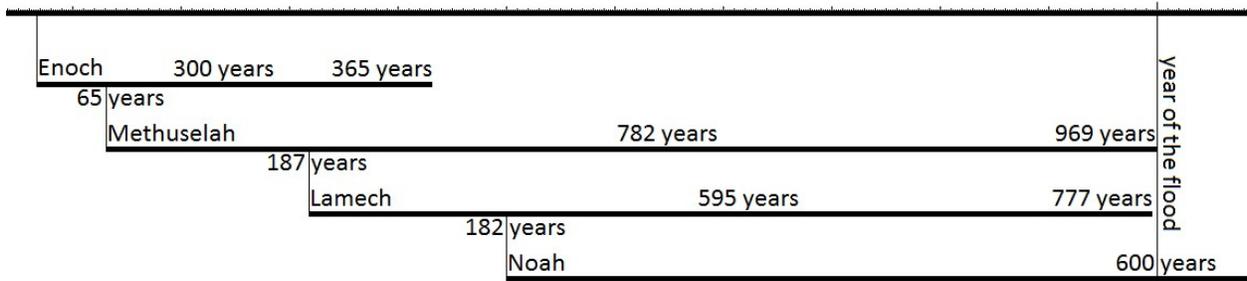
Maybe the more important question though, is to ask, What would God want you to do if this was your case? Fortunately, we have a Biblical example of exactly just such a situation. We find it among the genealogies in Genesis.

Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begot Methuselah. After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him. (Genesis 5:21-24.)

Remember, Jude 14 states that Enoch “prophesied.” So Enoch was a prophet. As such, it is interesting that He named his first-born ‘Methuselah.’ Roughly translated, this name essentially means ‘when he dies, it will come.’

Methuselah lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, and begot Lamech. After he begot Lamech, Methuselah lived seven hundred and eighty-two years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred and sixty-nine years; and he died. Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and had a son. And he called his name Noah, saying, “This *one* will comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord has cursed.” After he begot Noah, Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Lamech were seven hundred and seventy-seven years; and he died. (Genesis 5:28-31.)

So Enoch was Noah’s great-grandfather, and Methuselah was his grandfather. If you do the math in these verses, and put them together with Genesis 7:6 which states, “Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters were on the earth,” you will find that Methuselah died the same year the flood came. So Enoch’s prophecy was fulfilled exactly.



Methuselah *knew* he would not have to deal with the ‘end of the world’ in his day. So what did he do? Did he say, ‘Whew! I’m sure glad I don’t have to worry about that!’ and just go on with his life? The following quotation from Patriarchs and Prophets, page 92 tells us about Methuselah. Notice what he did.

Amid the prevailing corruption, Methuselah, Noah, and many others labored to keep alive the knowledge of the true God and to stay the tide of moral evil. A hundred and twenty years before the Flood, the Lord by a holy angel declared to Noah His purpose, and directed him to build an ark. While building the ark he was to preach that God would bring a flood of water upon the earth to destroy the wicked. Those who would believe the message, and would prepare for that event by repentance and reformation, should find pardon and be saved. Enoch had repeated to his children what God had shown him in regard to the Flood, and Methuselah and his sons, who lived to hear the preaching of Noah, assisted in building the ark.

Even though he *knew* he would not have to deal with the flood, rather than just go about his own life, Methuselah “labored to keep alive the knowledge of the true God and to stay the tide of moral evil.” *And*, he “assisted in building the ark” —which was a lot of hard work! (“The labor of building that ark was great and expensive.” *The Signs of*

the Times, February 27, 1879.) Why? . . . Why even bother? *He* wasn't going to have to deal with it!

John 15:1-8 has some interesting symbolism —“branches” on a “vine” that bear “much fruit,” Taking a closer look at these symbols, we find that “fruit” is something a plant does, not for itself, but for others. What’s more, in verse 5, Jesus tells us, “He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit.” So the result of us being connected to Jesus will be that we will do “much” for others. God’s way of doing things is all about living to bless and benefit others. On the other hand Satan’s way is all about just worrying about ourselves and selfishly seeking our own agenda. (See Isaiah 14:12-14, Genesis 3:5, Isaiah 53:6.) When Jesus came to die for us, He gave the ultimate example of the principle that is the basis for everything God does —to exist, not for self, but for the benefit of others.

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross. (Philippians 2:5-8.)

Therefore, since Methuselah was a godly person, rather than just selfishly living his own life, he would have lived to benefit others. He also would have wanted to be a part of what God, and God’s people were doing at that point in history. In addition to ‘spreading the Word,’ there was an ark that needed to be built. It makes sense then that he would have helped his grandson build it.

Jesus pointed out that there is a definite parallel between what happened in Noah’s time and what is happening today. “But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.” (Matthew 24:37.) There is another world to be warned, (see Matthew 24:14), and another ‘ark of safety’ that needs to be built. In preparation for the Mark of the Beast issue when those who remain loyal to God will not be able to “buy or sell,” we have been counseled to move out of “the cities, into the country, where [we] can raise [our] own provisions.” (See Revelation 13:16-17, and *Country Living*, pages 9-10.) As the Time of Trouble progresses, and conditions worsen, there will be a decree that, “as many as would not worship the image of the beast [should] be killed.” In response, God’s people will flee to the “the most desolate and solitary places.” (See Revelation 13:15, Matthew 24:15-16, 21, Revelation 12:14, and *Great Controversy* page 626.) We are going to need to know how to grow our own food, heat and cook with wood, purify our own water, and build simple shelters. We will also need to know how to survive in the wilderness for when that time comes. But unfortunately, this knowledge and these skills are sadly lacking among God’s people. Brothers and sisters, rather than laying up for ourselves “treasures on earth,” we have a *work* to do! (Matthew 6:19-21.) In addition to warning the world, there *is* another ‘ark’ to build!

But, you may be tempted to say, 'I'm fairly old. At my age, I will probably die before all this happens, so I really don't think I need to worry about preparing for the end-times.' You might even quote Revelation 14:13, and *Last Day Events*, page 255.

Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed *are* the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."

"Many will be laid away to sleep before the fiery ordeal of the time of trouble shall come upon our world." (Also on *The Faith I Live By*, page 171, and *Counsels on Health*, page 375.)

But, what kind of example will be given by following this course? Who will be helped by taking this attitude and focusing on comfortably 'living out the rest of your days?' Isn't this selfish focus just the opposite of God's principle of existing to benefit others? Let's follow the example of Jesus and Methuselah instead. Let's join with other godly people in taking the gospel to the world *and* in preparing for the end-times.

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. (Hebrews 11:7.)

While Noah was giving his warning message to the world, his works testified of his sincerity. It was thus that his faith was perfected and made evident. He gave the world an example of believing just what God says. All that he possessed, he invested in the ark. ... Every blow struck upon the ark was a witness to the people. (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 95.)

There are many who are 'playing on jet skis' when they should be 'building an ark.' Not that there is anything wrong with jet skis, or playing around on them, but when you need an ark, a jet ski simply won't do.
