

Sooke Baptist Church

Sunday, August 8, 2021

9:30 am, In-person

also on Facebook and YouTube

Unanticipated
Revelation 16:15



03:00

Coffee Question:

What missed opportunity do you most regret?

For what opportunity seized are you most grateful? Explain.

Revelation 16:15

Revelation 16:15

Look, I come like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake and remains clothed, so as not to go naked and be shamefully exposed.

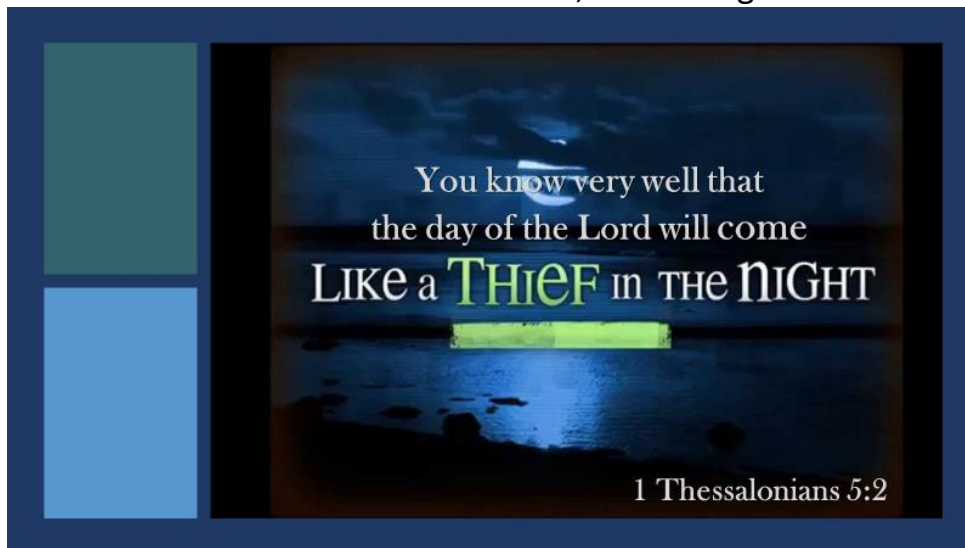


Before the vision of the sixth bowl is completed, John heard a voice from heaven!
The voice which spoke was that of Jesus.
With twenty-six words he assured his people, his church... he is coming soon!

Regarding the when of his coming... look at what Jesus says.

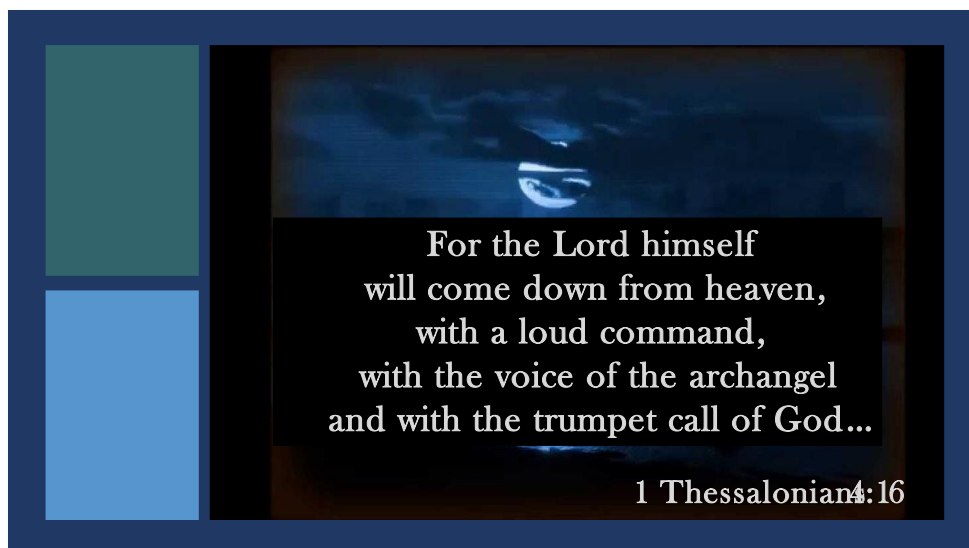


In the first letter to the Thessalonians, something similar is said.



Does this phrase "like a thief ...in the night" suggest there is a sinister component to the return of Jesus? that he will sneak up on people to take from them... things that are not his to take?
Look at the verse again.

The Scripture does not say that Jesus comes... as a thief, but rather... like a thief.
Several verses before this the Scripture says, 1 Thessalonians 4:16...



For the Lord himself
will come down from heaven,
with a loud command,
with the voice of the archangel
and with the trumpet call of God...

1 Thessalonian4:16

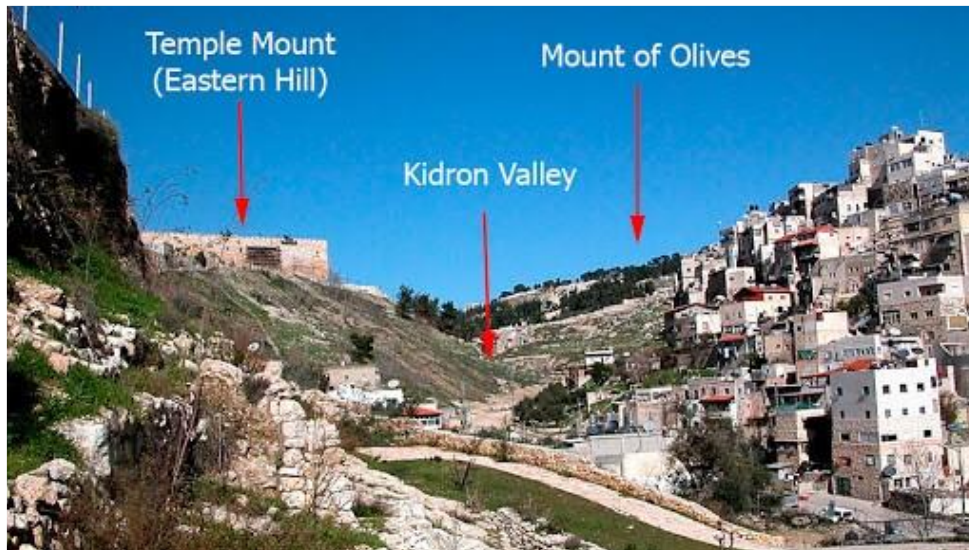
When Jesus returns his coming will be...



Unanticipated
Unexpected
Sudden
Surprising

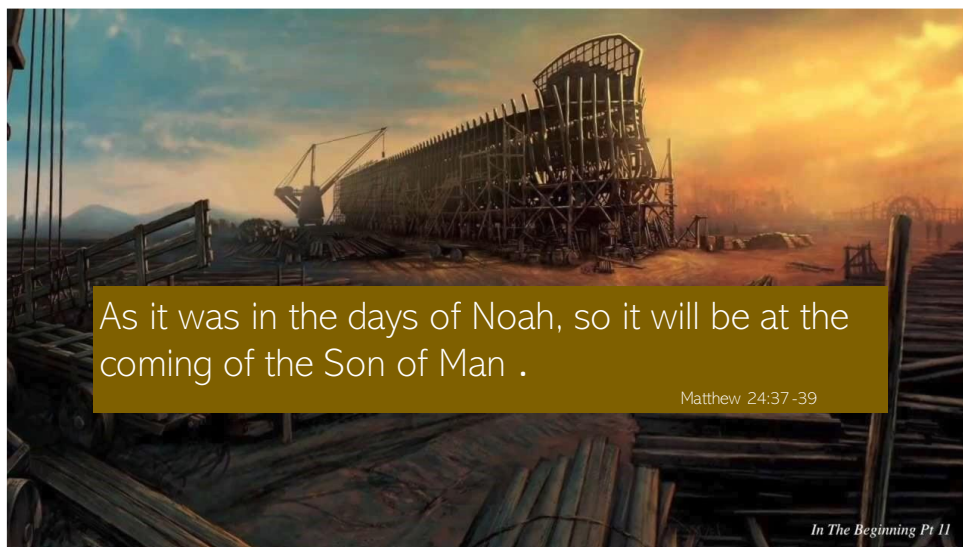
...but there will be no doubt that he has come.

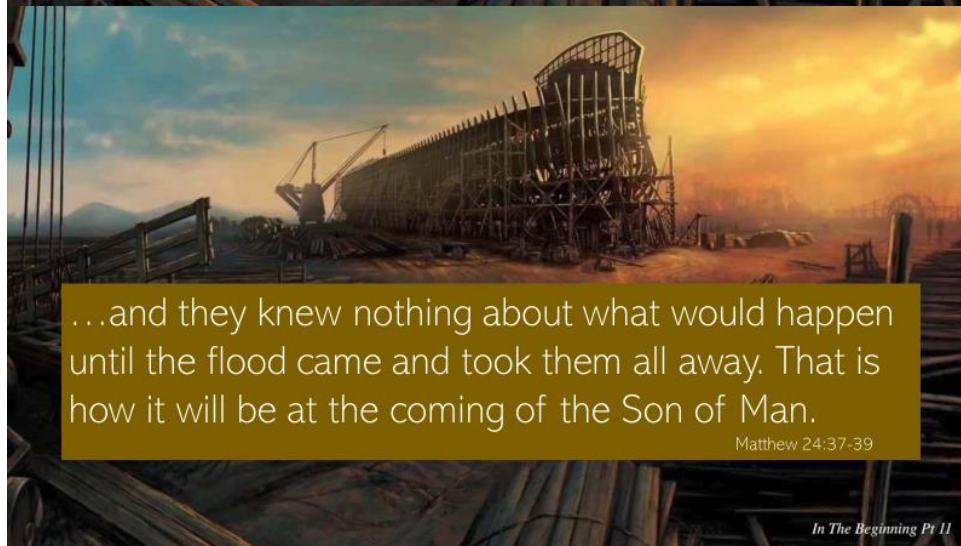
Several days before he died, was with his disciples on the Mount of Olives,
overlooking the city of Jerusalem.



The disciples asked him, “what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?”

This is what Jesus said to them.





We need to ask...in what way are the days of Noah and the coming of Jesus similar?

From what Jesus said... in the days before the flood, people went about their lives oblivious to the doom that was about to come upon them.

Jesus said, "They ate and drank. They got married. They gave their children in marriage."

The people of that day... did the kind of things people do when they think... how my life is right now... is how life will always be.

Jesus said before his coming... the same mindset will define humanity.



Matthew 24:40

Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.



Matthew 24:41

Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left.

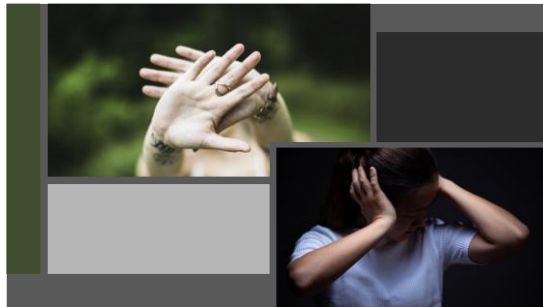
What was Jesus' point?

Before his return...people will likewise be doing the stuff they've always done... oblivious to the fact that eternity is about to break in upon them.

Jesus said...



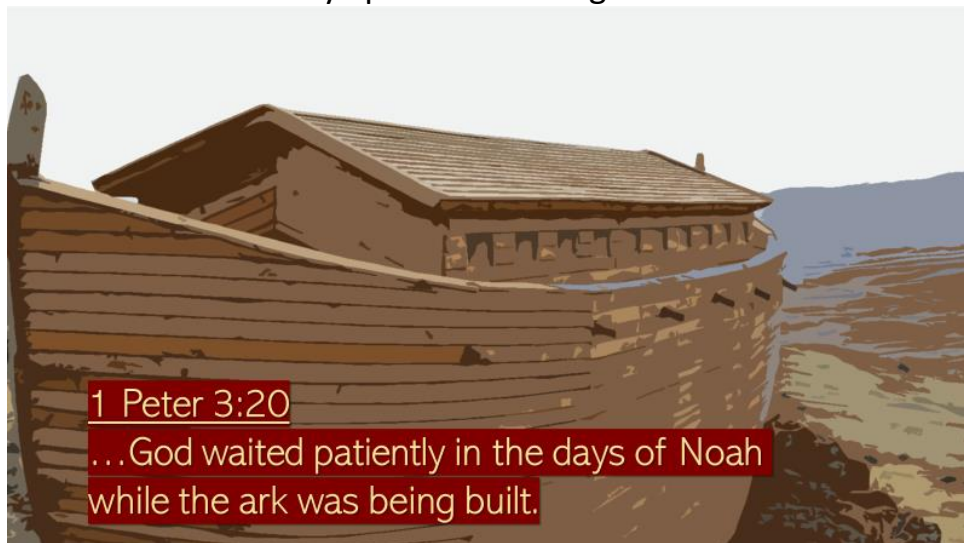
For people in the days of Noah the reason the flood was perceived to be sudden...and unexpected... was because...



... they had shut their heart... and their eyes... and their ears... to the message God was communicating to them.

How do we know that?

Look at what the Holy Spirit said through Peter...



How long did God patiently wait?

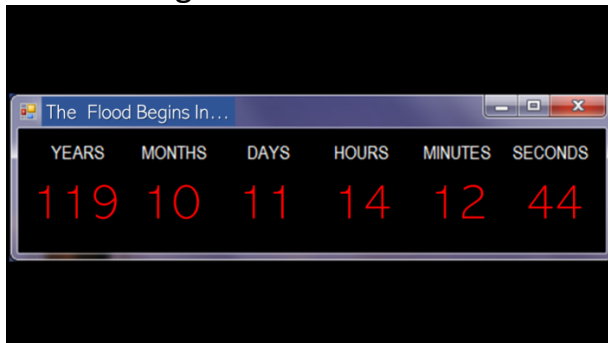
The verse tells us. All the time it took Noah to build the ark.

How long was that?

We understand from Genesis 6:3...



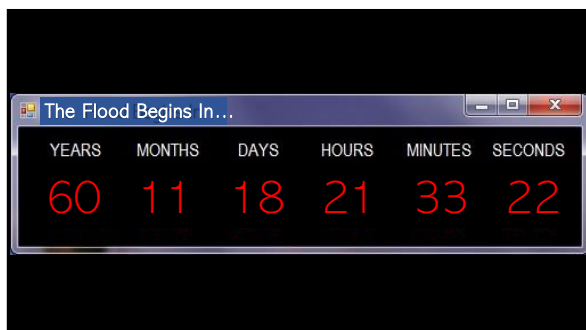
The building of the ark... functioned like a countdown clock.



First Noah harvested trees and milled the lumber.

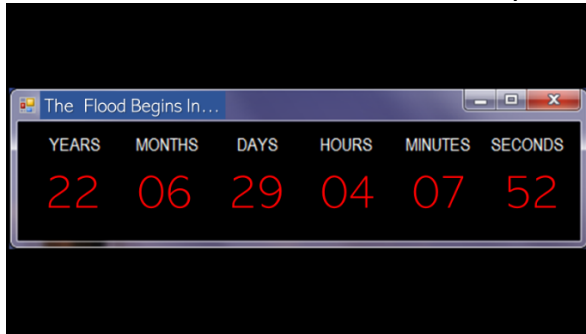
There's still more than enough time.

Then Noah built the shell of the boat and put in place its interior floors and walls.



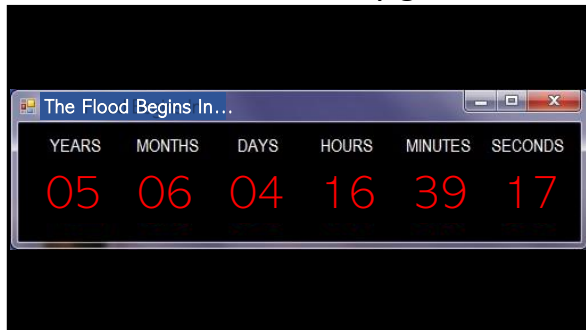
There's still time.

Then Noah attached the exterior planking and built the roof.



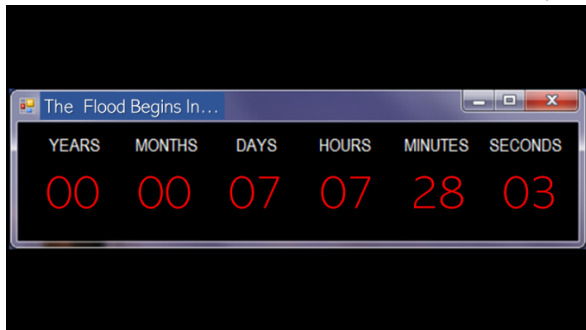
Time is getting shorter.

Then Noah and his family gathered and stored supplies.



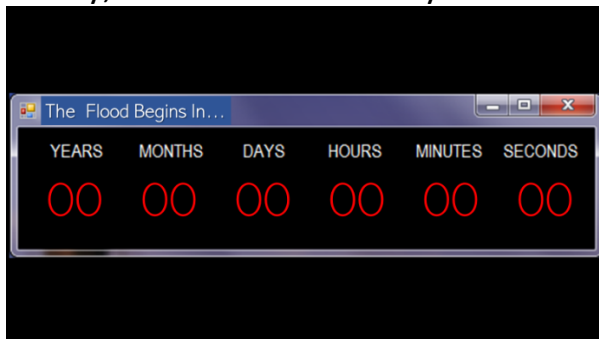
Time is quickly running out.

Then the animals went in to the ark, along with Noah and his family.



Time was almost up.

Finally, the door was shut by God... the springs of the great deep burst forth...

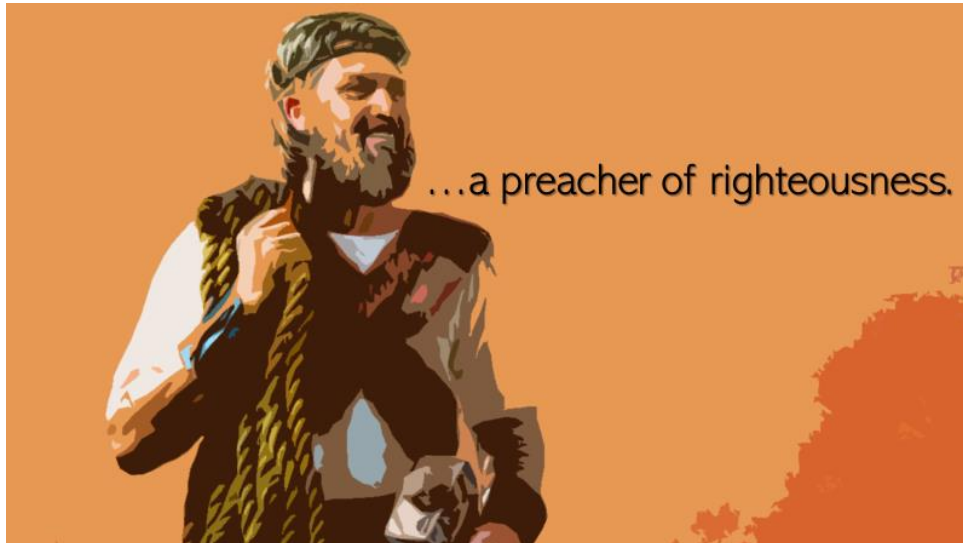


... and the flood gates of the heavens were opened.

Time had run out.

Noah's actions in building the ark testified to the reality of God and his priority in Noah's life.

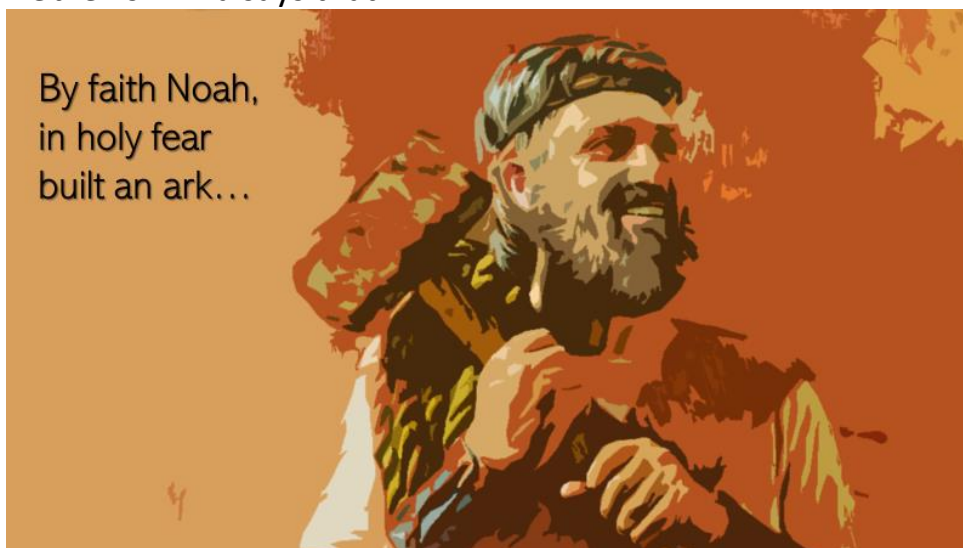
But Noah's testimony to those in his generation was not just non-verbal.
Look at how 2 Peter 2:5 describes Noah.
He was what?



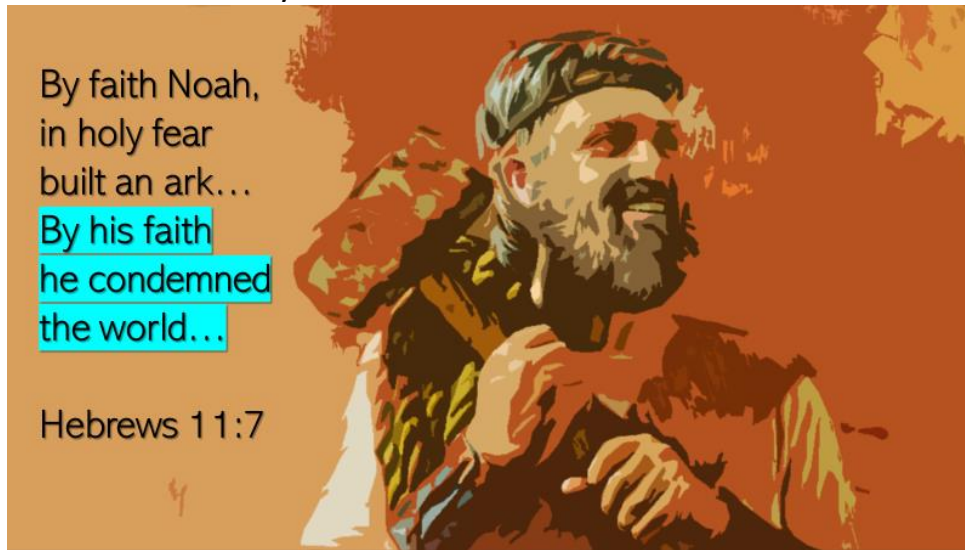
What that means is that Noah verbally spoke...to his neighbors...to those who asked what he was doing.

He may have even sought out people and urged them to turn from their sin and turn to God.

Hebrews 11:7a says that ...



This is what motivated Noah to build... and what influenced Noah's preaching.
Hebrews 11:7b says that ...



What does that mean?

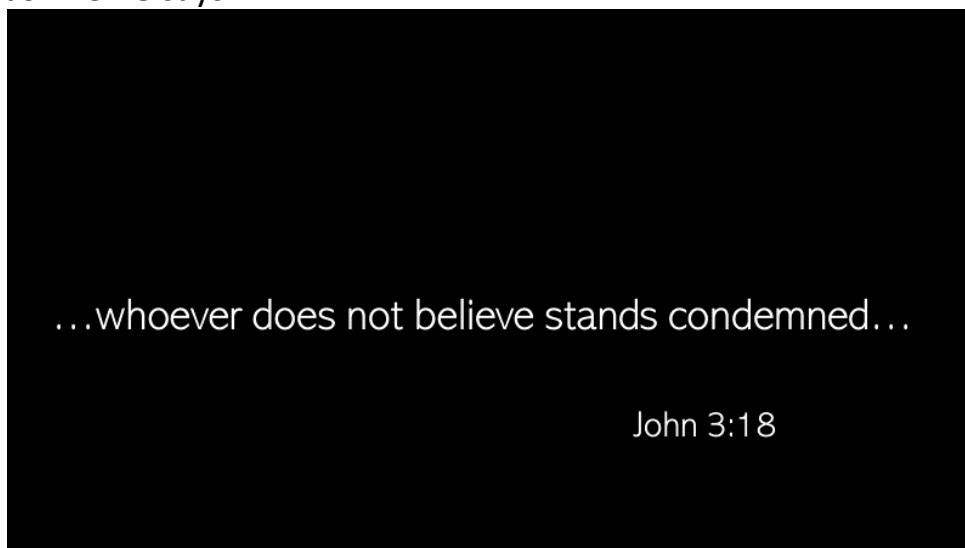
By faith Noah preached.

By faith Noah urged people to repent of their sin.

By faith Noah warned the people of his generation of God's impending judgment.

By faith Noah pointed people to the ark... as God's means by which they could be saved.

John 3:18 says...



Other than his family, no one in Noah's day believed him.

No one other than Noah's family went into the ark to be saved.

This was why the Scripture says that Noah's preaching condemned the world. Tragically... in choosing not to believe... the people of Noah's day chose death.

Since the ascension of Jesus, God the Father has patiently waited... not 120 years as he did in Noah's day... but almost 2000 years.

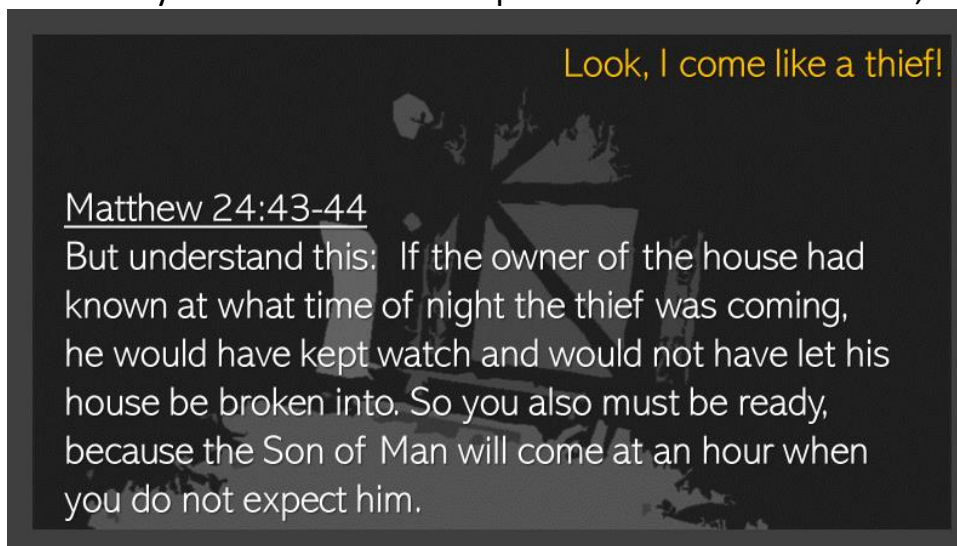
During this time, like Noah, the church of God has proclaimed the gospel of righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ...urging people to trust in him.

Though we do not know the hour of Jesus' coming... we know it is near.

This is why Jesus said to his church in Revelation 16:15...



This is why Jesus said to his disciples on the Mount of Olives, Matthew 24:43-44



Matthew 24:43-44

But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.

Jesus' coming will be...



The Holy Spirit through Paul in the letter to the Thessalonians used another amazing analogy regarding the suddenness of Jesus' return.



While people are saying, "Peace and safety,"
destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains
on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

1 Thessalonians 5:2

When a woman tells you she is pregnant what is one of the first things everybody asks her?



While people are saying, "Peace and safety,"
destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains
on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.

1 Thessalonians 5:2

A pregnant woman as a due date, but she does not know the exact day and hour when her labor pains will begin.

Even though everyone can tell by the ninth month it will be soon, for most women, labor pains come on...suddenly.

The Spirit of God said to the Thessalonian church...so, it will be with the coming of Jesus.

For those who live as if God doesn't exist or matter, who reject his salvation and Savior, Jesus' coming will bring... sudden destruction upon them, similar to what happened to those who lived in Noah's time.

But the destiny of Jesus' followers will be like that of Noah.
This is what Jesus reminds his church of.
Our destiny is determined by who we belong to.

The Holy Spirit through Paul said to God's people in 1 Thessalonians 5:8-9

1 Thessalonians 5:9

For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath
but to receive salvation
through our Lord Jesus Christ.

For the followers of Jesus, while his appearing will be sudden, it will not be unanticipated – for we know Jesus is coming again. His appearing will bring to completion our salvation. This certain hope fills us with gratitude... and explains why we spend our lives on projects of redemption.

1 Thessalonians 5:5, 8-9

We do not belong to the night or to the darkness...

Since we belong to the day, let us be sober,
putting on faith and love as a breastplate,
and the hope of salvation as a helmet.

For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath
but to receive salvation
through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Because we belong to Jesus... we belong to the day. And so...in the things we do with our lives we make known the goodness of God and his reign.

Do you remember the parables Jesus told the last week of his life –

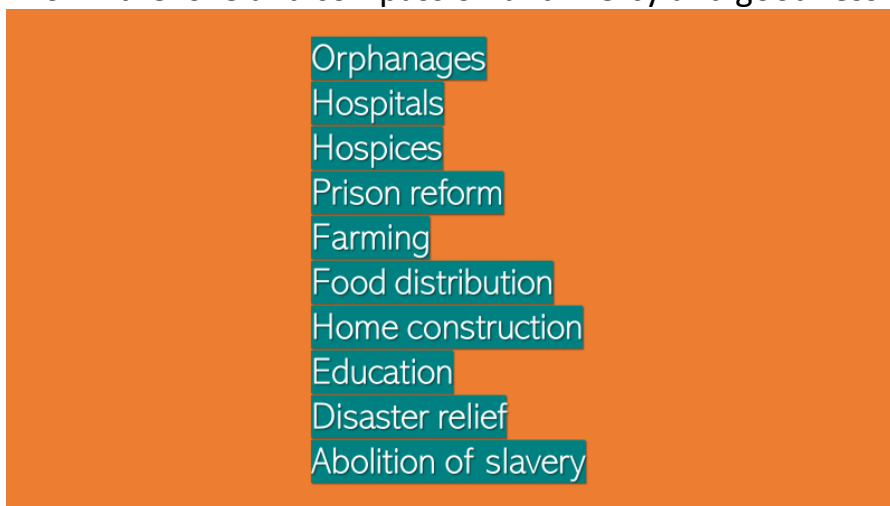


...the parable of the ten virgins; the parable of the bags of gold and the parable of the sheep and goats?

In three remarkable stories Jesus emphasized the truth stated in 1 Thessalonians. Knowing that he will come like a thief... Jesus tells his people to...

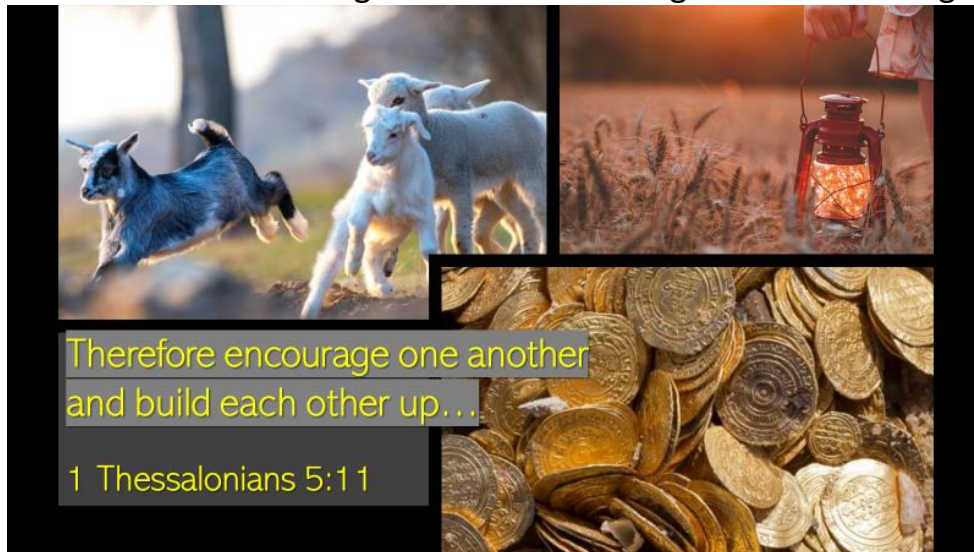
- keep watch – because you belong to the day
- be ready – that is, be sober, clear-headed
- live wisely and graciously – put on faith, love and hope

Throughout history the people of God, in addition to announcing the good news of Jesus.... have always invested their lives into projects of redemption that make known the love and compassion and mercy and goodness of God.



...to name but a few.

Because Jesus is coming like a thief in the night... we are to regularly...



Therefore encourage one another
and build each other up...

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Because Jesus is coming soon...Hebrews 10:24 tells us...



Let us consider how we may spur one another
on towards and good deeds.

Hebrews 10:24

Therefore encourage one another
and build each other up...

1 Thessalonians 5:11

We need each other to live the faith and to rightly invest our lives into kingdom projects.

Life Connection/Question

- How do you see the truth in this passage changing your faith, your life, your lifestyle?
- When you think of how God would have you spend your life what project of redemption is the Spirit drawing you towards? persuading you to engage with?

03:00

The Blessing

Ephesians 3:20

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

But we need to ask... is eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage... the kind of things that a just God would judge with such severity?

In the book of Genesis we discover there is much more to the story of Noah.

The reason Jesus didn't mention it is because his disciples knew what the people in Noah's day were like... and the emphasis of Jesus was not so much on the sin that would warrant God's judgment, but on the suddenness with which Jesus' will return to the earth.

That said, it is important for you and I to know why in the days of Noah God acted as he did.

Genesis 6:5-6, 11-12

The LORD saw how great
the wickedness of the human race
had become on the earth,
and that every inclination
of the thoughts of the human heart
was only evil all the time.

Genesis 6:5-6, 11-12

The LORD regretted that he had made
humans beings on the earth,
and his heart was deeply troubled. ...
Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight
and full of violence.

Genesis 6:5-6, 11-12

God saw
how corrupt the earth had become,
for all the people on earth
had corrupted their ways.

The issue in Noah's day was the human heart – it had been radicalized by sin.
If God had not acted, then he would not have been God.

Since Noah every generation likes to think that somehow, they are different...that
they won't repeat the mistakes of previous generations...that they are more
advanced, more cultured and more attuned to living well, that the failings and
sins of those who lived before them won't be repeated by them.

But every generation of humanity has the same heart condition.
Listen to how the Holy Spirit described what people will be like in the last days.

2 Timothy 3:1-5

But mark this:

There will be terrible times
in the last days.

People will be
lovers of themselves,
lovers of money,
boastful, proud, abusive,
disobedient to their parents,
ungrateful, unholy...

2 Timothy 3:1-5

...without love,
unforgiving, slanderous,
without self-control,
brutal, not lovers of the good,
treacherous, rash, conceited,
lovers of pleasure
rather than lovers of God—
having a form of godliness
but denying its power.

Jesus said to his disciples... as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man.

At the coming of the Son of Man God will decisively deal with sin and sinner, evil and evil doer, as he did long ago in the days of Noah, while saving all who trust in him.

Let's come back to our verse.