

# *Why the Flood?*

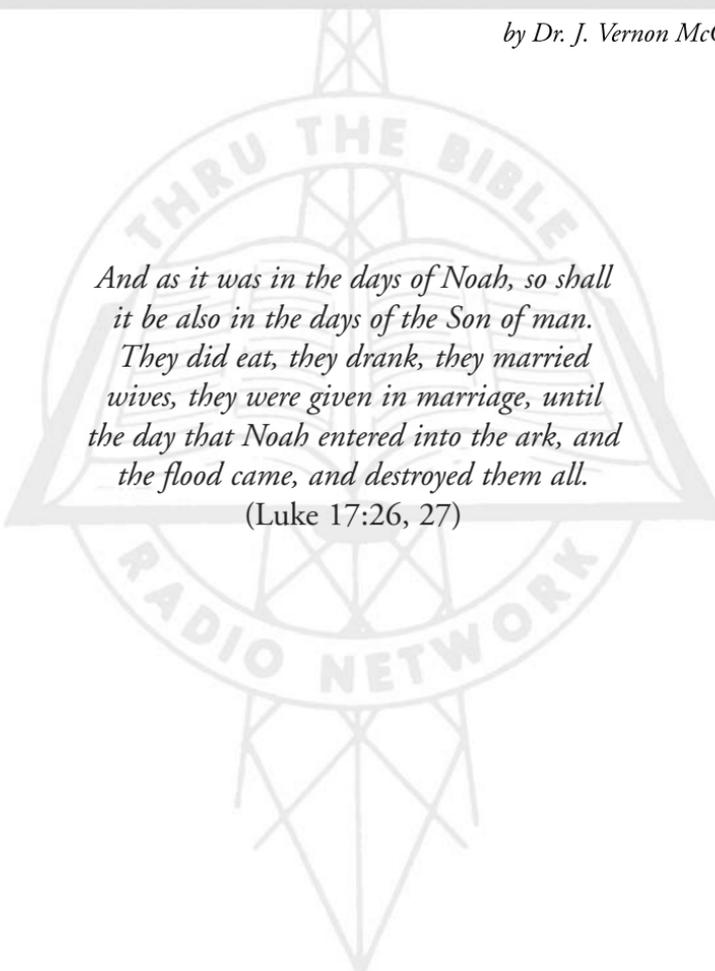
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# *Why the Flood?*

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*And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall  
it be also in the days of the Son of man.  
They did eat, they drank, they married  
wives, they were given in marriage, until  
the day that Noah entered into the ark, and  
the flood came, and destroyed them all.  
(Luke 17:26, 27)*

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# Why the Flood?

When rains come to Southern California, the metropolitan newspapers carry headlines: FLOOD DISASTER. It sounds like Noah's day, and for those who live in the flooded areas, it does mean disaster. But for Southern California generally, the rains are worth millions of dollars and are a great blessing. By the same token, the flood of Noah's day was a judgment from God upon mankind, but it was also a blessing in disguise. God's mercy was manifested in that flood.

Some Christian geologists treat the Flood as one in a series of local catastrophes. They attach no particular significance to the incident recorded in Genesis 7 other than to say it was probably the last in this series. They do not deny the Flood; they merely attempt to relegate it to a place of unimportance.

However, there has been a return to the old theory that the Flood is the explanation for the geological formations that are found all over the world today. Let me share with you an excerpt from the book, *The Genesis Flood*, written by Henry M. Morris and John C. Whitcomb<sup>1</sup>:

Throughout the eighteenth century, and well into the nineteenth, most theologians and scientists of the western world believed that the Deluge was responsible for the major fossiliferous strata of the earth. But the rise of Cuvier's theory of successive catastrophes, which assigned most of the fossil strata to ages long before the creation of man, caused many to abandon the older Flood theory of geology. William Buckland led the way in Great Britain by

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<sup>1</sup> Philadelphia, PA: Presbyterian and Reformed Pub. Co., 1961.

pointing to “diluvium” deposits as positive evidence of the last and greatest catastrophe in the history of the earth – the Genesis Flood. But no sooner had a large number of Christians accepted the “successive catastrophes” view than Buckland and Sedgwick, along with other geologists, began to make public recantations of their former views. The “diluvium” deposits were no longer attributed to the Flood, but to the last of a series of pre-Adamic catastrophes. The Flood, though still regarded as universal, was now depicted as a comparatively “tranquil” affair, which left no discernible geologic effects. By now, the Church was ready for the final stage of the harmonization process; for in 1839 John Pye Smith set forth his theory that the Flood was nothing but a local inundation in the Mesopotamian Valley. Freed at long last from the necessity of harmonizing geology with Genesis, scientists dismissed the Genesis Flood from their minds and joined Sir Charles Lyell in his efforts to “patiently untie the Gordian knot” of fossiliferous strata according to the uniformitarian principles which he had enunciated as early as 1830.

At the conclusion of the book, they give the “Bankruptcy of Uniformitarianism” because it never really explained anything:

The present widely accepted system of uniformitarianism in historical geology, with its evolutionary basis and bias, has been shown to be utterly inadequate to explain most of the important geologic phenomena. Present rates and processes simply *cannot* account for the great bulk of

geological data. Some form of catastrophism is clearly indicated by the vast evidences of volcanism, diastrophism, glaciation, coal and oil and mineral deposits, fossilization, vast beds of sediments, and most of the other dominant features of the earth's crust. When this fact is once recognized, it can then be seen that even the supposed evidences of great geologic age can be reinterpreted to correlate well with the much more impelling evidences of violent and rapid activity and formation.

There is a move back to the old position, and men of real intellectual stature and scientific background are taking that position. This is important.

The Flood was global in extent. It was devastating in its effect and permanent in geological evidence that it left.

The record given to us by Moses in Genesis is actually a restrained account. It is not extreme nor extravagant. There is no labored elaboration of detail and absolutely no excess verbiage at all in the record that has been given to us.

For instance, notice what is said concerning the ark:

*And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: the length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.* (Genesis 6:15)

The size of the ark is quite interesting. It is not the ridiculous little boat pictured on Sunday school literature. If you examine the measurements here, you will find that they are about six to one; that is, the width of it is about one-sixth of the length. If you will put that down by the measurements of the battleship *New Mexico* that once was considered the finest example of modern engineering (it was 624 feet long, 106 ¼ feet wide, and 29 ½ feet

the mean draft), you will find that the ark measurements are the same in ratio. If you imagine the ark to be some sort of crude structure, you apparently are not acquainted with the information given in the Word of God.

*A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.* (Genesis 6:16)

The window in the ark was not a little cubbyhole cut in the side, as pictured on my Sunday school card, but was probably a window one cubit from the top that went all the way around the ark. Modern gymnasiums today have that kind of ventilation. Also, it had three decks – “with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.” So the ark was by no means the crude structure it is sometimes made out to be.

There are those who ridicule the story by characterizing Noah as sort of a “Bring ’em back alive” Frank Buck. Noah was not a big game hunter; I don’t believe he went out after the animals. More likely, the animals came to him. A ranger at Yosemite was telling me that when the snow is gone from the top of the mountain, you can’t get within eyesight or earshot, certainly not within gunshot, of the deer. But when the snows begin to fall and bury the vegetation, those little deer will come down and eat out of your hand. Animals will come to man in time of danger. The animals at the time of the Flood came to Noah – that is what is said here:

*Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after its kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive.... There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah.* (Genesis 6:20; 7:9)

Noah's problem, I imagine, was not to get in the required number but to keep out the others. I have wondered how he managed to limit the number of each kind.

The ark itself and the account of the Flood carries a great deal of geological and historical evidence and is a fascinating subject for research and exploration. However, it is not my intention to deal with this aspect of the Flood. Rather, I want to deal with this question: Why the Flood? Why did God send it? Why was this type of extreme surgery needed on the human race? There are those who say that capital punishment is not humane. Believe me, God had mass execution in that day. Why was it necessary?

*And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, that the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all whom they chose.*

(Genesis 6:1, 2)

Many fine expositors give to this text a rather unnatural interpretation. They say that the sons of God were angels, that the daughters of men were human beings, and that this is the intermarriage of supernatural creatures with mankind. Now I personally cannot accept this interpretation because I do not think such a union could exist. Our Lord definitely said that angels neither marry nor are given in marriage (see Matthew 22:30), and I would take it that this would be entirely out of keeping with the purpose for which they were created. They were never told to multiply as man was told to do. Each was a separate creation of itself. Also, we must assume that good angels would not commit this sin, and bad angels could never be called the "sons of God."

Also, the offspring were men, not monsters. "But," some folks say; "it says that their offspring were giants." It does not.

*There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bore children to them, the same became mighty men who were of old, men of renown.* (Genesis 6:4)

Notice that there were giants in the earth *before* this intermingling took place. Giants were not the result of it. However, giants did exist. They were the result of the offspring of Adam.

To interpret this verse rightly, we must keep in mind the theme of Genesis. Moses, writing under inspiration, is not trying to tell us about creation or about the Flood. Rather, he is tracing the families, and one family in particular that is going to lead to Jesus Christ. Genesis is the record of the family tree from the first man, Adam. There is a line that leads all the way through the Old Testament to the Lord Jesus Christ. If you consult the two genealogies (Matthew 1:1-16 and Luke 3:23-38), you will see that they both go right back into the Book of Genesis; they are grounded there. That is the thing that lends importance to the Book of Genesis.

There is a definite pattern that is followed in Genesis. God will record the genealogy of a rejected line first and then dismiss it. Then God takes the chosen line (which will lead to Christ) and traces it on through. For instance, Abraham had two sons, Ishmael and Isaac. Ishmael's line is given to us and then is dismissed. Then the line of Isaac is given and is pursued all the way through the Bible so that the New Testament opens with the fact that Jesus Christ is a son of Isaac, which is the reason that line is followed.

Now, going back to the fourth chapter of Genesis, we see Cain's line: "And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden" (Genesis 4:16). Then the line of Cain is given, but it is not followed through.

In chapter five, the line of Seth is given. Noah is in this line, and

his is the one that is followed. Chapter six states the simple fact that the godly line that came from Seth has now intermarried with the ungodly line of Cain. The sons of God (this godly line) chose wives on the basis of physical beauty – they “saw the daughters of men that they were fair”; they had no regard for the spiritual side at all. You will see the intermarrying of these two, the godly with the ungodly, all the way through the Scriptures. The most notable example, I guess, is Ahab – king of God’s people Israel – who married Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal who was the priest of the most pagan religion in the world. This marriage had a disastrous effect on the entire nation. Also in our day, the intermarriage of believers and unbelievers is a most dangerous thing. God records it here before the Flood as a warning to us today.

The day came, therefore, when only one man among the millions on this earth found grace in the eyes of the Lord. “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD” (Genesis 6:8). Because of the intermarriage and the intrusion of that which was godless into the godly line, men and women were produced who turned their backs on God. Finally we get down to the time when there was one who did not – *one!* How tragic! The cancer of sin was terminal. The human race was suffering from the incurable disease of sin. If God had not taken extreme measures, no one would have turned to God in the next generation. The entire human family would have been lost. Therefore God moved in while He had only one man left. God was longsuffering; He was patient. He saw this erosion of spiritual life, man turning away from Him, and He waited until there was only one man left. If He had waited any longer, the entire race would have been lost.

May I say to you, friend, the Flood was an awful judgment. God never said it wasn’t awful – it was! But it was a blessing in disguise. The reason today that you and I have been able to hear the gospel

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and be saved is because God brought His judgment when He did. He waited as long as He could. Only Noah was left. Only one turned to God. This is shocking, I admit. Only *one!*

*These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.* (Genesis 6:9)

When it says that Noah was perfect and walked with God, it means that he did what Enoch and Abel did: Those who were God's men had been beating a path to an altar. And I can see Noah taking his little sacrifice, his little lamb, and heading for that altar. The grass had grown up around it, because men no longer were going there but were going their own way. But here is a man who walked with God, and that meant he walked to that altar. He acknowledged that he was a sinner and needed a Savior. When he did that, he was made acceptable to Almighty God. It was God's way for man to go.

*And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.*  
(Genesis 6:12)

What does it mean by "his way upon the earth"? Whose way? Well, it means simply this: It was man's way, but it was the way that God had marked out for him. It was to that altar that man could repair, acknowledge that he was a sinner, and on the basis of that, offer a sacrifice that made him righteous before God. That is God's way; not man's way. But man had corrupted his way upon the earth.

Because he did not come God's way; notice the condition of man in that day – this is the fruit of sin:

*And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* (Genesis 6:5)

Notice the pyramiding of modifiers here. The wickedness of man was *great* in the earth (his wickedness was not little). And not just *some* of his imagination and thoughts were evil *occasionally*, but *every* imagination and thought was *only* evil *continually*! This is the picture of mankind. Someone has said that the heart is the thought-factory of man. The Lord Jesus said, “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies” (Matthew 15:19). And out of the heart are the issues of life, according to Proverbs 4:23. The heart refers to our inmost being, where we live and move and have our being. I wonder if you have noted this prayer of David:

*O LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, our fathers, keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee.*  
(1 Chronicles 29:18)

This was his prayer when he dedicated the place where the temple was to be built, a place where God’s people could come and have their thoughts and imaginations drawn to Him. But here in Noah’s day, folk had left God out of their lives entirely. They no longer went to the altar, but the thoughts and the imaginations of their heart were only evil continually.

Now primarily, what was their sin? Can we specifically label it? I think we can. The words of our Lord shed light upon it.

*And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.* (Luke 17:26, 27)

A great many authors and speakers attempt to depict the days of Noah. They do not get their information from the Bible, although,

of course, an inference can be drawn from what was recorded. However, the Word of God is specific. Our Lord said that in the days of Noah they were eating and drinking. Was that wrong? No, it was not. Then what did our Lord mean? Also He said that they were marrying and giving in marriage. That was all right, wasn't it? Certainly. Then what was the sin? Well, when you go back and read the passage, the thing that was wrong was that they had left God out. They were eating and drinking as though God did not exist. Noah said a flood was coming; they ridiculed him and lived as if no such thing could possibly happen. They paid no attention to God; they had no relationship with Him. Our Lord pinpointed unbelief as their great sin and, of course, it was the root that produced their lifestyle. They had left God out of their lives.

Let me make this statement: I am more and more coming to the conviction that the worst sin is unbelief. No sin compares to it. It is the most deadly virus known to man. You and I cannot conceive of the extent of this awful thing known as unbelief – of just leaving God out. You remember that the Lord Jesus Himself said:

*It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me.* (John 16:7-9)

What sin? Murder? No. Unbelief! This is the big sin today. If you are an unbeliever, my friend, the difficulty and problem is not some great sin you might have committed or some mental hurdle you have to get over; your problem is a heart of unbelief. That is the most vile, wicked thing there is in God's sight. Do you know how practical this is? Let me give you an example.

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The United States Republic is based upon these principles:

1. There is a God.
2. Individuals have rights derived from God.
3. There is self-government to protect those rights.

International Communism, based upon the theories and writings of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin has the following postulates:

1. There is no God.
2. Men have no rights.
3. The State is All.
4. There is no Truth.

Now, friend, they tell me that Communism is something new. It is as old as the Flood. The problem in the days of Noah was that they said, "There is no God." You can call it by any label you choose, but, my beloved, that is what brought the Flood! And America today is as far from God as Communism is far from God. Oh, I don't say that America is Communistic, but we are *agnostic*. Rightist movements can be (and some of them are) as far from God as any of the leftist movements. We have become a godless nation. The sex revolution, the marching, protesting, and rioting are the fruit of the awful unbelief that has come into this country that was founded on the fact that there is a God. Even preachers have turned away from the Word of God. You and I are living in alarming days. The days of the Flood have returned. Unbelief was their sin, and it is our sin.

Noah was a preacher of righteousness. What kind of righteousness did he preach? The righteousness that God gave to a man when he went to the altar with his animal sacrifice, recognizing that he was a sinner and that a penalty had to be paid for his sin. Noah preached that kind of righteousness.

This is what Peter means when he says:

*For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God...*

That is the reason Christ died. That altar to which Noah went pointed to Him.

*...Being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison...*

When did Christ do that? I hear the foolish interpretation that Christ, after His crucifixion, went down in the lower regions and preached. Why would He do that? They had no second chance. Then when did He preach to them? Peter tells us:

*... Who at one time were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, in which few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water. (1 Peter 3:18-20)*

When Noah preached, Christ was preaching through him. Noah presented a Savior to the world of his day. This preaching took place back in the days of Noah. Christ preached through Noah for one hundred and twenty years.

*And the LORD said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be a hundred and twenty years. (Genesis 6:3)*

For one hundred and twenty years God was patient. He was waiting.

For one hundred and twenty years Noah was a witness:

*By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his*

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*house, by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. (Hebrews 11:7)*

This man was a witness to his world that he believed God.

Of course, leaving God out led to loose living and no regard for others. This follows:

*The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. (Genesis 6:11-13)*

The earth here begins to get the results of this business of unbelief. Believe me, America today is feeling the violence that is coming through lawlessness. You do not pick up a newspaper without reading about lawlessness and violence everywhere. And they are trying to doctor the symptoms. Actually, violence is the symptom of this awful disease of unbelief that has come to our nation.

That is exactly what our Lord said, even in the Sermon on the Mount, which theological liberals love to quote. Liberals say that they live by the Golden Rule; then let's see them follow through on it:

*Therefore, all things whatever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets. (Matthew 7:12)*

*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)*

The Sermon on the Mount is theocentric (not anthropocentric, as one liberal said); it is God-centered. Man must be rightly related to God, and man's conduct must be in obedience to the revelation of God. If it is not, then that man is lawless!

There is a message for us:

*This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you, in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior; knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts. (2 Peter 3:1-3)*

The “scoffers, walking after their own lusts” are here: In our day, they are abroad in the land. If you are a Christian, I hope you have found out that you are in a minority group. The scoffers are the majority. But as long as I can lift my voice, I want to make it very clear that the hope of the world is the coming of Christ.

His return is being denied everywhere:

*And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. (2 Peter 3:4)*

The curse of the hour is the skepticism, “Where is the promise of His coming?”

*For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water. (2 Peter 3:5)*

They deny that the Flood took place, but God says it did.

*By which the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished. (2 Peter 3:6)*

It is said that judgment has gone out of style and that there is not a preacher of any stature or intelligence that would dare preach judgment today! However, there are men of both intelligence and stature who are preaching judgment. Certainly Paul, the greatest preacher of them all, did:

*And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife, Drusilla, who was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of righteousness, self-control, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee. (Acts 24:24, 25)*

Felix did not want to hear any more about judgment to come.

Our Lord asked:

*... When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth? (Luke 18:8)*

“Faith” is an abstract term. Everybody has faith in something. But the faith our Lord speaks of here is the body of revealed truth. Will He find that when He returns? The way the question is couched in the Greek, it demands a negative answer. The answer is no.

Why hasn't judgment already come?

*The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)*

Before the days of Noah, there was the warning: The birth of Methuselah. His name seems to predict the sending of the Flood, and the year that Methuselah died the Flood came. Yet God prolonged his life for 969 years. God warned that the Flood was coming; it had to come for the sake of the generations that were yet

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to be born on the earth. God had to do it. It was an act of mercy for them. For one hundred and twenty years God warned them through the preaching of Noah: “It’s coming!”

The people laughed, “All things continue as they were. You must have missed it, Brother Noah. The weather report is fair and warmer!”

Noah said, “It is coming.”

*By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house, by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.* (Hebrews 11:7)

There wasn’t a cloud in the sky. They hadn’t even had a good *fog*, but Noah persisted, “It’s coming.” One hundred and twenty years went by, and then the Flood came.

You and I live in a day when men insist that we have moved out of the orbit of judgment and the idea of a God who judges. In fact, they have concluded that we don’t even need God, that things will continue as they are.

Frankly, I’d like to rush God. Oh, if I could get a telegram to Him, I’d tell Him to hurry. But He is not hurrying. He has eternity ahead of Him. Someone asks, “Do you think judgment will come in our lifetime?” I don’t know. He has told us only that it is coming. However, for you and me, it won’t be long, because we will not be here very much longer. Time is against us.

You have your opportunity now to decide for or against Christ. And I believe, frankly, that the ministry should be sharpened down to one point: Declare the Word of God. That’s all. Let the chips fall where they may. “But,” someone argues, “I know a very brilliant man, and he doesn’t believe the Bible.” I’m not worried about him at all. What he thinks makes no difference. It was pretty hard

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in Noah's time to have the world against you, but it sure was nice to be right the day the Flood came.

Dwight L. Moody said this:

I look upon this world as a wrecked vessel. Its ruin is getting nearer and nearer. God said to me, "Moody, here is a lifeboat. Go out and rescue as many as you can before the crash comes." The churches are asleep. I know of no better way to awaken them than to get them to look for the return of their Lord from heaven. Nowhere in the Scriptures is it claimed that the whole world will be brought to the feet of Christ in this dispensation. I do not find any place in the Bible where God says that the world is to grow better and better and that Christ is to have a spiritual reign over the earth a thousand years. The first thing Christ is to do at his coming is to take the Church out of the world. The trump of God may be sounded before anything we do – before I have finished this address.

However, Moody said that years ago, and still Christ has not come. Do you know why Christ has not come before this? It is not because He is not coming; it is because He is longsuffering and patient. He is not willing that any should perish. He has tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow.

But you don't!