

Last Day Warnings

by Wayne Dailey,
Founding Pastor, Bethel Revival Center

We don't always firmly grasp on to why things are in the Word, but the whole idea is to learn to listen, because, in the end, it will make all the difference for those who've listened and taken hold of what the Lord has said, really applying it to their heart and life.

We won't go wrong by listening to God, by heeding His Word, by applying His Word. We'll go wrong if we turn aside from that.

Luke 17:22

And He said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it.

Jesus is giving a warning here. The days (plural) will come. This would be more than just a longing to see someone you haven't seen for a long time. There's a reason they would long to see one of the days of the Son of man. They would want those days again when Jesus was right there with them: when their eyes could see Him, and their hands could touch Him.

Those days, no doubt to the disciples, were great and precious days. The day would come when they would long to see just one of those days again, days when the anointing of the Spirit was moving in many wonderful works.

I guess in a lesser sense we would like to see one of those days out of the past when God was pouring out His Spirit mightily. Our hearts can long for things like that.

But Jesus said that, though they longed for such a day, they would not see it again. It's dealing with the time after Jesus' ascension into heaven in the last days.

Beware of False Prophets

Luke

And they shall say to you, See here; or, see there: go not after them, nor follow them.

Jesus is speaking of false prophets who would rise up in the last days and try to sway people away from Him unto someone else. Jesus is wanting His disciples to understand that the day would come when they would desire for one of those days they had when He was upon the earth. And He warned them that some would come along to try to get their attention that Jesus was here or there. He warns them not to go after them nor follow them.

Jesus won't be in that, so they shouldn't rise up and follow the little cunningly devised programs that will come along to deceive in the last days.

We have to be careful, too, that we don't follow after those false prophets who will come along to lead souls astray.

Luke 17:24

For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth unto the other part under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in His day.

Here an expectation is given us of the day when Jesus will come and the manner of His coming. He lets us know so we won't be led astray, thinking any of those false prophets are Jesus.

When the Lord comes, He's coming so fast it will be like a streak of lightning flashing across the sky. Jesus can travel with speed, and when He comes again, He will come in a split second, as a flash of lightning.

He told us He is coming in His day, which is the day of Christ. He's not referring to the day of the Lord, which deals with the tribulation. Bear in mind that His coming will be swift.

Now, will we be here at this time He is speaking of? There will be people here, whether we are or not.

Luke 17:25

But first must He suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

First, before this other event comes, Jesus will suffer many things. This speaks of going to Calvary and suffering all that He would suffer there. His precious life would be hung on the tree, where He would suffer, bleed, and die: rejected of that generation.

These things are important to us, both in principle and in reality. The day when Jesus comes for His own, we who are found ready and waiting will be caught up to be with Him in the twinkling of an eye.

But the Lord gives warning here in Luke and in the other Gospels. We've got to heed His warnings and be watchful. We should take His warnings to heart. He has called us to watch and pray . . . and to be found ready.

We saw in the hearts of the disciples the night Jesus was betrayed that it didn't seem like they were ready for what lay ahead. Though He had warned them, they weren't ready. When the mob came out to the garden with the soldiers and took Jesus captive, all the disciples turned and ran. They fled because they were terrified. They weren't really prepared for such an hour. They took off on the run, and Jesus was left alone with the soldiers.

The disciples could have been arrested, too, if they had stayed behind with Him.

As in the Days of Noah

Luke 17:26

And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

In the time period where the Lord will come again, it will be so much like the days of Noah. What were those days like? You can read about Noah in the book of Genesis, and how he was warned of God to build the ark.

Hebrews 11:7

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 the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Noah moved in preparation to do what God had told him to do.

The days of Noah were troubled times: the earth was filled with violence; everything had turned that way; and then there was the problem of mixed marriages, the godly marrying the ungodly. The daughters of men were given in marriage to the sons of God.

The daughters of men were of Cain's lineage. Cain was godless and so were those who came through his lineage. Cain went out from the presence of God empty, without a sacrifice to cover his sins. He went out in the flesh; he went out carnally. He went out mad. He built a city and his people became a clan all by themselves. For about seven generations there were no daughters born to them. But when daughters began to be born to them, they began to intermarry with the seed of Seth, the godly seed. And when these two got together and started having kids, their kids were giants.

Having giants wasn't the problem. The apostate condition that developed through these intermarriages was the problem. Things began to deteriorate until it got to the point that God had enough. It repented Him that He had ever made man upon the earth.

You know, God loves man. For Him to repent of the day He ever made man show us that things were in a pretty bad state. Man wasn't walking with God, wasn't prepared to be with Him forever. Rather, people were becoming more and more evil day after day.

In this state of things God spoke to Noah to build the ark. In His longsuffering He waited as Noah went to work to prepare the ark, just as He had told him to.

Now, Jesus said that as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man. The conditions in the world are going to be very similar to those days.

So, you have to bear in mind that, as the end time approaches, it's going to become more and more like the days of Noah.

Were they good days? That answer is summed up in the next verse:

Luke 17:27

They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

Man can very easily degenerate. We may not always understand or see. One of the problems here were these intermarriages. They didn't bring forth any more godly seed. And it just got worse and worse and worse until the entire population was degenerate (but for Noah and his family).

God went ahead and fulfilled what He had spoken in repenting that He had ever made man: and the flood came.

What pleasure did God have in that? There was something good that God saw when He created Adam. He saw that the creation was good and He was pleased with it.

Now, there's this little seed. It's almost like getting down to the place where you don't have big bins of grain to use for seed. All you have left is just a handful.

But this seed is what pleased God. From this little handful of seed, God would spread man out over the earth again, and that would bring back man into being again through the seed of Noah.

Noah was a righteous man. He loved God and found grace in His eyes. As far as his sons were concerned, God was gracious to them. They didn't perish: but they did have to believe God and build the ark to the saving of their house.

So, think about it in this manner then: there is a climatic end here. The flood came and destroyed all who were not in the ark. None of them survived.

Don't think of Noah and his family as survivors. They were part of the plan of God and were being kept in the place God had put them for their safety. They weren't surviving the flood. They never got wet!

But outside, all over the land, the flood waters came and kept building up and building up and building up and building up . . . until the water was so high that it touched the top of the mountains.

We can't imagine a flood that deep. But, listen, there's a word in here which is for us:

Luke 17:26

And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

So, now, in the days when Jesus will be coming back again for His own — that's an important day — in those days it will be as it was in the days of Noah *before* the flood, not in the days of Noah *after* the flood.

As in the Days of Lot

Luke 17:28-30

Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

So, in both of these cases one thing is common: In Noah's day the flood came and destroyed them all. In Lot's day it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.

Is this unusual? These are two Old Testament examples for us to learn from.

We can take Noah and follow him all the way back to the world before the flood. And we can look at Lot, who goes back to Abraham's time: He was Abraham's nephew.

Lot had his place with Abraham until a certain day came when there was strife in the camp and the herdsmen were complaining.

Abraham was wealthy with much cattle, and Lot also had a lot of cattle. So, the herdsmen of Abraham and the herdsmen of Lot had a problem finding enough grazing land for their cattle to feed. Every day there was strife amongst them.

Abraham said it would be best for them to separate, letting Lot have first choice of which way to go, and he would go the other way.

They were close and they both believed in God. Abraham had a deep relationship with the Lord. (It wouldn't be very easy to run around with Abraham and not believe in God.)

Lot's life started to fall apart when Abraham separated from him. His spiritual life went down. The next thing you knew, he was living in Sodom as one of the elders sitting in the gate.

Now, the days of Lot becomes an important issue. The angels stopped by to visit with Abraham before they went down to see if all the reports they had heard of Sodom were true.

II Peter 2:7,8

And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked: (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds)

When the angels came, Lot recognized them and invited them to come stay with him for the night so they wouldn't have to spend the night in the street where it was dangerous. They accepted his invitation and when they went into his house, the city gathered around the door, all the wicked men of Sodom. They weren't about to be refused in wanting these two visitors. It was like it would be a gang rape of these two.

Warnings for Today

This account is something that is spoken to us in our present day as a warning.

Luke 17:30

Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

The conditions back in those days promoting this distorted life style is spreading like wild fire in our day. They have no desire to go God's way:

Romans 1:24-27

Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet.

In the day when Jesus comes, it will be like that on the earth. We see this today, and it will only get worse and worse. This will drag the world down into strong judgment. So, we see the conditions in the days of Noah and in the days of Lot. Both reveal to us the conditions that will be prevalent in the days of the Son of man.

The world has never been more violent than it has been in our day. We are appalled in our hearts because there is so much violence. Small children are taught violence. The way you straighten things out today is like the wild west, where you pull your six shooter out and blow people away. We see the young generation in this position. No doubt it's television, movie and computer game violence — violence from the things which are so

easily put in their hands. The influence of our day! What do young people want today they don't eventually get?

In our day, right now, we're seeing what a generation like that turns out — from that generation to the generation to come. Their parents were that way, and now the children who are born to them are the same way.

Every generation has had wars. Way back they fought wars with stones and clubs, with knives and swords. They were always working to make a better weapon, something that could destroy faster. You can't imagine the violence of a war. If we have another world war, the violence would be more than the planet would seem to be able to take.

The Earth Shall Reel to and Fro

Isaiah 24:20

The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again.

A man is walking down the street drunk. He reels to and fro, trying to make it down the street. We think about that drunkard. The Bible says the earth is reeling to and fro like a drunkard, giving that to us as a picture of what it will be like.

We may not always understand the way God speaks, but we do know this: war is a horrendous violence. Some of us are too young to remember World War II, the violence there was every day. We think of the violence of the big bombs there are today. A city could be destroyed with one bomb. A cluster bomb could be thrown down into one of the big metropolitan areas and destroy the whole place in one operation. Would that be violence, man suffering the violence of fire?

God is telling us that we should know and understand that one day, in the speed Jesus is coming, there will be no need to look around or listen to anyone's propaganda that Jesus is out in a desert place or in a big building over town. We're never to answer one of those calls, for He's not coming that way. When He comes, He's coming as lightening from one part of heaven to the other.

Luke 17:30-32

Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. In that day, he which shall be upon the housetop, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back. Remember Lot's wife.

Remember Lot's wife: she turned and looked back. They were told not to do this. Can you imagine what it would be to want to turn around and take a quick peek. She turned to look back and became a pillar of salt. Her life was gone.

Lose Your Life to Save It

Luke 17:33

Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

So, some are going to be taken and some left. We are warned, in the midst of all this, that if we seek to save our life, we will lose it. On the other hand, when we surrender our life unto Jesus, in that sense, we lose our life. It now belongs to Him. We're no longer living like the world lives, no longer living for self.

The world may look at us and say we have lost our life. No, we saved our life by giving it to Jesus! One day He will come to take us home.

What we did in surrendering unto Jesus is to save our life: but what the world did in striving to save their life is lose it. They won't be ready to meet Jesus at His coming.

This text lays out two principles for us. Both of them are given as a warning to us, showing us the conditions that would prevail, and causing us to want to stand true and faithful to God: to stand in the way of holiness and righteousness before Him, not taking up with the way of the ungodly.

All we read about concerning the days of Noah and the days of Lot we want no part of. The day we're living in is only going to grow worse until the end. There's so much wickedness and ungodliness in our day that it makes one's head swim.

Know that there is a real importance for us to walk every day on the straight and narrow path with God, keeping our eyes upon Him, keeping our hearts with all diligence, keeping in tune — and waiting.

One day we're going to see Jesus. One day we're going to be caught up, changed as glorified vessels. We going to go up to be with Him throughout eternity. And we have every reason to live completely yielded to the Lord. We're not losing anything. We only gain in the end. We who make the rapture — who make the end of the age, who make it into heaven — look at what we have gained.

Then look at those who wind up in hell and the burning lake of fire. Look at what they have lost in striving to save their lives. They lost eternal life. They lost having a blessed relationship with God.

We don't want to let up. It's easy enough for people to let up, to slip backwards. You know, people generally slip a service at a time, slipping backwards a little, and then a little more and a little more. The next thing you know they're too far back to gain ground. The devil gives them a new attitude: "I don't have to go to church all the time. I don't have to read the Bible and pray every day."

Woe to those who have such an attitude! Will they get back to where they belong with the Lord? Will they make it back in time?

The Lord has told us to be found watching and praying, found ready for Him at His coming. We want to be part of that glorious church without spot or wrinkle.

If He came right now, would you be ready to go? Or is there something that stands between you and Him this moment, something that would hinder you from being taken?