

A The end is coming for the antediluvian world:

❖ A long-announced end

- The world reels as if it were spinning out of its orbit. Everything shakes. Suddenly, the sky fades like a scroll being rolled up... The hour has come. Jesus appears, filling the heavens with His glory (Rev. 6:12-14).
- But many do not receive it with shouts of joy and gladness, but with cries of panic and fear: "Hide us from the face [...] of the Lamb [Jesus]" (Rev. 6:16).
- Jesus compared the end of the world to the days of Noah (Matthew 24:37). What similarities do you find with the description in Revelation?
- The world was shaken. Along with the rain, waters emerged from the earth itself (Gen. 7:11-12). But it did not happen without warning. For 120 years, the "preacher of righteousness" had been warning of the coming flood (Gen. 6:3; 2 Pet. 2:5).
- Similarly, since the end of the 18th century, people have been preaching about the imminent coming of Jesus. So, those who flee from Jesus at that time will not be because of ignorance but because they have not wanted to believe in Him.

❖ The closing of the door of grace

- Seven days before the flood, Noah entered the ark, and God closed the door (Gen. 7:1-4, 15-16).
- Despite observing extraordinary events, such as the peaceful entry of the animals into the ark, they continued with their daily activities (Luke 17:27). No one wanted to enter the ark before the door was closed.
- World events warn us of Jesus' imminent arrival. It is our duty to warn this world and give them the opportunity to accept Jesus before the door of divine grace closes. Many will scoff, but others will accept. Take heart, the final harvest will be far more abundant than that reaped by Noah!

B The end comes for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah:

❖ The reasons for the destruction

- Jesus compared His Second Coming to the time when Lot was taken out of Sodom and fire consumed the city (Luke 17:28-30).
- If the comparison with the time of Noah speaks to us of unbelief, the times of Lot speak to us of immorality and social disorder (Jude 1:7; Ezek. 16:49-50; 2 Pet. 2:6-8).
- The hearts of men have always been wicked (Jer. 17:9; Rom. 1:24-32). Even Christians have committed shameful acts. However, these days, wickedness is proclaimed as virtue, and virtue is ridiculed. Consciences, like David's, have been numbed.
- Our world needs people like Nathan who will awaken those consciences and encourage them with the message: "The LORD has already forgiven your sin, and you will not die" (2 Sam. 12:13 NIV).

❖ The judgment before destruction

- The wickedness of Sodom was evident. But before destroying it, God carried out an investigative judgment (Gen. 18:21). Accompanied by two angels, he went to Sodom and intentionally passed by Abraham's house.
- Unwilling to hide his intentions from Abraham, he told him what he was going to do (Gen. 18:17-21; Amos 3:7). Then the unexpected happened: God's own character was judged (Gen. 18:23-25).
- For a thousand years, we will have opportunity to review divine judgment, and to know for ourselves the just character of God in his dealings with sin (Rev. 20:4).

C The end of our world is coming:

❖ The judgment before the close of grace

- Daniel recounts a scene of judgment taking place in Heaven while human activities continue their course, oblivious to what is happening there (Dan. 7:9-12).
- At that judgment before the Second Coming, Jesus is recognized as worthy of receiving "dominion, glory, and a kingdom" (Dan. 7:13-14). Then, he will come to end the history of this world (Dan. 7:26) and make us sharers in his eternal kingdom (Dan. 7:27).
- Does God need to make a judgment to determine who is saved? He doesn't, but his angels do. That's why he sent angels to Sodom to investigate before destroying it (Gen. 18:21-22).
- The time between the end of the Judgment and the Second Coming is exemplified by the closing of the ark's door seven days before the flood. Every case will have been decided, and divine grace will have covered all of us who have clung to it (James 2:12-13; 1 John 4:17).