Man's Progress Toward Evil

Following the death of Abel, the record follows the generations of Adam through Seth unto Noah. Very little is said about the first sixteen hundred years of man's existence. The genealogy of Adam is given to direct the reader to Noah. Noah was five hundred years old and begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth (Gen. 5:32). The record says, "the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thought of the heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5). Considering Jehovah's dealings with the nations of the world, it is evident that Jehovah gave pre-flood humanity every opportunity to repent.

When Jehovah promised Abram the land of Canaan, he said, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be sojourners in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. But thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. And in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full" (Gen. 15:13-16). When Jehovah destroyed the nations that possessed Canaan, it was due to their sins. Jehovah told Israel, "Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out from before you; and the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land vomiteth out her inhabitants" (Lev. 18:24-25). Even today, when a person degenerates into a condition of no return and becomes a danger to society, they are put away, either by death or confinement for life. The wrath of God has been "revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Romans 1:18) time and again. So it was with those of the pre-flood days whose wickedness was great in the earth, "and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." The Apostle Peter said, concerning the days of the flood, that Noah was "a preacher of righteousness" (2 Pet. 2:5) and that through him, Christ in the spirit preached unto those "that aforetime were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing" (1 Pet. 3:19-20).

Jesus said, concerning those who are spiritually prosperous: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth

good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men" (Matt. 5:13): Noah was that salt.

Thus, God "preserved Noah with seven others" (2 Pet. 2:5). "By faith Noah, being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith" (Hebrews 11:7).

For sixteen hundred years, mankind drew closer and closer, day by day unto destruction because the "imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." What of today? Jehovah said, "the heavens that now are, and the earth, by the same word have been stored up for fire, being reserved against the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men" (2 Pet. 3:7). Will mankind heed the warning, or be like those of old who failed to recognize God's right to rule in their life? ret