



## **A Spiritual Encouragement Message**

**April 7, 2020**

My beloved brothers and sisters, this current bad situation may well be barely starting but we all need to understand that no matter how bad it gets, it will only be temporary.

Our hope and faith come from God's Word, so I want to transport your minds to the first global destructive event recorded in Scriptures. I will not force Scriptures into the wrong framework, and it is not my intention to domesticate the Bible stories. But I believe right now during this mandatory stay-cation we can really learn a great lesson from Noah's experience in the Ark. Noah never even saw rain in his life before (Genesis 2:4-6, Hebrews 11:7). Noah never experienced a flood before, but one thing he knew. It was going to be only temporary. In a similar way, during our lifetime we had never seen a global pandemic as strong as Covid-19. We just never personally experienced a pandemic of this contagious speed and magnitude. But from other pandemics in world history, we know it will get worse but it will also be only temporary.

We are all going through very uncomformable temporary life changes but let's remember Noah's life changed drastically for at least 120 years (Genesis 6:3). Noah and his triplets (Genesis 5:32) had to dedicate a really big period of their lives to build the wooden Ark and be prepared to survive the global flood. Today kids have fun playing with toy replicas of Noah's Ark, they watch entertaining cartoons of the Ark, and have beautiful drawings of it. But it was probably not a fun, entertaining, or beautiful experience for Noah and his family. Now imagine you and your family one year and ten days confined in the same place (Genesis 7:11-13, 8:13-16). The Ark was huge with three decks, but for that same reason it was really dark inside because it was covered inside and outside with tar, and only had a very small window on the top deck (Genesis 6:14-16), and that window was closed for the first forty days because of the rain (Genesis 8:6). Their only source of light was possibly oil lamps. The first

days inside they could hear the nonstop rain, lightning, and thunder, the wooden Ark creaking, along with bad people crying, yelling, cursing and scratching the Ark with their finger nails trying to get in as they drowned washed away (Genesis 7:17-23). If you ever had a pet, you can have a small idea of the smells inside the Ark 24,7,365, by having it literally filled with all kinds of animals (Genesis 6:19-22). Noah and his family spent that whole year feeding animals and cleaning manure in the dark. Thank God the animals were not carnivorous in the beginning (Genesis 1:30). To be stuck for a whole year inside that Ark does not sound like a great blessing, but you had to be in there to be saved, to preserve your life and humanity (Genesis 6:17-18, 1 Peter 3:20).

God provided us the Scriptures so we can learn from those examples like Noah and his family (Romans 15:4), in a similar manner, but obviously with greater undeserved conditions today, we just need to do our individual parts and remain temporarily in our arks to save our lives and the lives of others we come in contact with. If you really have to get out of your ark remember this, "stay six feet apart to stay six feet above."

In Christ,

Oscar Velazquez