

# PREPARING TO STAND

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“In this age, just prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven, God calls for men who will prepare a people to stand in the great day of the Lord.” SW 3/21/1905

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## PREPARING FOR THE NO BUY / NO SELL LIFESTYLE

by Jim Buller

A prudent person foresees danger and takes precautions.  
The simpleton goes blindly on and suffers the consequences.  
(Proverbs 22:3, NLT.)

We have a practical illustration of the principle in this verse in the experience of Noah. What he went through should be of special interest to us since Jesus points us to him as an example of what will happen in the end-times, (see Matthew 24:37, and also 1 Corinthians 10:11.) So let's take a look at the summary of Noah's experience in Hebrews 11:7, and see how it might parallel ours.

By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

Noah prepared the ark as a result of his faith in the 'divine warning.' So, what have we been "divinely warned" about, that we would be "prudent" to "take precautions," and "prepare" for? Actually, there are several things, but one of the main ones is found in Revelation 13:16-17. Here, we are warned,

He, [the beast with lamb-like horns from verse eleven], causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

The time will come when those who refuse to receive the Mark of the Beast will not be able to buy or sell. [Note: From previous studies it has been found that this will happen during the first part of the Time of Trouble —that is, after the first *national* Sunday Law, but before our final flight to the “most desolate and solitary places” during the time of the Seven Last Plagues. (See *Great Controversy*, page 626). Some people have referred to this time period as the ‘Little Time of Trouble.’ However, I am not totally comfortable with this term, as the word ‘Little,’ in this context could be misleading. (Also, to my knowledge, Ellen White does not use this term.) This study will focus on the issues connected with not being able to buy or sell, how not being able to buy or sell will impact our lifestyle, and what we can do to prepare.] As we think about the issue of the ‘Mark of the Beast,’ we need to keep in mind the warning of the third angel in Revelation 14:9-11.

If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.

The “wine of the wrath of God” mentioned here, is a direct reference to the ‘Seven Last Plagues,’ (see Revelation 15:1 and 16:1). These plagues therefore, will be poured out on those who receive the ‘Mark of the Beast.’ But, it is even more serious than that. Just before the plagues are poured out, ‘Probation’ closes, (see Revelation 15:8). And those who the plagues are poured out on blaspheme God and do not repent, (see Revelation 16:9, 11 and 21). Being “tormented with fire and brimstone” refers to the final destruction of the wicked. (See Matthew 25:41, Revelation 19:20, 20:9-10.) So, the plagues will be poured out on those who receive the ‘mark of the beast’ and they will end up eternally lost.

As we read earlier, the power represented by the ‘beast with lamb-like horns,’ will use economic sanctions in its attempt to force everyone to receive the ‘Mark of the Beast.’ This brings about a serious crisis! If you *don’t* receive the ‘mark,’ you will not be able to buy or sell, but if you *do* receive the ‘mark,’ the seven last plagues will be poured out on you, and you will be eternally lost.

To make matters worse, our current ‘consumer society’ has set us up to receive the ‘Mark of the Beast.’ Most of us simply buy everything rather than producing the things we need. So if we are not able to buy things, how are we going to get what we need? Unfortunately, for a couple generations already, many of us have been living this consumer lifestyle. As a result, we haven’t developed the skills, nor do we have the necessary equipment to be able to make what we need for ourselves. What’s more, most of us are not located where we are able to obtain, or produce, the raw materials we would need to be able to make things. For example, there *are* those who knit, sew, make soap, and do woodworking. These are all valuable skills, and they can produce useful items. But, in order to make these things, most of the people who do these crafts have to buy yarn, fabric, oils, and lumber. Few of us are in a position where we can raise our own sheep to spin our own yarn, or grow and press our own oil, or have

access to trees that we can cut to mill our own lumber. It is interesting to note however, that during other historical time periods, turning raw materials into useful objects was a common aspect of day of day life.

As if this wasn't bad enough, there is yet another potential problem that our current culture may cause us. Many of us are used to just pushing a button, turning a knob, or flipping a switch, to get many of the things we need such as cooked food, a drink of water, or heat for our homes. Because it is so easy to get these necessary things, we don't even think of them in terms of 'survival.' But the worst part might be that because it is so easy to get the things we need this way, a lot of us have simply not learned how to work. This is going to make living during the time when we are not able to buy or sell doubly hard on us. Our lazy habits will make it hard for us to do what we need to do in order to survive, and we may end up quite hungry, thirsty, and cold. Although it is tempting to think that being lazy makes life easier, in reality it makes things much more difficult! Keep in mind 2 Thessalonians 3:10, which says, "If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat." Therefore, an important part of preparing for not being able to buy or sell would be to develop some industrious habits.

While we are talking about character traits in preparation for not being able to buy or sell, Philippians 4:11, 1 Timothy 6:7-8, and Hebrews 13:5 describe something else that will be very important. These verses all talk about being content with whatever situation we find ourselves in. This quality will be especially valuable in the troublous times ahead. Both contentment and a willingness to work are important lessons we need to learn, and no doubt God is going to use the time when we are not able to buy or sell to help train us.

Before we go on, let's look a bit more closely at just how not being able to buy or sell would impact our lifestyle:

(1) Because we would not be able to pay the power bill, our electricity would be shut off. No electricity would mean: no lights; no refrigerator or freezer; no electric cook stove; no oven, (as even gas stoves have electric controls anymore); no microwave; no washing machine or dryer, no hot water, (if you have an electric hot water heater); no air conditioning; no furnace, (again, the controls and blower fan are electric); no radio, stereo, or TV; no phone or computer; and no power tools such as blenders, food processors, electric drills or saws, etc.

(2) We would not be able to pay the water bill either, so the water would be shut off. Even if we get water from our own well, we still might not have any water because the pump most likely runs on electricity. So, unless you happen to be set up with a gravity fed, or alternate energy water system, there wouldn't be any 'running water.' This would mean: no kitchen faucet; no shower or bath; no flush toilets; and no water coming out of the faucets outside to water the garden either.

(3) We would not be able to pay for fossil fuels, which would mean: our vehicles would not operate; no gas stove or oven; no gas hot water heater; no furnace; and no power equipment such as lawnmowers, roto-tillers, chain saws, or tractors, etc.

Going without just about any one of these things would make a *huge* impact on our lifestyle! Yet, if we refuse to accept the 'Mark of the Beast,' we are going to have to go without *all of them!* —*and*, deal with being persecuted for our faith on top of that! As was pointed out earlier, our very lifestyle has indeed set us up to receive the Mark of the Beast. Most of us are simply not in any kind of position to live without electrical and fossil fueled powered equipment. A lot of us don't even know how it would be *possible* to live without these things! Which brings us back to our opening verse about "foreseeing danger" and taking "precautions," rather than going "blindly on" and suffering the "consequences." If we fail to prepare for the 'Mark of the Beast,' one way or the other we will indeed be setting ourselves up for much suffering —either from not being able to buy or sell on the one hand, or from the Seven Last Plagues on the other.

All this may seem quite overwhelming! But remember, God *is* our Savior. He is the one who has "divinely warned" us that all this is going to happen, and He has a plan. Noah was probably a bit overwhelmed at the enormity of the task when God first told him about the need to build an huge ark in preparation for the coming flood too. But rather than giving up in discouragement, he "moved with godly fear" as he went to work and "prepared."

Which brings us back to Hebrews 11:7, about how Noah "moved with godly fear," as he "prepared an ark." Now over the years, I have heard many talks and sermons about how the word 'fear,' as it is used in the Bible, doesn't necessarily mean being 'afraid,' and I'm not going to get into all that here. I just want to point out that Noah, 'moving with godly fear,' meant that he took the divine warning, and the necessary preparations, *very seriously!* We should too! Let's not give up in discouragement at the enormity of the task. Let's have faith in God's plan and His promises, and *get serious* about preparing for not being able to buy or sell.

Now remember God didn't just tell Noah about the coming flood, and then let him figure out what to do to get ready. God also told him what to do to prepare, by not only telling him to build an ark, but also telling him how to build it, (see Genesis 6:13-21). In the same way, we should not lean on our own understanding and try to figure out what to do on our own either, (see Proverbs 3:5-6, and John 15:5). God has also told us how we should prepare for not being able to buy or sell. Notice the following quotation from *Country Living*, pages 9-10, (Letter 5, 1904).

Again and again the Lord has instructed that our people are to take their families away from the cities, into the country, where they can raise their own provisions; for in the future the problem of buying and selling will be a very serious one. We should now begin to heed the instruction given us over and over again: Get out of the cities into rural districts, where the houses are not crowded closely together, and where you will be free from the interference of enemies.

God's plan is for us to get set up to be able to "raise [our] own provisions." This can be done most easily in the country where there is space to grow food, and the other raw materials are also available to be able to make the other things we need. In the city, both space and resources are extremely limited —even if we had the skills and the equipment to grow and make what we needed. But that isn't the only reason to get out of the cities, we have also been told,

But ere long there will be such strife and confusion in the cities, that those who wish to leave them will not be able. We must be preparing for these issues. (*Country Living*, page 11.)

So, it is understandable that we have been counseled to locate in the country where we would be away from this “strife and confusion,” and where we would have the resources we needed to be able to ‘raise our own provisions.’ Keep in mind that we have been promised, “God will help His people to find such homes outside the cities.” (*Country Living*, page 24.)

This counsel to ‘raise our own provisions’ is expanded further on page 325 of *Fundamentals of Christian Education*.

The people should learn as far as possible to depend upon the products that they can obtain from the soil.

Notice that it says “products that *they* can obtain from the soil,” not ‘products that *can be* obtained from the soil.’ Let me illustrate: Bananas, are a product that can be obtained from the soil. However, since I do not live in the tropics, bananas are not a product that *I* can obtain from the soil. Now, there is nothing wrong with bananas —they are a good nutritious food. But, since I do not live in the tropics, I need to learn how to get the nutrition I need from plants that will grow in my area, and not depend on bananas, or similar exotic foods.

To be sure we don’t overlook something, let’s systematically analyze everything we need in order to survive. These things are called the ‘Survival Priorities,’ which, by the way, are the same whether we are in the city, in the country, or in the wilderness. (It is strongly recommended that you memorize these Priorities.) ‘Health Issues’ here covers things like: safety, sanitation and hygiene, getting adequate rest, etc. And ‘Fire’ includes both heating and cooking. These Priorities are:

### **Survival Priorities**

- 1. Shelter**
- 2. Water**
- 3. Health Issues**
- 4. Fire**
- 5. Food**

Based on these Priorities, there is an expanded list of actual equipment item categories that we need in order to provide ourselves with the Survival Priorities. (See the following chart.) We will call this expanded list ‘Survival Priority Equipment,’ (or simply ‘Equipment,’ as on this chart). Note that there are actually three different types of shelter that we need to concern ourselves with: (1) ‘body shelter,’ or clothing and footwear; (2) ‘bedding,’ to wrap up in and keep warm when it gets colder at night; as well as (3) a ‘structural shelter’ to protect us from the elements. ‘Tools,’ as the term is used here, is meant in an anthropological sense. Although they are not one of the

Survival Priorities, they enable us to get the Priorities in a much more efficient way. Take a knife for example. We can't eat a knife, but we can use a knife to help harvest and prepare food much more efficiently. (Actually, the water storage bottles, some hygiene items, the fire-starters, and cooking utensils are also 'tools' in this same sense. These have just earned their own spot on this list because they fulfill a particular and definite necessary function.)



It is worth noting that we already have all of these 'Survival Priority Equipment' items connected with our homes. This is because in a very real sense, our homes are our 'survival system.' Some of us may be tempted to think that we don't have some of these items, such as: fire, or cutting/chopping, and digging tools in our homes. However, when we flip the thermostat switch, 'fire' comes on somewhere. Also, someone had to use some kind of 'cutting' tool to cut and mill the lumber to build the house, as well as some kind of 'digging' tools to level out the pad the house sits on, and to dig the trenches for the piping and wiring, etc.

However, most homes nowadays are not set up to function without electricity or gas. For example, a while back meteorologists predicted a big ice storm that would knockout the power in a large part of the country for several days. In connection with this prediction, someone posted on the internet a list of ten or twelve ways you could cook when the power goes out. But all the truly effective methods listed were not safe to do indoors! In order to avoid carbon-monoxide poisoning, or burning your house down, you would have had to go outdoors to cook—but . . . there was a bad storm coming! So in that respect, this post probably wasn't very helpful. However, it does point out that even though most modern houses provide a roof over our heads and a place to store our things, they will not be able to meet all our survival needs without electricity.

But things weren't always this way. A hundred and fifty years, or so, ago, if we had told people that they would have to go without gas or electricity, they probably would have said, "So what." Back then, people were regularly cooking indoors with

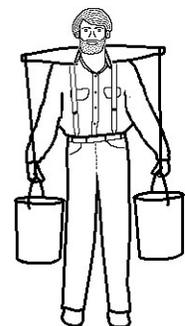
wood in all kinds of weather, as well as doing all the other things they needed to do to survive —without electricity or gas. Unfortunately, because this is a few generations back for most of us, we have ‘lost’ almost all of the knowledge of how to live this way. Thankfully there are various historical re-enactment groups that have worked to keep at least portions of this information alive. We can learn a lot from them. We also have the experience of some of our missionaries who have lived this way in ‘under-developed’ areas around the world that we can draw from.

Now, when we talk about ‘raising our own provisions,’ the first thing most people probably think about is growing a garden. But, everything we need doesn’t necessarily come from a garden —not even all of our food. So, we need to broaden the principle here a bit.

Since we are already on the subject of food, let’s go ahead and start there. In order to produce everything we eat, and have food to eat year around, (not just when things happen to be ‘in season’), we also need to think in terms of berry patches, fruit and nut orchards, and grain fields. Additionally, we would need the equipment and ‘know-how’ to cultivate, harvest, process, and preserve these various foods until next year’s harvest —without using electricity or gas. Moving on from food, we also need to consider all the other ‘Survival Priorities,’ such as a house to live in, an independent source of water, hygiene and sanitation systems, and how to heat our homes in cold weather. We will also need the equipment and ‘know-how’ to be able to provide all these things in a way that does not require gas or electricity.

Let’s talk a bit about where we might get our water from. ‘Ideally,’ there would be a year-around spring, a short distance uphill from our home and garden area. This spring could be ‘tapped,’ and gravity would bring the water down to the house and garden through pipes. If there is enough water flowing from the spring, this simple system would give sufficient volume and pressure at the faucets. The only other thing that might be necessary would be some type of ‘relief valve’ for the water to flow out of when we are not using it.

Although these ‘ideal’ situations do exist, they are actually not that common. For example, the ‘flow rate’ of the spring might be less than ‘ideal.’ In that case, a tank could be installed just below the spring which would be continually filling with water from the spring. Then, in order to provide ample volume and pressure, the water could be piped downhill from the tank to where it is needed. Even more frequently, the spring is located downhill from the house and garden area, and all too often, the property does not have any reliable spring on it. Other options might be lakes or year around streams, a well with an alternate energy system or hand pump, or possibly rain water catchment and storage systems. But how will we get the water from these other sources to the house or garden? Alternate energy systems might be one option. There are also some non-powered methods of piping water to where it is needed that might work in some cases such as ‘hydraulic rams.’ But the ‘back-up’ method would be hauling the water with buckets. Keep in mind that unless the water is coming from a pure source, it would also need to be purified before drinking or cooking with it.



hauling water up from the well

How can we take a shower and get cleaned up if there isn’t any water coming out of the faucets? I remember hearing a story about the early days of Walla Walla

College. They were wanting to put shower units in the dormitories, so they wrote to the General Conference asking for money. However there were no funds available. So in reply, they sent a detailed set of instructions on how to take a 'sponge baths.' To bathe this way, you will need a washbasin and a washcloth. The water can be heated over a fire, or on the wood stove. It is also possible to drill a hole and put a spigot on the lower edge of a bucket, and install a shelf for the bucket in the shower stall or above the bath tub. The bucket can then be filled with warm water, placed on the shelf so that the spigot is sticking out over the edge of the shelf. Then take a shower by opening the spigot.

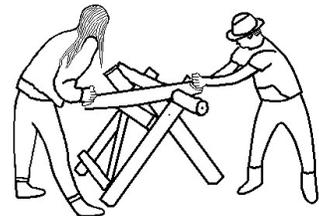
What can we do if the toilets won't flush? Notice these instructions given in Deuteronomy 23:12-13.

Also you shall have a place outside the camp, where you may go out; and you shall have an implement among your equipment, and when you sit down outside, you shall dig with it and turn and cover your refuse.

However if you are in a more permanent location, building an outhouse or having a composting toilet may be more practical than digging a 'cat-hole' every time you have to 'go to the bathroom.'

When we are not able to buy or sell, wood and muscle power is going to take the place of many of the things we use electricity and gas for. Axes and hand saws will cut the firewood that will heat our homes and cook our food. Buckets will haul our water. Spading forks and hoes will cultivate our gardens, and hand-cranked food mills will take the place of electric food processors.

We would be wise to invest in the equipment we need to live this way while we can still buy it. But, we also need to keep in mind those 'last minute converts,' who will not have had a chance to prepare. We also need to consider the possibility that we might lose some things due to disasters or persecution. At that point, we may be able to barter to get some of the things we need, but what do we have that would be of value in trade? Therefore, it will be a good idea to learn how we might be able to grow and/or make everything we need. So let's expand the chart once more, and take a look at the general skills categories that would be necessary in order to grow and/or make all these things.



How large a home do you want to have to heat cutting wood by hand?



Did you notice that certain categories of skills kept coming up over and over again? —agricultural skills, wood working and metal working skills, and fiber arts, (which is everything from spinning thread or yarn, to knitting, crocheting, and weaving, to sewing, etc. this would also include making twine and rope). Now, no one person may be able to be proficient in all these areas, but we would be wise to develop as many of these skills as we can. Start by picking something that God has given you interests and aptitudes in, and work on developing a skill in that area.

In this context, it is worth noting that with the right know-how and equipment, we can produce pretty much everything we need from products that can be obtained from the soil. (Or as in the case of metal tools, metal can be scrounged and then turned into useful objects by blacksmithing.) The only thing we might not be able to obtain from the soil would be salt, (unless we lived near the ocean or a salt deposit). It is also worth noting here that there is one other thing that we would probably like to have that is fairly easy to grow, but more difficult to process, and that is oil. Oil is needed, not just for cooking, but also for making soap, and for lighting, (and possibly lubrication). Although there are small oil presses available on the market, these are designed primarily for making essential oils, and would not necessarily be efficient for producing the quantity of oil we would want for cooking and soap making.

There is a description of what life will be like when we are not able to buy or sell on pages 427-428 of Selected Messages Book 3. This statement tells us a lot! and it has many implications besides what we are able to explore here.

The time of trouble was upon us. I saw our people in great distress, weeping and praying, pleading the sure promises of God, while the wicked were all around us mocking us and threatening to destroy us. They ridiculed our feebleness, they mocked at the smallness of our numbers, and taunted us with words calculated to cut deep. They charged us with taking an

independent position from all the rest of the world. They had cut off our resources so that we could not buy or sell, and they referred to our abject poverty and stricken condition. They could not see how we could live without the world. We were dependent on the world, and we must concede to the customs, practices, and laws of the world, or go out of it. If we were the only people in the world whom the Lord favored, the appearances were awfully against us.

As a result of not being able to buy or sell, God's people are described as being in "abject poverty." Now, most of us probably associate this term with 'homeless' people. So the picture we get here is that because we are not able to buy or sell, we will essentially be living like the 'homeless.' This raises an interesting question: 'What happened to that nice country home with alternate-energy comfort that some are striving so hard to get all set up?' Well, maybe it will simply be so full of fellow 'refugees' that it is no longer 'nice,' or 'comfortable.' Or perhaps it was destroyed by a natural disaster, or as a result of persecution. Another possibility is mentioned in Matthew 10:23, where Jesus said, "When they persecute you in this city, flee to another." In connection with this verse, *Testimonies for the Church Vol. 6*, page 478 states:

If persecution comes there, go to still another place. God will lead His people, making them a blessing in many places. Were it not for persecution they would not be so widely scattered abroad to proclaim the truth.

So the need to re-locate may be a very real possibility. Whatever the reason, that nice comfortable home just doesn't seem to be a part of the picture any more! In this context, please note that Ellen White did *not* say that, 'If we had a home in the country we would live like kings and queens during Time of Trouble.' Look up: *Adventist Home*, page 141; *Country Living*, page 18; or *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, page 326 to find out what she *did* say. Notice that these quotations are talking about *now*, not describing conditions in the middle of the time of trouble!

This brings up another interesting question: 'If we are only going to lose that nice comfortable home anyway, why work so hard to get it all set up with expensive alternate energy systems?' To look at this from another angle: Picture us shortly after we get to heaven, sitting around under the mango tree, (as my friend Damian likes to say). After we express how thankful we are to finally be in heaven, we start talking about what we have just gone through. Are we going to be saying things like, "I sure wish we had been able to install that solar system so we could have been more comfortable during the Time of Trouble?" —No! We are going to be wishing we had done more, and done it sooner, so that at least one more person would have made it to heaven! So it seems like we would be wise to focus more on how to provide 'the simple basic necessities,' rather than letting comfort and convenience be our major pursuit.

Notice also the connection between the need to have the practical skills we discussed earlier and the concept of "privation" and "abject poverty" in the following from *Manuscript Releases, Vol 19*, page 26.

Privation may be the lot of every soul who now believes and obeys the truth. Christ has told us that we will have reproach. If persecution for the truth's

sake is to come, it is important that every line of work become familiar to us, that we and our families may not suffer through lack of knowledge. We can and should have tact and knowledge in trades, in building, in planting, and in sowing. A knowledge of how to cultivate the land will make rough places much smoother. This knowledge will be counted a great blessing, even by our enemies.

So, what does the type of preparation described in these quotations look like? If you already have a place in the country, start learning how to get by without electricity or gas. Develop an independent source of water, get serious about growing, processing and preserving your own food. Start collecting hand tools. And think about what you might be able to do to house the ‘refugee’ families God sends your way. If there are other believers who have country properties in your area, work toward developing a network with them, and plan together for the coming crisis.

If you haven’t been able to get a place in the country yet, start developing skills and collecting key equipment items. It might be helpful to think: Are we going to be an ‘asset’ or a ‘liability’ to the group God connects us with? To illustrate this concept, let’s contrast two different families who are still living in the same large city at the time of the first national Sunday law. Remember, this law marks the beginning of the Time of Trouble and is our signal to flee the large cities, (see Matthew 24:15-21, Luke 21:20-21, and *Testimonies for the Church Vol. 5*, page 464-465). Since this will probably happen before we are not able to buy or sell, we will picture both families still being able to buy gas, which would enable them to flee from the city in their vehicles. For the purpose of our illustration here, let’s assume that both of these families also know a third family that already lives in the country. This third family has generously ‘invited’ both families to come to their place if they don’t have anywhere else to go when they have to flee, and they have also extended this same ‘invitation’ to several other believers as well.

Like Lot and his family, the first family in our illustration hasn’t prepared. When they reluctantly realized that it was time to flee —*NOW!*— they just grabbed a few personal items, got in their smallish car and drove off, (probably repeating Matthew 24:17-18 and Luke 17:32 to themselves).

When they ‘showed up’ at the third family’s property, a place had to be found for them to stay. Since, there were several others already there who had also accepted the third family’s ‘invitation,’ the first family ended up living in a corner of the already overcrowded small house. Since it was late in the day, everyone worked to scrounge up some bedding for them to sleep with.

“Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.” (Matthew 24:17-18.)

“Remember Lot’s wife.” (Luke 17:32.)

In the morning, everyone had a hearty breakfast, but the wife of the third family was overheard saying, “With this group, the food we have here won’t last long.” After breakfast there was a group meeting, during which chores for the day were assigned. But, the first family in our illustration had to be shown how to use the tools in the garden and orchard, how to safely cut firewood, and because they had frequently ate out, they

even had to learn how to prepare food 'from scratch.' So it actually took everyone longer to get things done.

Often they were tempted to complain about the 'sub-standard' living conditions, the dirt, and the bugs. It was definitely a challenge for them just to do their part of the workload. Their inclination toward laziness together with their somewhat negative attitude tried the patience of the rest of the group. However as loving brothers and sisters in Jesus, they were willing to work with them and help them grow.

Their lack of preparation in all these areas would definitely put an additional strain on the already limited resources, as well as on the social and spiritual structure of the group. Because they had to be provided with even their basic necessities, because of their lack of practical skills, and because of their attitudes towards work and discomfort, they would have been a 'liability.'

On the other hand, like Noah and his family, the second family in our illustration did prepare. Although due to their situation, they had not been able to purchase country property of their own, they still did what they could. They realized that when they had to flee they would probably be going to someone else's place in the country, and after much thought and prayer determined that they would be an 'asset' when they got there.

They had been living in a 2<sup>nd</sup> story apartment, so they didn't have any yard. But they still wanted to get some experience 'raising their own provisions.' So, after thinking and praying about it, they started growing some simple vegetables in a couple of pots on their small balcony deck. Soon, their deck was crowded with as many containers as they could fit on it. They even had a dwarf fruit tree.

Since 'Shelter' is the #1 Priority, they concluded that if they were going to truly be an 'asset' they would somehow have to provide their own shelter. Otherwise, they would have to depend on the owners of the property for something to live in. Bringing their own place to stay would contribute more toward them being an 'asset' than anything else. So, they prayed, and did some research on various shelter options. As a result, they purchased a canvas wall tent with a 'stove jack,' and a small wood burning 'tent stove' to go with it.

To practice living the no buy / no sell lifestyle, they regularly went camping. On these trips they spent time in nature, practiced skills, and became familiar with how to make life without electricity or gas work. From the experience they gained while camping, they realized the need for other key equipment items, such as: rugged clothing, good bedding, containers for water, a large washbasin, a folding table, an axe, a bow saw, and a shovel.

They soon realized that there wouldn't be room for themselves and all this gear in their smallish vehicle. When they actually had to flee they would want to take even more than they took when they went camping. So after thinking and praying about what they should do, they decided to have a trailer hitch installed on their car, and buy a small inexpensive utility trailer that they could tow with their vehicle.

As they recognized the nearness of the time to flee, they began in earnest to collect some of the other equipment items that they didn't already have: a grain grinder, a wheelbarrow, and a crosscut saw. Because storage space was limited in their apartment, they made an organized pile of gear in one corner of their living room. These things, along with their personal items, were kept ready to go so they could quickly load up the car and trailer and head out of town when the time came to leave.

They had also already made several visits to the third family's property. While there, they would help with whatever needed to be done on the homestead, and share spiritually with the third family. On one of these visits, as they talked with the third family, it was decided that they should pick out a spot for their camp. So they trimmed the trees and bushes in the area, leveled out a pad for their tent, and cut and stacked some firewood.

When the time came to flee, they loaded up their car and trailer and drove out of town. Once they 'showed up' at the third family's property, they simply 'checked in' with them, then drove over to their spot. As they put up their tent, set up the wood stove, brought in the folding table, unfolded their cots and sleeping mats, spread out their sleeping bags, brought in the boxes of food and utensils, and the duffles with their clothes, everyone in the family helped—even the kids. They all knew just what to do, and just where everything needed to go.

Although their tent wasn't large, they had a warm, dry place to live. They had their own adequate clothing and bedding. In many ways they were better off than those at the house. At the very least they had their own privacy as a family.

Since they had brought their own equipment, they were able to haul their own water, bathe themselves, wash their own clothes, cut their own firewood, and cook their own food. They were also able 'pitch right in' with the work that needed to be done in garden and orchard. The wheelbarrow they brought was a great blessing to everyone, hauling produce from the garden, biomass to the compost pile, and firewood to and from the woodpiles.

As they saw the crowded conditions at the house, they took over much of the stores of food they had brought with them. They had learned to sew as a part of their preparations, and brought a hand-cranked sewing machine with them. So when they noticed that there was quite a bit of clothing being shared among the group, they were able to help alter some of the clothing so it would fit the person who was wearing it better. They had also learned a bit about construction, and brought along some basic construction tools. So, when one of the other people in the group was able to get some lumber, they were able to help build a couple small cabins to relieve the overcrowding at the house.

Because they were missionary minded, they helped to organize the group's evangelistic team that would go to visit and share the end-time gospel message with the neighbors, the nearby country community, and even the city they had left behind. They had also studied 'medical missionary work.' So whenever someone in the group, one of the neighbors, or someone the evangelistic team had contacted became injured or sick, they were able to help.

During their earlier study of the prophecies they had recognized the need to be able to 'endure to the end,' (see Matthew 24:13), so they began looking at the end-time scene a whole. In doing so they realized that in addition to fleeing from the cities to the country at the first national Sunday law, they also needed to be prepared to flee to the "most desolate and solitary places" at the Death Decree shortly after the Seven Last Plagues began to be poured out. (Great Controversy, page 626, 627-628, and *Early Writings*, pages 36-37.) As a result, they had started learning about wilderness survival. From then on, in the evenings and on their camping trips they would practice bushcraft skills, and as a family, they had even gone on a couple survival trips, taking only minimal gear for practice. This knowledge and experience enabled them to teach the

rest of the group about wild edible plants and other wilderness skills in preparation for when they would all have to leave the country property, and flee to the wilderness.

Due to their own research and previous visits to the homestead, they knew life in the country would be a lot of hard work. Because of their diligent study and belief in the end-time prophecies, they were also diligent about their preparations. They collected necessary equipment. They practiced as much as they could by growing their container garden, going camping, and learning skills in the evenings. The time and effort they put into these activities, together with their Christian attitudes in general, helped to develop in them a willingness to work, and the group never heard any of them complain, even their children.

This second family had 'taken precautions' and prepared themselves. They were set up not only to be able to take care of themselves, but to also be a blessing to others. From their others-centered focus in life, and their seriousness about preparing for the things we have been divinely warned about, it was obvious that Jesus was living in their hearts. Their faith was made evident by their works. This second family was definitely an 'asset!' Everyone in the group was glad they were there.

On the following page is a list of the basic equipment items that would enable us to live the no buy / no sell lifestyle. Actually, it ended up being two lists. The first list is put together with a family that has a limited budget and a relatively small vehicle in mind. (The gospel needs to be preached to the poor. See Luke 4:18.) They would therefore have very limited space to transport themselves and their belongings. So this list contains what might be called the 'Minimal Absolutely Essential' items. These are the things a household, (of whatever size), would need to be able to function with at least some degree of independence without electricity or gas. If you are a single person and anticipate living by yourself, you will still need all of these things. If you are planning to be living with a group, the group will collectively need all of them.

The second list has additional items that would be HIGHLY desirable, but that might take up too much space in a small vehicle, and therefore should not crowd out any of the items on the first list. In other words, plan on bringing ALL of the items on the first list, and as many of the items on the second list as possible, with a more substantial shelter being the highest priority!

Remember that we need to flee from the cities at the first *national* Sunday law. This will probably be before we are not able to buy or sell. So we should still be able to use our vehicles at that point.

PLEASE NOTE: although the *principles* are essentially the same, this is NOT a list for fleeing to the "most desolate and solitary places" during the later part of the Time of Trouble—that is a whole another study.

### MINIMAL ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL 'GRAB & GO' LIST for COUNTRY LIVING

- Adequate Clothing: rugged clothing for both warm and cold weather (hats, scarves)
- Blankets/Sleeping Bags
- Sleeping Pads/Mats
- Tarp(s): 10'x12' treated canvas (for shelter covering —about 1 tarp per person)
- Water Bottles and Water Purification Device
- Water Jug (3-5 gal)
- Buckets (for hauling water, washing, and a waste water bucket)
- Wash Basin/Wash Tub
- Towels & Wash-Clothes
- Personal Hygiene Items (toothbrush, hair brush, soap, deodorant, toilet paper, etc.)
- First-Aid Kit
- Fire-Starter(s)
- Food (especially dried foods)
- Cooking Pots
- Mixing Bowls
- Cutting Board
- Cooking Utensils
- Spoons & Forks
- Knives
- Axe (1 ½ to 3 lb head)
- Bow-Saw
- Sharpening Stones/Files
- Shovel
- Cordage (twine, rope, etc)
- Pack/Bag/Boxes/Containers —to store and carry all this in

### HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

- Work Gloves
- Sewing Supplies (hand-cranked sewing machine)
- Cots (for sleeping on —allow storage space underneath)
- A Canvas Tent with a 'stove jack' (so it can have a small wood stove inside, such as a 'canvas outfitters wall tent' or 'camping yurt') -or- an RV with a wood stove
- 'Tent Stove' & accessories (stove pipe, spark arrester/rain cap, poker, ash shovel, ash bucket)
- Broom
- Cross-Cut Saw
- Splitting Axe/Maul
- Construction Tools (carpentry, masonry, roofing, etc.)
- Safety Equipment (goggles, etc.)
- 'Dutch Oven'
- Grain Grinder (hand-cranked, or pedal powered?)
- 'Heirloom' Seeds
- Gardening Tools: spading fork, rake, hoe, pitch fork, clippers, hand trowel
- Wheelbarrow

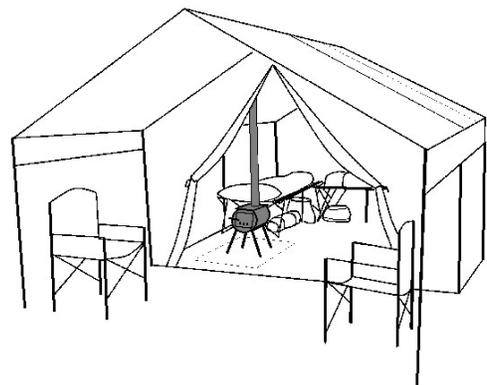
Keep in mind that ‘Shelter’ is the first priority. You WILL need a warm, dry place to live—not only on that first night you arrive, but possibly also along the way there. Therefore, as noted in the illustration story, having your own ‘Shelter’ will probably do more toward making you an ‘asset’ than anything else! In other words, if you don’t have your own ‘Shelter,’ you will have to rely on someone else to provide you with a warm, dry place to live, which in itself will make you a ‘liability.’

Probably the first thing we might think of for a portable ‘Shelter’ might be an RV. However, many families are not be able to either afford an RV, or tow one with their small vehicle. So they need other options. Another problem with RVs is that they typically rely on propane for heating and cooking. But when we are not able to buy or sell, we will not be able to get any more propane. So, although a simple solar system might be able to keep an RV’s electrical components functioning, without propane to run the heater, it can get really cold!—and, you wouldn’t be able to cook inside either. It is possible that some RVs might be able to be set up with a wood stove, but this would not be an option for many of them. Therefore, one way or another, an RV is probably not a viable option most people.

Based on our research and experience, we have found that, under continuous use, typical camping tents, which are made of synthetic materials, will only last a couple of seasons. Many ‘homeless’ people also cover their tents with a ‘poly’ tarp or plastic sheeting to make them more weather proof. However, both ‘poly’ tarps and plastic sheeting also only last a few months when continuously exposed to the elements. This shelter system *only* works if the tarp coverings and tent itself are replaced regularly, which will not be a viable option when we are not able to buy or sell.

In contrast, treated canvas can last many years! That is why simple 10' x 12' treated canvas tarps are the ‘Shelter’ option on the ‘minimal—absolutely essential’ list. (Larger canvas tarps are considerably heavier and harder to handle. So if you need more coverage, you may want to bring more tarps, rather than getting a larger one.) Tarp shelters can be set up many different ways, (please do a little research). It is also possible to have a campfire in connection with some of these tarp-shelter designs, so the shelter could be heated, and you would be able to cook without having to ‘go outside’ in bad weather.

Note that there is another ‘Shelter’ option on the ‘Highly Recommended’ items list. We consider this to be a much better option than just tarps. But a wall tent would be bulkier and more expensive. Keep in mind that even if you don’t end up living in a tarp shelter, the tarp(s) would definitely not be a waste of expense or effort as they come in handy for many other things.



As noted in the illustration story, a good way to practice and get accustom to living the no buy / no sell lifestyle is to go camping! Make sure the whole family get’s involved in doing the ‘camp chores.’ Since you never know what might happen, everyone needs to know how to make this lifestyle work. While you are at it, take the opportunity to get close to God through His creation. Remember Adam and Eve lived in a garden, and on the earth

made new, we will be living there again. So our end-time experiences may very well be an important part of our 'final training' for heaven.

In closing, here are a couple more thoughts worth contemplating in connection with all this:

(1) At what point in Noah's experience was it no longer 'business as usual?' Probably as soon as God told Him to build the ark. So from then until the flood came, building the ark was the 'usual business.' Also keep in mind that no one paid Noah to build it either! So he had to earn a living, which included raising three boys, while he was building the ark. Yes, God helped him, but he still had to do the work.

(2) If we recognize that 'wars, famines, diseases, and earthquakes' *are* becoming more frequent and more intense, then we must also recognize that the end-time 'birth pains' have already begun! (See Matthew 24:6-8.) And when a pregnant woman goes into labor, it is definitely no longer time for 'business as usual.' It is time to take some definite action!

Brothers and sisters, we have another 'ark' to build. Unfortunately, many of us are already years behind in getting it built! Let's follow Noah's 'prudent' example and begin in earnest to 'prepare.' Let's not just 'go blindly on and suffer the consequences.' Let's follow Noah's 3-Point Preparation Plan, (based on Genesis 6:9, John 15:1-8, and Hebrews 11:7):

1. Be very deliberate and intentional about our relationship with God.
2. Allow the Holy Spirit to work through us to benefit and bless others.
3. Be serious about preparing physically for what we have been "divinely warned" about, by:
  - (a) Developing habits of being willing to work, and of being content in uncomfortable situations.
  - (b) Learning self-sufficiency skills.
  - (c) Working toward obtaining the necessary equipment.
  - (d) Working toward positioning ourselves in the country where we can 'raise our own provisions.'
  - (e) Re-outfitting our country homes as necessary so they will function without electricity or gas
  - (f) Becoming familiar with how the no buy/no sell lifestyle works

This is a huge job! —but so was building the ark! Remember that Jesus said, "Without Me, you can do nothing." (John 15:5.) He doesn't expect us to do all of this on our own. He wants to help us, and open the way for us.