

THE FAITH OF NOAH

The following study is based on *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."*

1. **Noah was warned of God of things not seen as yet. What had Noah never seen before?**

- *Genesis 2:5-6*

5 And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. 6 But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

- Noah had never seen rain. God watered the whole world with a mist that came up from beneath, not above.
- Another proof that it had never rained before:
- *Genesis 9:12-15*

12 And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: 13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. 14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: 15 And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

- God made a promise that He would never destroy the world by a flood ever again. What was the token of the covenant that God would use to remind Noah of that? It was a rainbow.
- If a rainbow had been seen before, then God could not use it. Because the last time that Noah saw a rainbow was before the flood and then the whole world was destroyed by water.
- So the rainbow must have been something new that had never been seen before. And every time it rained, which was a reminder of Noah of the flood, that he would see the rainbow in the sky and would remind him of God's promise to him.

2. **What was it that moved Noah to start to build an ark?**

- This ark was probably the biggest thing that had ever been built at that time. It had to house all the animals that had been created by God - the ones that lived on land and air of course. The sea animals didn't have to be housed as they lived in water.
- But according to Hebrews 11:7, what was it that moved Noah to build this immense structure? It was faith!
- Remember that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:17). So God tells Noah that he is going to do something that has never been done before. Not just referring to the flood, but by the way that God will destroy the earth through rain, water falling down from the sky.
- I can imagine Noah's conversation with God:
 - God: Noah, this world has become so wicked. I'm going to start over. I'm going to destroy this world with a flood but I'm going to save you.
- What do you think Noah's reply would be?
 - Noah: OK God. But uh... what's a flood?
 - God: Well you see, I'm going to cover the whole world with water and every living thing will perish, including man.
 - Noah: OK God. But how are you going to do that? Where will the water come from?
 - God: You see Noah, I'm going to send rain to pour out on the earth.
- What do you think Noah would say?
 - Noah: God, uh.... What is rain?
- Remember Noah had never seen rain before.
 - God: It's water that's going to fall down from the sky over the whole earth. There's going to be so much water that will come down that even the highest mountain will be covered.
- Noah at that point had to make a decision as to whether he would believe God or not. He had never seen rain before. He had never seen a flood before.
- God does not ask Noah to stand back so that God would make it rain off in the distance to prove that such a thing could be done.
- Even though faith comes by hearing the word of God, Noah then had to choose whether to believe the word of God or not.
- But faith is like that. It helps you to believe in things never seen before!
 - Like a person walking on water.
 - Or how the whole world and all its amazing intricacies were created in just six days by a being that simply spoke it all into existence!

3. **So after God warns Noah of things not seen as yet, what does Noah do?**

- He moves with fear and begins to build an ark (Hebrews 11:7).
- Noah wasn't scared. That's not what the fear meant.

- Fear in the Greek means - to be apprehensive (anxious or fearful that something bad or unpleasant will happen), to reverence, to act cautiously and circumspectly (wary and willing to take risks).
 - Noah reverenced and respected God. He could believe God's word because he had a relationship with God.
- 4. If you were Noah and you believed God that He would destroy the whole world with a flood, covering the whole earth with water, where would you choose as the ideal location to build this big boat?**
- I would build it in the middle of a forest.
 - Everything will be covered anyways.
 - It will be best to build it near trees because that's the number one material that you need.
- 5. So as Noah begins to build the ark he starts to solicit help from friends, people begin to find out. And by and by, people probably become more curious as to what he is doing as word gets out. So I can imagine people coming to Noah and having a conversation with him:**
- People: So Noah, what are you doing?
 - Noah: I'm building an ark, a big boat!
 - What question do you think you would ask next if you were his friend?
 - People: Uh, why are you building a big boat?
 - Noah: Because God told me to!
 - People: OK... but why did God tell you to build a boat?
 - Noah: You see, God told me he's going to destroy the whole world with a flood because it's gotten really wicked.
 - What's the next question you'd ask Noah?
 - People: Noah, what's a flood?
 - Noah: Well, God's going to cover the whole world with water.
 - People: And how is God going to do that?
 - Noah: God is going to send rain!
 - People: What's rain?
 - Noah: You see, God's going to send water from above and make it to pour down on the earth.
 - At this point, you're thinking that Noah has gone crazy! No one has ever seen rain before and people were going to arrive at that answer sooner or later simply because he was building this big boat!
 - When we follow God, faith does not always take us down a path that seems logical. It will make us look radical and seem out of place in this world.

- Example - Peter walking on water, being faithful on the Sabbath and willing to lose your job or scholarship, believing in creation and not evolution.

Every hammer blow, every section of the ark being built, all of it was a testament to Noah's faith in God's word. There must have been people that would have scoffed at what he was doing. But this is where faith must come in. Our relationship with God and our trust in His word must be the foundation of all that we do. An abiding trust and confidence in who God is.

6. Notice what the Bible says about Noah:

- *2 Peter 2:5*
And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.
- Noah was a preacher of righteousness. He had opportunity to preach as the ark attracted much attention and people would ask the why. Always it would lead back to the answer that God had given him - because the world is getting wicked! You got to repent and help me build this ark and then get on it!

7. How long did Noah preach for?

- *Genesis 6:3*
And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.
- God had given Noah 120 years before He would bring the flood upon the world.
- For 120 years Noah preached the same message - a flood is coming! Get on the ark!

8. But before we can be a preacher of righteousness, we must BE righteous! Look at what the Bible describes of Noah:

- *Genesis 7:1*
And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.
 - God declared Noah righteous!
- *Genesis 6:9*
These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.
 - Notice here that the Bible describes Noah walking with God.
 - That is the same description that is given to someone we studied previously - Enoch!

9. What is the fruits of righteousness?

- *Genesis 6:22*
Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.
 - It is obedience to all of God's word.
- God asked Noah to build the ark because a flood was coming - something that he had never seen before. And because of Noah's faith, his belief in what God had said, Noah moved forward with obedience to God's command.

10. What else does the Bible describe of righteousness?

- *Psalms 119:172*
My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.
 - The law, the 10 commandments.
- So a righteous person would be found keeping the 10 commandments.
- But this is the problem:
 - *Romans 3:10-12*
10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.
- Not a single person is righteous. None are able to keep the 10 commandments. This standard is too high for anyone - even Noah!

11. So how can anyone be righteous then? Let's go back to our original text in Hebrews.

Notice what it says:

- *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.
- Righteousness comes by what? It comes by faith!
- It has nothing to do with anything in us. It is an external influence.
- Faith comes from where again? Romans 10:17 - from the word of God.
- It comes from walking with God - not over a single day or hour, but building an intimate, loving relationship with God. So that when God finally came to Noah to tell him he was going to destroy the world by a flood and that he needed to build this big boat, Noah trusted God so much that he went forward by faith (in God's word!) and just simply obeyed.
- Look at the product of love:
 - *John 14:15*
If ye love me, keep my commandments.
- And that is exactly how faith works.

- *Galatians 5:6*
For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.
 - Faith is built on love. And love comes from walking with God, with knowing Him, spending time with Him in prayer and His word.
- 12. How did Noah become the heir of the righteousness which is by faith? What does it mean that he became the heir?**
- He inherited or received the righteousness that comes by faith.
 - How? By simply choosing to believe in the word of God, no matter how radical it sounded.
 - No one else believed it. Only him, his wife, his three sons and their wives. Of all the millions of people that were living at that time, only eight people were saved.
- 13. Did God give all the people living back then enough chances to believe and to be saved?**
- Absolutely! Noah preached for 120 years.
 - What else happened?
 - *Genesis 7:2-4*
2 Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female. 3 Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth. 4 For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.
 - *Genesis 7:7-9*
7 And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood. 8 Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth, 9 There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah.
 - There was this amazing miracle that happened JUST before the flood was poured out. Seven days before the flood came the animals just lined up and went into the ark obediently. The lion was not eating the deer in front of him.
 - Noah did not have to go out and round all the animals up and catch them with a net or string. They just walked in by pairs. The clean animals - seven pairs. The unclean animals - two pairs.
 - If people did not believe the preaching of Noah, at least this would have gotten their attention. God was warning them again!

We wonder how they could have missed such an obvious sign from God. But this is what sin does. It makes our ears dull to spiritual things that we can even miss an obvious miracle from God. Look at what sin does:

Hebrews 3:13

But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Revelation 3:17

Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

Sin deceives us, it makes us blind to our true condition and our need for help. May God help us to learn to walk with Him today just like Enoch and Noah did. That we would treasure His word in our hearts. For therein is the power of God unto salvation. The word of God will begin to work in our hearts to help us to believe, to help us to be obedient.