

“By Faith, Noah Was Warned”

Hebrews 11:7

INTRO:

In Titus 2:11-14 we read: ***“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.”*** Grace that brings our salvation also teaches us how to live in view of the coming of the Lord. There is a striking parallel between this passage of Scripture and what happened to Noah here in **Hebrews 11**.

The Lord gave Noah a glimpse of the future, and Noah chose to live out his life in view of that future. This example of faith and faithfulness is what the writer of Hebrews chronicles for us here in **Hebrews 11:7**.

“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.”

In our exploration of this text we will look at it in terms of three parts.

- I. By Faith Noah Was Warned***
- II. By Faith Noah Built an Ark***
- III. By Faith Noah Judged the World and Saved His Soul***

I. By Faith Noah Was Warned

A. We meet Noah for the first time in **Genesis 5** at the end of the genealogical list there. As the history of Noah is more fully expounded we discover that Noah stands in stark contrast to his contemporaries.

1. We read in **Genesis 6:5** God's evaluation of the state of the earth in Noah's day.
“Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”

It sounds a lot like today, doesn't it? When we have to put ratings on TV programs, we know that something is terribly wrong with the way we think.

2. In contrast, we read of Noah in **Genesis 6:9**:
“This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God.”

Noah was a righteous man we are told. He was just and ***“perfect in his generations.”*** This is a statement of comparison between Noah and his

contemporaries. *Keil and Delitzsch* translate this phrase, ***“was blameless among his generations.”*** Why was this so in Noah's life? How could he be holy in such an unholy environment? The answer is two-fold. First, in **vs. 8** we read, ***“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.”*** God had worked in Noah's life to bring him to faith in Himself. Second, we read in the end of **vs. 9**, that ***“Noah walked with God.”*** The relationship begun at salvation did not stagnate in Noah's life. He had an active, continuous, and growing communion with God.

B. When the time came that God decided that He needed to destroy evil mankind, He had a talk with Noah that is described by the first phrase of our verse. **“By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen. . .”** I think it probably went something like this.

1. "Noah, I want you to build an ark."

"Ok, Lord, but what is an ark?"

"It's a big boat."

"Right. Ah, what am I going to do with a boat?"

"You are going to need it because I am going to make it rain."

"Wonderful! Lord, I hate to keep asking these stupid questions, but what's rain?"

2. Noah had to believe a warning that contained elements that had never happened before. In **Genesis 2:5-6**;

“For the Lord God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground; but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.”

So, it took faith for Noah to even understand the warning.

C. The warning that God gives about the return of the Lord Jesus to planet earth is very similar. He tells us in **Matthew 24:37-39**;

“But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.”

Life will go on just as it always has until suddenly the Lord will appear!

1. So, the warning that we need to be ready when Jesus comes falls often on deaf ears. They say that day follows day. One year follows the next. How can you say that He will come? I am sure that Noah had that experience as he faithfully preached the truth to many. They no doubt put him in the same category as those fellows who walk around with the sandwich signs saying, "REPENT THE WORLD WILL END TOMORROW!"

2. It took 120 years, but one day came that was not like any other, for it began to rain. Then it was too late to believe the message that Noah preached. The same will be true for those who turn their backs on Jesus today!

II. By Faith Noah Built an Ark

A. Noah's faith did more than warn him. It also compelled him to be faithful. He obeyed God in building an ark. I am convinced that we today have very little idea about how hard that task was.

B. It wasn't that the work itself was so hard. The environment in which he worked was so difficult.

1. Over the years I have had many folks come to me and say. "Pastor, you have no idea how hard it is to be faithful to the Lord at work. I'm the only Christian there!" Think about poor Noah. He lived in a world in which he and his family were the only believers!

2. Not only did Noah have to live in that environment, he had to do something that looked utterly ridiculous -- build a boat miles from any ocean. We could say that wouldn't be so bad if he kept his mouth shut about it! But he didn't. Not only did he build his ark, he also preached to those around him. **(2 Peter 2:4-5)**

"For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment; and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, one of eight people, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly."

When the people came around to see what he was doing, he took the opportunity to tell them about God and what He was going to do.

C. What did Noah's faithfulness produce? It saved his whole house. Of all the people who populated planet earth at the time of Noah, only Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their wives were spared. Were there times when Noah doubted that all this was worth it? We are not told, but I'm sure that there were those times. In the end was it worth it? Yes, I am sure that Noah looked back in the hours after the flood began and said to himself, *"I sure am glad that I listened to the Lord and believed what He said."* It was worth it!

III. By Faith Noah Judged the World and Saved His Soul

A. There is one last thing Noah's faith accomplished. This one thing has two sides. First, it judged the world in which Noah lived. This is the part of walking with God and seeking to live a life of personal holiness that disturbs people. Our lifestyles and message judges those who do not share our beliefs.

We read in **Ephesians 5:9-11**;

"For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),

finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.

The Greek word rendered "*expose*" means "*to bring to light*" or "*to correct or reprove.*"

How do we go about reprovng them? They are exposed by our lives as we walk in the light.

B. At the same time, Noah's faith and faithfulness made him an heir of righteousness. Noah did not work his way to righteousness. Rather his righteous works showed the righteousness that God had given him by faith!

What about us?

1. We live in a world not all that much removed from the world of Noah. Are we being faithful in the same way that Noah was? By faith, Noah received God's warning! Jesus is coming back. Although some doubt, the fact is that He is coming and we need to be ready that we are not ashamed at His coming.

2. Are we living in such a way that those around us who do not know the Lord find that their lifestyles are judged by our obedience? May God help us live in such a way that any who are embracing sin, find that our presence makes them uncomfortable. May how we live draw others to Him.