

Hebrews 11:7 (KJV)

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.

Noah's Faith

OUTLINE

- (1) A God-fearer's Faith (v7a)**
- (2) A Faith Backed by Action (v7b)**
- (3) A Salvific Faith (v7c)**
- (4) A Faith Rewared (v7d)**

INTRODUCTION

It is interesting the Chinese character for a ship “船” consists of an ark “舟” with eight “八” mouths “口”. It fits exactly the Genesis account of the global flood during the days of Noah where Noah and his wife, his three sons and their wives, eight members of Noah's family, on board the ark, were saved from the global deluge that destroyed all the living on earth at that time. God preserves the truths of His judgment in the ancient record of the Chinese language as a testimony, I believe, to the Chinese people, to the veracity of the Bible.

船

Indeed, the ark was the vessel that delivered Noah's family from the judgment. And we applaud the faith of Noah. He took heed to God's warning and obediently constructed a vessel that saved his family.

The ark was a 3-storey vessel made of gopher wood that is 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide and 30 cubits high (it is approximately 135m by 22.5m by 13.5m). It has a roof that is 1 cubit of the top and a window and a door at the side. There was one roof opening for light and air intake.

We learn from Noah's life the lesson of faith to take God at His Word and to act upon it according to His instructions. Noah's faith was an obedient faith and a faith that was undergided with precise action according to God's instruction.

Genesis 6:22 *Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.*

Genesis 7:1-5 *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. 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. Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth. 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. **And Noah did according unto all that the LORD commanded him.***

What was the motivation for Noah's obedient and submission to God's Word? Our text tells us that Noah was moved with fear.

(1) A God Fearer's Faith (v7a)

7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear...

Noah was a man who fear God. There is a holy reverence, respect and honour that he accorded to God's Word that distinguished him from his generation. He took heed to God's Word and willingly obeyed.

There was yet no rain, no flood ever seen on earth at that time. It was unimaginable that the heavens will open and water would pour out of heaven to overflow the earth and destroying it thereby.

Psalm 25:14 *The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.*

Proverbs 2:4-7 *If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand **the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.** For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.*

Proverbs 2:8-11 *He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of his saints. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity; yea, every good path. When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee:*

Job 28:28 *And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.*

God revealed to him concerning the judgment to come. God visited Noah with His sovereign grace. It was God who came to Noah. Noah was a passive party in his encounter with his Creator God. What amazing grace! The living and true God, the Creator of heaven and earth, condescended Himself to reveal Himself to Noah. By choosing Noah and by making His plans known to him, God was gracious to Noah. Among the countless men living on planet earth in the pre-flood world, he was special in the eyes of God, he had found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

Genesis 6:5-9 *And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. **But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.** These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.*

To him, God made known the future. He was going to send a tsunami of such great proportions that it would destroy the known world at that time. All the fountains of the great deep would be broken up, and the windows of heaven would open. In these

few words — “Noah being warned of God” — we see how God accorded Noah with the privilege of His visitation as well as the receipt of His warning in the fear of God.

Psalm 33:8 *Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.*

Only Noah, feared the LORD amongst the men in his generation. There were many scoffers who mocked and made light of God’s truth of the coming judgment.

Psalm 103:17 *But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;*

God would preserve Noah and His posterity.

(2) An Active Faith, A Faith Backed by Action (v7b)

- prepared an ark to the saving of his house;

James 2:17-18 *Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.*

What was Noah’s response? Noah believed God. This was a man who had encountered God and knew that God meant every word He said and said what He meant. The Bible says he was moved with fear. The fear of God was in his heart. God moved Noah’s heart to respond to His warning by putting His fear in Noah’s heart. Fear was not a negative emotion that God gave to Noah. It was a wake-up call! It was like a bell or a gong going off in his heart and mind, stirring him into life to flee into the safety of God at the first approach of danger. **It was a signal to provoke his soul to watchfulness and sobriety, to lifelong action!**

James 2:14-16 *What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?*

Noah was moved with fear because he saw wickedness in the world all around him. Every imagination of the thoughts of the heart of man was only evil continually. God revealed this to Noah so that he realised the depraved state of mankind. For example, the earth was filled with violence.

Noah was moved with fear. The truth of God’s coming judgment was effectual in his heart. By faith, he took action to prepare for the coming global destruction. Noah put his house in order. He got ready. God gave him instructions to prepare himself for this disaster. He was to build an ark. It was so massive an endeavour that he devoted all his attention to its preparation. In this task, Noah fully followed God’s instruction. Genesis 6:22 states his humble, complete obedience, *“Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.”* Noah did not question God why he should make

only one window, why it had to be three stories and not four. Noah exercised a resolute obedience to the task of building the ark by simple faith. Remember, everything was calm and normal. Business was as usual.

See how Noah gave a godly response to the great privilege God had given him. By the fear of God, he worked and prepared while the world around him was complacent and oblivious to God's coming judgment. Thus, Noah prepared an ark to the saving of his house.

(3) A Salvific Faith (v7c)

- ... to the saving of his house by the which he condemned the world (v7ci)

The word "condemned" means "to judge against" or "to judge worthy of punishment". Noah by his submission to God set himself as an example against the evil and the wicked in his generation who refused God's truth. His very obedience to God in building the ark and preparing his family was a judgment against the mockers and scoffers who by their unbelief perished when God sent the flood. By his walk, Noah was a witness against the world. This was his responsible response to the privilege God had bestowed upon him in the fear of God when He chose him to be His witness against the world. May God be similarly pleased to make us His witnesses in this world, and a channel of blessing wherever He chooses to place us. The world then, and the world now, is not worthy of God. It has always rebelled against Him. Who is on the Lord's side? Who will serve the King?

God condemned the world through Noah's preparation — he built the ark, he prepared his family, he preached to the world. That God had deemed it fit to choose him to be the recipient of such a blessing was a great honour to Noah. Hence there was a determination in his heart to live a life of cleaving to God, a bending of his own will in submission to God and to obey Him. It distinguished him from the people in his generation. *"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD ... Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God"* (Genesis 6:8-9).

He lived a life of righteousness. Not of sinlessness but of constant submission to God. Noah lived a surrendered life. He surrendered his ambition to God, and in turn, made his life goal the complete, no-questions-asked execution of God's will. He focused his efforts on what really mattered in the light of God's revelation to him.

Dear friends, the world today continues to focus its efforts on building yet bigger barns and taller buildings. When one structure is torn down, another bigger, taller, grander, more ostentatious, more spectacular edifice is built in its place. Indeed, on the very site where the Twin Towers once stood in New York City now arises a new super structure called the One World Trade Centre. With 104 floors and an antenna, 1WTC will rise to 1776 feet, making it the tallest building in the US — surpassing even the Twin Towers it replaced — and third in the world.¹ Just as symbolically, the world is preparing for the arising of the one whom it thinks is its saviour — the Anti-Christ — to save it from its woes.

What will save us from the coming judgment of God? Only faith in the Lord Jesus Christ will save us and our family. Dear reader, is there a holy submission to God and His Word in your life?

(4) A Faith Rewarded (v7d)

- and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith (v7d).

Noah received a righteous man's reward by (according to or by way of) faith. Noah passed from the old world to a new world. He inherited the new world together with his family. All who believed did not perish in the global cleansing God meted out upon all mankind.

But there is more to come. Be warned there is yet another global "flood" of God's judgment that is coming. This time it shall be by fire.

This is recorded for us by the Apostle Peter in 2 Peter 3:10-13, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

The first judgment was by water, the coming judgment by fire.



The Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest prophecy yet unfulfilled. God wants you to know that His coming is imminent. The world certainly does not know or realise the impending judgment upon planet earth when the church is rapture, the world will go through a period of Great Tribulation when the Antichrist rules the world.

Life seemed to go on as usual — eat, drink and be merry, we have much goods laid up for the future. The world feels very secure with its make-believe sense of prosperity.

Matthew 24:37-39 *But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, 39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.*

Dear friends, this is the deception today as it was then in Noah's time just before God brought on a global flood that destroyed the whole world.

Rejoice, for our inheritance is the new heavens and the new earth which our Lord will re-create and where we shall reign with Christ as His bride. We can also look forward

to the New Jerusalem which will come upon this new heaven and new earth, and this wonderful promise in Revelation 21:4, *“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”*

Dear reader, do you not see how similar our position is to Noah’s? God has visited us with His gracious offer. God has warned us through His Word of the *“things not seen as yet”*. But is our next step similar to Noah’s? Do we move with fear and make preparations?

The Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest prophesy yet unfulfilled in the Bible and it is also a sorely neglected doctrine in the church today. Not that Christ’s Second Coming has not been preached, but that there seems to be a lack of the fear of God in the hearts of church members today that should rouse them into a Noah-like reaction. As we watch disasters unfolding before our very eyes, do they not cause us to fear the wrath of God and realise that His return is nigh?

What if the world had known that on 26 December 2004, there would be an undersea earthquake of magnitude 9.1, making it the third largest earthquake ever recorded, with an epicentre off the west coast of Sumatra? Would the 225,000 people from 11 countries who perished in the tsunami-churned waves that towered a hundred feet high have been saved? Of course, to be forewarned is to be forearmed. Today, there is another warning of a greater judgment that will affect more than 225,000 souls from more than 11 countries. Will they heed the warning? Will they flee from the greater tsunami? Will they move with fear and prepare?

Nearer home, how can we protect the people God places in our way — our spouse, family members, children, Sunday School charges, fellowship group friends, colleagues, neighbours — from the temptations and struggles of life? What is the antidote to counter this overwhelming tide of wanton, unrestrained, euphoric, hedonistic, eat-drink-and-be-merry lifestyle? How can we prepare them so that all will enter the ark, just like Noah’s family did? God’s Word is our blueprint as we prepare for battle.

Was Noah any different from the people living in his world that God should reveal the future to him? Noah too inherited the sinful nature from the fall of his forefather Adam. But the Bible says Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD (Genesis 6:8). How can man find grace in the sight of God? Is it by his determined effort or his merits that he finds God? Noah *“being warned of God”* is a significant statement here that underscores Noah’s privilege because he was a sinner like the rest of the world, lost and undone, save that God was gracious to him. God’s mercy came upon him, and God worked in his heart. Noah was saved the way we are saved through the Gospel. Through it all, God was the main actor in this encounter.

As we consider God’s encounter with Noah and the great privilege of Noah, we must thank God for the same privilege He has given us. Like Noah, we too have been chosen by Him to be His people and, like Noah, we too have been given knowledge of the things to come. Are we not privileged that God has similarly visited us with His

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salvation, and has worked His work of salvation in our hearts to heed His warning of an impending judgment and take refuge in His Ark of Jesus Christ?

CONCLUSION

Dear friends, let us be awakened to the signs of the times. We are living in the days of Noah. May the truth of God's Word convict and convince us that His way is the best through the example of Noah's life. May it give us that strength to re-order our life goals by the fear of God, live a surrendered life on this earth and receive at the end a righteous man's reward which is eternal life and the opportunity of great rewards that all who follow Him will receive at His return. May the Lord prepare our hearts to give an account of our stewardship of the Gospel that He has entrusted us.