

Noah

Genesis 6.17-19: (God said to Noah) – I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark – you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you. You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you.

You must know the story of Noah and the Ark which is found in Genesis 6-9. Noah went into the ark with his family, taking with him two of every kind of animal and bird (by kind this means 'species', not every type of every species...) God had to do something because every thought of every human (except Noah and family) was only evil.

The Bible says this about Noah in Genesis 6.9:

Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God.

Noah's Obedience

God asked Noah to be obedient and do something that seemed totally crazy – build an ark. In this way, God would save Noah from a flood God was bringing on the earth to cleanse the earth from great wickedness. Noah would be spared because God had found him righteous. Another way of reading this is that Abraham was 'pure'. Many people believe that 'Nephilim' (fallen angels) had defiled the bloodline of mankind (as stated in Genesis 6.1-4), but Abraham and family hadn't been defiled. So God could be assured of a pure bloodline needed to keep the genealogy of Jesus pure. God thinks ahead – there's nothing in your life he hasn't thought about or doesn't have the answer to!

Twice in each of the chapters of Genesis 7, 8 and 9 we read that 'Noah did everything just as God commanded him' or 'as God commanded him.' (see for example Genesis 6.22). So Noah built the ark and sure enough, God sent a global flood. God gave Noah 7 days to get the animals into the ark, 7 days warning. These were literal days (you'll hear people talking about creation saying they weren't literal days, but will go on to believe that everything else in Genesis was a literal day!)

Point – God loves our obedience more than he does our 'sacrifice' for him. Yes, we do make sacrifices for God, we serve him and serve others. But this all flows out of hearing God and doing what God says!

In The Ark

Can you imagine what it was like in the ark?! God had told Noah to prepare for a long 'voyage' and to sort out food: "You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them." (Genesis 6.21). So Noah and family had a

pretty full-time job sorting out the animals, feeding them and probably even helping some of them give birth! The family would have shared round different jobs, helped each other out and done what God had called them to do as they journeyed together.

Point – God has us each on a special mission. In many ways, being a Christian is a bit like going on this journey. If we know Jesus, he has a purpose for your life. Noah and his family in the ark didn't just sit around waiting for the end of the flood all the time. Let's think about what Noah and his family had to do...

1. They had things to do on the ark – practical tasks for living – different but just like we do.
2. They had to show real faith and had to trust God. If the ark failed, they would die. We know now that those in the ark were kept safe but while it was happening, they had to show real trust in God.
3. They weren't totally sure of their destination or how things would be when they 'landed'. This would be a new beginning...

Back to the flood...

Some people think the flood was localised, but the Bible makes it very clear this was not a local flood, it was worldwide. Genesis 8 twice says that the flood came on the (whole) earth; all the highest mountain tops were even covered; and that every living thing on the earth was wiped out. God was making things new. It must have been very difficult for God to do this. In Genesis 8.21, God promised never to send another worldwide flood on the earth (see Genesis 9.11). Again, if the flood had been local, then God would be a liar as there have been 1000s of localised flooding across the earth. But God is true and not a liar! (See Romans 3.3-4).

Genesis 8.24 – The waters flooded the earth for a hundred and fifty days.

On a side note... we also read in Genesis 8.11 that the great springs of the 'deep' burst forth. Science has found that the core of the earth contains much more water than the oceans!

But back to Noah. After 150 days, the floods began to recede. The ark came to rest on Mount Ararat. On Noah's 601st birthday (he was 600 when he entered the ark!) the earth was completely dry.

Key Point – Noah would be saved because God had found him righteous. Today we can only be 'saved' by Jesus as only he was righteous (right with God). So we can only come to God through being made right with God. This only happens through Jesus. The ark was a picture of what Jesus would do – but like Noah, we have to obey God. Noah was saved because he got in the ark that he'd built, just as God had told him. We are saved (made right with God) through Jesus. Our obedience to God is what keeps us safe!

God Remembers and Acts

So back to the story of Noah. The flood covered the earth for the 150 days but God hadn't forgotten:

Genesis 8.1 – “But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and the livestock that were with him in the ark.”

Point – Do you sometimes feel slightly abandoned or a bit lonely? Ever feel that God may have forgotten about you? He hasn't. He didn't forget Noah and he won't forget you.

Point – Do you love animals and care for the environment too? Well I believe that God does too. Why else did he save two of every species of animal?! God then remembered the animals in the ark, as well as remembering Noah. God cares about animals as he created them. I'm sure that it pains God to see the extinction of species, to see that even polar bears may be extinct in our lifetimes.

Encouragement and Response

Let me encourage you that God is a God of action and he calls us to do the same! Today God is saying to you – get on board my 'ark' (live and have your being in Jesus, be sold out for him), trust God and expect great things from Him, attempt to do great things with Him and for his glory. Like Noah, be a hero of the faith!

Today, will you respond. Tell God now that you will respond. Pray and if you can get others to pray for you to 'release' you into all God has for you.