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The Faith of Noah

11: 7

The faith of Noah DIG: How is faith made visible in a person's life? In what way was Noah's faith made evident? What made it difficult for Noah to believe there would be a flood? What was the basis of Noah's faith? What was the content of the message Noah preached? In what way was Methuselah a display of God's grace (see the commentary on **Genesis**, to see link click [By - Enoch was the Father of Methuselah and Walked with God for 300 Years](#))? Did God give a fair warning to the people of Noah's day before sending the Flood? How similar was Noah's day to us today?

REFLECT: It was 120 years from the time God warned Noah that the Flood was coming until it came. It would have been easy for Noah to have given up during that time, but he didn't - he preserved in his faith. Have you been waiting on the Lord for something for so long that your faith is beginning to waver? Perhaps you are involved in a ministry that has borne little fruit. Or maybe you've been praying for someone's salvation for many years, and that person seems no closer to God than when you first began. If you are tempted to give up, remember Noah's patient faith, and memorize Hebrews 10:23 this week: Let us continue holding fast to the hope we acknowledge, without wavering; for the One who made the promise is trustworthy.³⁰⁶

But those who are righteous will live their lives by faith (Hebrews 10:38 CJB quoting Habakkuk 2:4 CJB). True **faith** always has actions to support its claim. **Faith without works is dead (James 2:26).** If you really **believe** in YHVH, there will be evidence of it in the way you live, in the things you say, and in the things you do. **Abel** illustrates the worship of **faith**, and **Enoch** the walk of **faith**. **Noah**, perhaps more than any other person in history, illustrates the work of **faith** - obedience. For 120 years **he** worked **faithfully** in an undertaking that, from a human perspective, looked totally absurd and absolutely impossible.

Three things in **Hebrews 11:7** give proof that **Noah's faith** was genuine. First, **he** responded to **God's** word. That is always a characteristic of true **faith**. Second, **he**

condemned the world. Noah was such a man of **God** that **his** very life was a rebuke to the **wicked** people that surrounded **him**. Third, **he** received **ADONAI's righteousness**. These are the classic hallmarks of true **faith**. **God** also declared **Job, Abraham and Jacob righteous**.

Job was a righteous man. When **the LORD** was speaking to the Adversary **He** said: **Have you considered my servant Job. There is no one like him; he is blameless and upright** (Hebrew: *tam*), **a man who fears God and shuns evil (Job 1:8).**

Noah was a righteous man. When speaking of **Noah**, the Bible says: **Noah was a righteous** (Hebrew: *tam*) **man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God (Genesis 6:9).**

Abraham was a righteous (Hebrew: *tam*) **man (Genesis 15:6).**

And **Jacob was a righteous** (Hebrew: *tam*) **man (Genesis 25:27).** The NIV says **Jacob was a quiet man**, and the NKJ says **he was a mild man**. But the Hebrew word *tam* is *always* translated elsewhere as *righteous, perfect (KJ), or upright, whole, complete, blameless or without blemish*. It does not mean sinless perfection, but it has the sense of *righteousness, or a man whose heart is right towards God*. As a result, the word *tam* is *never* translated **quiet** or **mild** anywhere else in the TaNaKh.

Additionally, **after Esau** was born, **Jacob came out with his hand grasping his brother's heel (Genesis 25:26a).** And just as **Esau** was named by **his** appearance, **Jacob** was named by **his** action, **so he was named Jacob**, which is the same root word for *heel*. The primary meaning of **his** name is *the one who takes by the heel, or heel holder*. And there is no negative connotation here. But the secondary meaning of **his** name is *supplanter, which is a neutral term to be determined by the context (Genesis 27:36; Jeremiah 9:4).* So **his** name should *never* be translated "deceiver" because **Jacob was a righteous man.**

Noah responded to God's word: When **Ha'Shem** told **Noah** that **He** was getting ready to destroy the world because of its **wickedness** and instructed **him** to build **an Ark (Genesis 6:13-14), Noah** dropped everything and started building. It undoubtedly sounded very strange to **Noah**, but **he** was obedient. To devote all **his** time and effort to building a giant ship took a special kind of commitment. **He** probably had no idea hat an ocean-going ship looked like. **He** had no experience in shipbuilding, no easy access to building supplies, and no help except for **his** sons. Even they were not able to help for many years after **the Ark** was started because they were not born until after **Noah** was 500 years old (**Genesis**

5:32).³⁰⁷



By **faith**, Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, namely, of course, **the Flood**, in holy fear built an Ark to save his family (11:7a). The word **fear** gives the reader the wrong impression. The Greek word *eulabeomai*, which means *to act cautiously, with reverence, or to stand in awe of* in this context. The basis of building **the Ark** was that **he** was **warned** by **God**. Until the time of **Noah**, it had never rained upon the earth and there had never been a flood. Nevertheless, **Ha'Shem** said it would happen, and **Noah** believed **God**. He showed his **faith** and built **the Ark**. As the result of the building of **the Ark**, **Noah accomplished two things**.³⁰⁸

Noah condemned the world: First, by his **faith** he condemned the world (11:7b). **Noah's** faithfulness included his passing on to the rest of the world **Ha'Shem's** message of judgment. In **Second Peter 2:5**, he is called a **preacher of righteousness**. **God** called **Noah** to preach while he built. **His** message was, "Judgment is coming." The preaching was probably more difficult than the building. Hard jobs are always easier to deal with than hard people. But, like **Enoch**, **Noah walked with God** (see the commentary on **Genesis Cd - Noah Was a Righteous Man, Blameless Among the People of His Time and He Walked With God**).

The times in which **Noah** lived in were among the most **evil** and corrupt in human history (see the commentary on **Genesis Ca - The Sons of God Married the Daughters of Men**). Then **Adonai** saw that the wickedness of humankind was great on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil all the time (**Genesis 6:5 TLV**). If anyone had reason to regret the time in which he lived it was **Noah**. He didn't complain, he merely obeyed and warned the wicked people of his time that **Ha'Shem** would soon judge them because of their evil and unbelief. The people had

ample warning of judgment, and **they** also had sufficient knowledge of the truth. **For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature - have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse (Romans 1:20).** The people had no **excuse** for their **sin** before **Noah** began building **the Ark**, and **they** had even less of an **excuse** after **he** finished.

Perhaps the saddest lesson from **Noah's day** is that **people** today have not changed **their** attitude toward **ADONAI** since then, and will not change until our **Lord** returns. When **the Rapture** occurs, it will happen while there are normal conditions on the earth. **As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man, to all those who live on the face of the whole earth. For in the days before the Flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the Ark. While normal conditions existed on the earth, they knew nothing about what would happen until the Flood came and took [swept] them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man (Matthew 24:37-39).** In the same way, while there will be normal conditions on **the earth**, **the Rapture** will happen suddenly and without notice.

The parallels of **Noah's day** to our own are sobering. In **Noah's day** **God's** message was rejected, as it is today. In **his day**, wickedness, immorality, violence, lewdness, vulgarity, profanity, lying, killing and blasphemy were rampant, as they are today. In **Noah's day** a remnant found grace, just as a remnant believes today. In **his day**, or shortly before it, **Enoch** was **taken up** to be with **YHVH** (see **Cn - The Faith of Enoch**), picturing **the rapture** of believers when **the Lord** returns, which could be in our day. We can be sure as they should have been that the judgment is coming, because **God** has promised it just as clearly and the people of today deserve it just as much. Someone has said, "If **God** doesn't destroy our world, **He'll** have to apologize to Sodom and Gomorrah."³⁰⁹ Again, the only security we have is refuge in **Messiah** (see the commentary on **Genesis Ce - The Ark is a Type of Christ**),

Noah received God's righteousness: And secondly, **Noah** became heir of the **righteousness** that is in keeping with **faith** (**Romans 1:17, 3:22, 4:13, 9:30**). The words **he became heir** in the Greek text here mean simply that *he became the owner*, but underneath the words, the idea familiar to the Jewish mind infer that the spiritual blessings are a heritage given by **the LORD**. We must be careful here to note that **the righteousness** mentioned here is not **the** justifying **righteousness** that comes at the moment of salvation, but sanctifying **righteousness** comes as we are **separated for holiness** (**John 17:16-19**) and **conformed into the image of Christ** (**Romans 8:29**).

What is the difference between being **justified** and being **separated for holiness**? **Justification** is a *one-time act*, accomplished by **ADONAI** (see **Bw - What God Does for Us at the Moment of Faith**). It is always spoken of in the past tense because we already belong to **God**, paid for by **the blood of Christ**. However, **sanctification**, or being **separated for holiness** is a *process* that takes a whole lifetime. It is the work of **God** in which you cooperate (**Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Hebrews 12:3-4; 1 Peter 5:8-9**); and is a process (**Ephesians 4:11-16**), trusting in **God**, apart from whom we can do nothing (**John 15:5; Ephesians 3:16; Colossians 1:11; Hebrews 2:18 and 4:14**). **He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (Phil 1:6)**. Even Rabbi Sha'ul, as a mature believer, struggled with sin until the end of his life (**Romans 7:14-25 CJB**). As a result, all of **Messiah's righteousness** was transferred to **Noah's** spiritual bank account when **he believed (Romans 3:22)**, and then **he demonstrated his belief** by building **the Ark**.

Noah not only **believed** that judgment was coming, but **he** also put **his faith** into practice by building **the Ark**. We often say we **believe God** - as long as **He** doesn't put us in a position where we have to trust **Him**! As you study **Hebrews 11** ask yourself how all the people named there put their **faith** in **YHVH** into practice. Then ask **ADONAI** to show you some concrete ways in which you can put your **faith** into action this week.³¹⁰