

“The Floods That Rise”, Week 3 of Navigating Deep Waters

Presented by Rev. Kristen Lowe on 9/23/18
At Crossroads United Methodist Church
Waunakee, WI

Scripture:

Genesis 6:9-10, 12-22

This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God. Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth. God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways. So God said to Noah, “I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. So make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. 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. Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive. You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them.” Noah did everything just as God commanded him.

1 Pete 3:20-21

There were those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God.^[a] It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

Hebrews 11:1-3, 6

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible. And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.



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There is a fairly new nova documentary out about Noah’s ark. In the documentary, they reveal that the ark was probably round. It’s on Netflix, and it’s a little less than an hour. We don’t really know for sure what exactly the ark looked like, but I think we usually picture something like this



It reminded me of all I really need to know I learned from Noah's ark

- Plan ahead. It wasn’t raining when Noah built the ark.
- Noah didn’t wait for his ship to come in, he built one.
- Stay fit. When you’re 600 years old, someone might ask you to do something really big.
- Don’t listen to critics -- do what god has called you to do even if everyone else says you’re crazy!
- Speed isn’t always an advantage. The cheetahs were on board, but so were the snails.
- Don’t miss the boat.
- Remember that the ark was built by amateurs and the titanic was built by professionals.
- No matter how bleak it looks, if god is with you, there’s always a rainbow on the other side



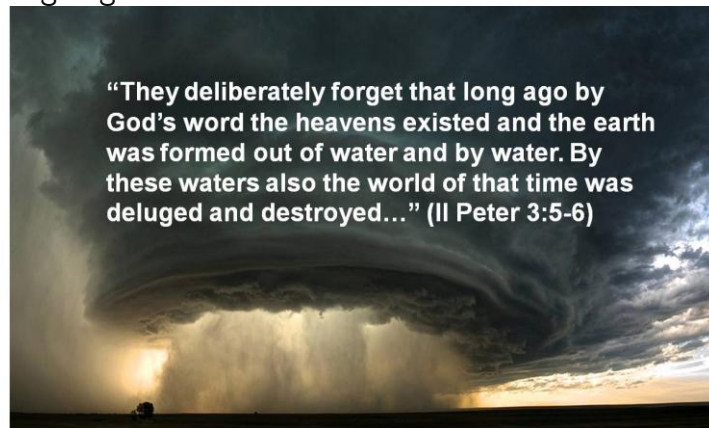
So, there are different ways to learn from the building of the ark. Peter, for example, wrote that the flood served as an example of our salvation. He told about the people who

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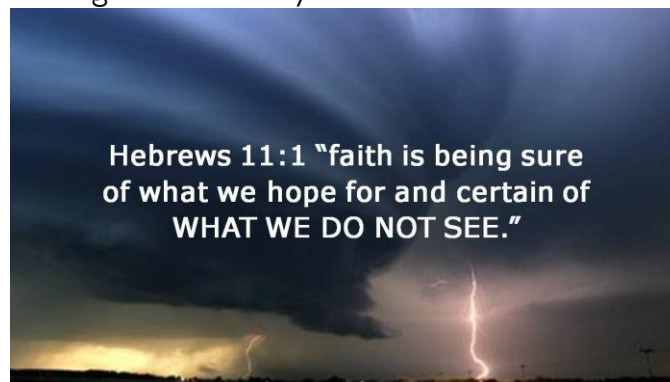
“disobeyed long ago when god waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also– not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward god. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ” I peter 3:20-21

Jesus said Noah’s experiences should be a warning to us. Just as they did in those days, people will be eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage (Matthew 24:38), when Jesus comes in judgment. See, if we’re not expecting Jesus to show up, so we don’t feel like we need to be ready. It’s kind of like when the teacher walks into the room and catches you doing something you shouldn’t. If you were warned ahead of time, you could have prepared.

In fact peter explains: “...in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own selfish desires. They will say, ‘where is this ‘coming’ he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation. If it hasn’t happened yet, it’s not going to.’ hmmm... think about that. Is that really true?



And, peter goes on, they deliberately forget that long ago by god’s word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water. By these waters also the world of that time was deluged and destroyed.



And now, in Hebrews 11, god is telling us that the story of Noah and the flood is an excellent example of what faith should look like.

What is it about Noah that makes him such an excellent example of faith?

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Well, god tells us why in one simple phrase “by faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family.” Take special note of that phrase “things not yet seen.” Even when everyone said he was a nut job, he knew in his heart that god was speaking. It made absolutely no sense, but Noah trusted god even in the face of critics. This is a lesson for us today.

Remember the description of faith in Hebrews 11:1 “faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.”



Think about this for a minute: Noah had never even seen rain; much less a flood and neither had the people! What would we have said about Noah today? Hey, the people had facts on their side.

Genesis 2:5-6 tells us “god had not sent rain on the earth. But streams came up from the soil and watered the whole surface of the ground.” Springs!

No rain. Think about the symbol god used to promise that he’d never flood the world again? The rainbow. When do rainbows occur? They usually occur after a heavy rain. If God **gave** the rainbow as the symbol of his eternal promise, that meant there had been no rain before the flood.



So... “By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family.” (Hebrews 11:7a)

That means that for 120 years, while he built the ark:

1. Noah preached to people about a flood they’d never seen before
2. He warned of massive rains they’d never experienced
3. He built a boat unlike any they’d ever seen

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4. He used tremendous amounts of resources and money, which people thought he was wasting and could have been used for real life needs.

The wonder is not that the people of his day did not believe...

...the wonder is that Noah did believe.

Why would Noah believe god about something neither he nor any other mortal had ever beheld or experienced? And why would he risk so much to do it?

There were 2 reasons that I can think of:

1st, god said so. That alone would have been enough for Noah.

And 2nd, Noah was actually only 2 generations removed from a man who had seen god's presence first hand - Adam.

Through Noah's grandfather Enosh, Noah would have heard of that god had brought judgment upon mankind in the past, and Noah would have realized that "if God had done it before... he could and would do it again."

The bible tells us that even though Noah preached for 120 years - nobody believed him. He didn't follow logic. // even *today*, much of what has passed for science has challenged genesis so effectively that many Christians have struggled with whether or not there was a worldwide flood like the one described in the bible.

Then what do you do when the storm is upon us and the water is rising? What do you do when even the highest places you know are becoming submerged? What will it take to leave behind those things keeping you in the water?



You remember Noah. You remember to listen to god and not those around you who think they know what they're talking about. You keep faith even when stuff doesn't make sense, you wait upon the lord with faith and patience and you release the dove when the time is right because god will always come through. Amen.