**BIBLE TALK Radio Broadcast**

**On KTTR (99.7 FM) Every Sunday at 8:30 a.m.**

**Rolla, Missouri**

**6/12/2022**

**The Faith That Saved Noah**

In Hebrews 11:7 we read, *“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.”* The building of the ark that saved Noah was an accomplishment made possible “by faith.” What were the characteristics of the faith that saved Noah?

This is the focus of our program today.

First of all faith caused Noah to accept a future reality as fact.

The wickedness of man was great in the days of Noah. As a result the Lord said, *“I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth…”* (Gen. 6:7). God told Noah to *“make yourself an ark of gopherwood.”* (Gen 6:14) In verses 17-18 God told Noah, *“And behold, I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life; everything that is on the earth shall die. But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark-you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you.”*

Now, Noah could not show from the course of events that things were tending toward a world-wide flood. There were as yet no natural indications that such an event would ever occur. And, a coming world-wide flood was not the common belief of men in that day so that it was easy for Noah to fall into this belief himself. Noah believed that a flood was coming because of what God said, and he put unwavering confidence on the truth of the divine declaration. The word of God was the only ground of evidence and his faith prompted him to heed the warning of God. The faith of Noah caused him to accept a future event as fact, because God said it would happen. A thing is not unreal just because it is unseen. Indeed, the most important parts of reality are unseen. Paul said to the Corinthians, *“while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”* (2 Cor. 4:18-5:1) Just because we do not see *“a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens”* does not mean it is not real. God has promised it to His people and faith will accept it. Faith is the mental faculty by which we deal with realities that are “not seen.” Hebrews 11:1 says, *“Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen.”* Noah had the faith to accept as real a future happening that had never happened before!

And secondly, the faith that saved Noah is a faith that caused the future reality to have a practical impact on Noah’s life. The Hebrew writer says, *“By faith Noah…moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household.”* Because He believed what God said concerning the coming flood, he then acted by preparing an ark as God commanded. Faith calls for decisive action in the present. Without the decisive action there is no saving faith. James makes this point in James 2:14-26. In verse 14 he says, *“What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?”* James is asking, “Can faith without works save a man?” The answer is no. Let me ask you, What if Noah had said, “I believe God when He says, “*I Myself am bringing floodwaters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh,”* but I believe God can save me without having to build this ark.” And so rather than moving with godly fear and preparing the ark as God said, he does something else. Would he and his household have been saved from the flood? No. He would have been disobedient to God like the rest of the world. Faith without works is a dead faith. James goes on to say, *“If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,’ but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”* (verses 15-17) If we have true faith we will not just believe what God says, but we will do what He commands. Faith is not merely something we think about — it is something we act on!

Thirdly, faith caused Noah to endure scoffing. The Genesis account of the story of Noah and the flood does not mention that the people scoffed and made fun of Noah as he was building the ark, but we can infer that happened. The Bible says that Noah was a “preacher of righteousness” (2 Peter 2:5). He preached to the people. 1 Peter 3:20 says that *“the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.”* In other words, God was being patient with the people, giving them time to repent that they might be saved. Now while Noah was preparing the ark, he was preaching to the people, no doubt telling them of the coming flood, and urging them to repent. What do people who refuse to repent do to preachers of righteousness? They ridicule, mock, and scoff. I’m sure Noah received such scoffing. But Noah remained faithful. He patiently endured such scoffing. I’m sure that in his mind the scoffing of the people was nothing in comparison to disobeying God and being destroyed in the flood.

When we obey God, reproach from other people ought to be the least of our worries. Jesus said to his disciples, *“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”* (Matt. 10:28) Well, Noah’s faith caused him to patiently endure the scoffing.

Fourthly, faith caused Noah to do exactly what God instructed, without modification. God gave Noah specific instructions about the building of the ark. He told him what kind of wood with which it was to be built, gopherwood. He told him how long, how wide, and how high it was to be. It was to have three decks or three stories. He told him to make rooms in the ark, and put a window in it, and a door in its side. God also told him to bring animals into the ark, two of every kind, a male and his female. And of the clean animals it was to be seven of each, a male and his female. God told him to take for himself and his family of all food that is eaten. Gen. 6:22 says, *“Thus Noah did; according to all that God commanded him, so he did.”* What if Noah had decided to change what God commanded, and built it out of some other kind of wood, let’s say oak? Now God nowhere tells him not to build it out of oak. But we understand that when God specifies what He wants us to do, we are to do exactly what He says without modification. That is what faith does. When God told Moses to build the Tabernacle, Moses was required to build it according to the pattern God had given in the mountain. The Hebrew writer says, *“as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, ‘See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.’”* (Heb. 8:5) It’s very important for us to do all things “according to the pattern.” 2 John 9 says, *“Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.”* We must abide in the teaching of Christ. We must abide by the pattern Jesus has given us. For example, look with me at the subject of baptism. In the teaching of Christ, baptism in the name of Jesus is an immersion in water (Rom. 6:4; Acts 8:38-39). Immersion in water is specified for baptism. Those who act by faith will do exactly what God instructed, without modification. And so those who act by faith will not sprinkle or pour water on someone and call it baptism in the name of Jesus. Also in the teaching of Christ, baptism is for penitent believers (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). Baptism is commanded of sinners who can believe in Jesus and repent of sin. Therefore, those who act by faith will not be found baptizing infants. Infant baptism is outside the pattern God has given. Also in the teaching of Christ Baptism is commanded for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). It was commanded so that one’s sins might be washed away (Acts 22:16). Those who act by faith will be baptized for that purpose. They will be baptized in order to be saved, and not to show that they are already saved as some believe The faith that Noah had caused him to do exactly what God instructed in His word, without modification. If we have that faith, we will do the same.

Fifthly, faith saved Noah from destruction. Again Hebrews 11:7 says, *“By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household…”*

The quality of faith exhibited by Noah is the only kind that saves. It is a faith that obeys, and obeys exactly what God has commanded without modification. Again, that is the point James is making in James 2:14-26. In verse 14 he says, *“What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?”* James is asking, “Can faith without works save a man?” The answer is no. The only kind of faith that will save a man is faith with works, that is faith with obedience to the commands of God. Faith alone will not save. James says in verse 24, *“You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.”* Notice the word “justified.” The word “justified” means to be free from the guilt of sin so that one may be pronounce righteous. How may one be free from the guilt of sin so he may be pronounced righteous before God? James says it is not by faith only, but by faith with works. This faith saved Noah from destruction. And this faith will save us from sin.

In 1 Peter 3:20 Peter makes reference to Noah and his family being saved. Peter says, *“that aforetime were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.”* Noah and his family, eight souls were saved through water. Peter says in the very next verse, *“which also after a true likeness doth now save you, (even) baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the interrogation of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”* Noah and his family were saved through water. After a true likeness, baptism saves us, Peter says. Baptism is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, in other words, its not a bath to cleanse the dirt from the body, but it is an interrogation of a good conscience toward God, that is, it is an appeal to God for a good conscience. That is saying when one is baptized, he is saved from his sins, and therefore, it is an appeal to God for a good conscience. One does not have a good conscience until he is saved from his sins. That doesn’t take place until he is baptized.

Noah’s faith caused him to accept a future reality as fact. His faith caused the future reality to have a practical impact on his life. His faith caused him to do exactly what God instructed, without modification. His faith caused him to endure scoffing. And his faith saved him from destruction.

Does your faith have the characteristics of the faith that saved Noah?

Our time is gone for today.

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