



## HEROES OF THE FAITH

# NOAH: HE FOUND FAVOR

GENESIS 6:1-22; 9:1-29

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### MAIN IDEA

Believers should strive to trust God's Word and obey Him as Noah did.

### INTRODUCTION

*As your group time begins, use this section to help get the conversation going.*

We live in a world that bestows awards for all kinds of things. Think about the last time you were recognized for something or given an award of some kind. Most of us strive to be the best we can and sometimes there is recognition along the way. While it is nice to be seen as achieving by people around us, how much better is it to be found favorable by our heavenly Father?

- **When have you been recognized for an achievement of some kind? How does receiving recognition for your efforts affect you going forward?**
- **How is finding favor with God different than being recognized for achievements by people?**

**UNDERSTANDING**

*Unpack the biblical text to discover what Scripture says or means about a particular topic.*

> Have someone in your group read **Genesis 6:5-14, 17-22**.

Don't let the familiarity with this story cause you to miss the application for today. As believers in Jesus, we are often called to do things that are counter to the world we live in. If you read and apply the Bible to your life, then you are always facing the choice of whether to obey God or follow the culture.

Any time you choose God over the world you can expect opposition from the enemy. This opposition can come in various forms, but it will come. Many of us are willing to stand against the world and obey God when we have a group of people who link arms with us to stand firm. But how willing are we to obey when we are alone? Noah obeyed God even though he was surrounded by corrupt and wicked people.

Imagine how God felt when He looked at the world and the people He created in His own image and found them living corrupt lives. When the Lord decided to wipe out the inhabitants of the world and start over, He focused on Noah and gave him some unusual instructions. Instead of questioning why he should build a boat in a desert, Noah did all that the Lord commanded him. That's the kind of obedience we should strive to display in our own lives.

- **What words used to describe Noah in Genesis 6 stand out to you? Why?**
- **How would you compare the world we live in today with the world in Noah's day?**

- **How do you typically react when you receive unusual promptings from God?**
- **What are some potentially embarrassing or costly consequences that you might face today by choosing to obey God?**

> Have someone in your group read Genesis 9:7-17.

Once the flood was over, it was time for rebuilding. God gave more instructions on how that was to happen, and He blessed Noah for his obedience. God also established a covenant with mankind and promised to never flood the earth again.

God knew Noah and subsequent generations would need reassurance of the covenant, so He placed the rainbow in the sky after the rains. Faith is the key to continuing in obedience even when times are tough and the instructions may be unusual. Who and where your trust is will determine your choices.

Obedient people are grounded in faith and wholly trust the Word of God. Think of it like standing on shifting sand. You will not be able to stand firm and unshakable until your foundation is firm and secure. The Word of God is solid and unshakable, and we can stand firm in obedience when we fully trust in His Word. Noah showed how obedience brings blessing and favor from the Lord.

- **What significance does God's covenant with Noah have to us today?**
  - **What are some types of shaky ground that people stand on today?**
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- **How does trust in God's Word affect your obedience to the Lord?**
- **What do you do that builds your faith in God and trust in His Word?**

> Have someone in your group read Hebrews 11:7.

Hebrews describes the effects Noah's faithfulness and obedience had both in his own day and on all the generations to come. His example of obedience was motivated by godly fear of an event coming that had never before been experienced. Fear can be a powerful catalyst to obedience and godly fear is something to be desired, not avoided. Noah had a healthy fear of the Lord and his obedience is still an example to follow 2000 years later.

God warned Noah of the flood and Noah acted in obedience. Noah took the precise instructions for building the ark and got busy. He didn't spend time questioning, he just obeyed. Faith in God should result in action. Our faith is to be demonstrated in what we do and not only in what we say. Jesus is the ultimate example of obedience that resulted in action.

A life of obedience will stand out and be noticed. Noah lived his life of faith in such contrast to others that it appeared as condemnation to the world. Instead of trying to look like the people around him and blend in, Noah chose to obey God. Our goal should be to live in faith and obedience to the point that it is noticeable. Consider the impact that is possible when we testify to Christ by the way we live.

- **Where do you see a healthy fear of the Lord in the world today?**

- **How does godly fear help motivate obedience?**
- **Why does real faith in God always result in action?**
- **How was Jesus's obedience to the cross the ultimate model of a life of trust and faith?**

## **APPLICATION**

- **Consider the areas of your life where you have been questioning God's instructions instead of obeying them. Prayerfully commit to obedience even if you don't understand all the details.**
- **Seek to have two spiritual conversations this week.**
- **How do we regularly demonstrate faith and trust in God's Word? What should we do differently?**

## **PRAY**

Thank Jesus for His example of obedient living leading to action. Confess where you have resisted obedience and pray for courage and strength to live in a way that stands out in the world.

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## GENESIS 6:5-14,17-22

6:5 God, who alone can observe both people's outward actions (Jb 34:21) and their thoughts (1Sm 16:7), saw what was visible—that human wickedness was widespread—and what was invisible—that every inclination of the human mind was nothing but evil all the time. The word translated “mind” is literally “heart,” reflecting the ancient conception that this organ was the seat of the intellect, emotion, and will.

**Notes:**

6:6 For the first time in the Bible, the Lord regretted something that he had made. However, his regret did not stem from something he had done wrong, but rather from what humanity was doing wrong. The fact that people had become totally preoccupied with evil grieved him deeply, much as Israel's sin would later grieve him (Ps 78:40–41; Is 63:10).

6:7 Humanity was created to obey, worship, and fellowship with God. However, the magnitude of people's sin had progressively increased from that of eating forbidden fruit (3:6), to murder (4:8), to polygamy and multiple murders (4:23), and finally to worldwide preoccupation with evil (6:6). God's patience had come to an end, and the curse pronounced against Adam would now be amplified in a single catastrophic act. Since humanity was the capstone of God's creation, the elimination of people would take away any need for the ecological support system that sustained them; therefore, it was expedient to destroy the animals, creatures that crawl, and birds as well. Even as Adam's sin had caused him to lose the garden of Eden and Cain's sin drove him from the soil, the sins of humanity would now cause them to lose the earth.

6:8 This contrast to the rest of humanity anticipates Noah's contrasting destiny. The word favor means undeserved blessing given by a powerful being to one who is less powerful. Noah did not earn his salvation, but his life did demonstrate that he possessed saving faith (Heb 11:7). A wordplay exists in Hebrew between

the words for “Noah” and “favor,” as both contain the same two consonants but use them in reverse order: n-ch/ch-n.

**Notes:**

6:9–10 The family records of Noah is the third of eleven (Hb) toledoth sections in Genesis (2:4; 5:1; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1, 9; 37:2).

6:11–12 Within these two verses three different forms of the verb corrupt are used to describe what humanity had done to itself and the world in Noah’s day. The Hebrew word translated “corrupt” means “to bring to ruin, to destroy.”

6:13 For the first time in the Bible—but by no means the last (18:17; Am 3:7)—God is shown expressing to one person what his intentions were for others. Noah is thus established as a prophet, a role that he would faithfully fulfill (2Pt 2:5). As indicated first in Gn 6:5–7, God would put an end to every creature ... because of human sin. But judgment would not be limited to people; God would also destroy ... the earth. Sadly, one of the victims of human sin is the earth on which we live (Lv 26:18–20; Is 24:4–7; Jr 12:11; Hs 4:1–3).

6:14 Because of God’s grace (v. 8) and Noah’s relationship with God (v. 9), Noah and his family would be saved in an ark, along with the land and air animals. The Hebrew term translated “ark” is used only in the Noah account and the story of Moses’s early childhood (Ex 2:3); as used in the Bible it refers to a watertight vessel used to preserve human life from impending disaster. Gopher is the transliteration of a Hebrew word whose meaning is unknown; gopher wood may be pine or cypress or something extinct.

**GENESIS 9:7-17**

9:7 God’s blessing of humanity in Noah’s day begins (v. 1) and ends with the command to be fruitful and multiply. This repetition underscores the sacredness and desirability of human reproduction within God’s plan.

9:8–11 These verses are the formal conclusion of the covenant first mentioned in 6:18. The initial expression of the covenant unconditionally offered safety in the ark to Noah’s family and many classes of animals. In the style of a royal grant or unilateral agreement, this portion of the Noahic covenant unconditionally promises that there will never again be a flood of the same destructive scale as Noah’s flood.

**Notes:**

9:12–17 Accompanying the covenant was a visible confirmation of the agreement between God and the earth that would continue for all future generations: God’s bow in the clouds represented his promise that he would never again send a flood to destroy every creature. From this point forward the rainbow would have profound significance as an affirmation of God’s grace and peace. Elsewhere in the Bible the rainbow is associated with the presence of God or his angelic representative (Ezk 1:28; Rv 4:3; 10:1). This covenant is one of three in the Bible that were accompanied by a sign; the other signs were circumcision (Gn 17:11) and the Sabbath (Ex 31:16–17).

## HEBREWS 11:7

Noah (Gen. 6–9) showed his faith in response to a specific warning from God. He took the warning to heart, built an ark, and saved his family. Noah’s act of building the ark condemned the scoffing unbelief of his generation and provided visible evidence that Noah believed God. Noah’s contemporaries must have been merciless in their ridicule of this “foolish” man who was building an ark so far inland. In building the ark, Noah became an heir of faith righteousness, a theme echoing Paul’s discussion of the subject (Rom. 9:30; 10:6).