

# NOAH'S FAITH: A FEARFUL, REVERENT FAITH

## HEBREWS 11:07

### Introduction

Noah stands as a great example in believing God and in believing God's warning of coming judgment. His faith was unique in that it was a fearful, reverent faith.

- I. His faith: a faith that promptly obeyed with fear (v. 7).
- II. His reward (v. 7).

### HEBREWS 11:07–40 FAITH

This begins the list of the believers included in God's Great Hall of Fame. The first two mentioned, Abel and Enoch, should also be added to it, although they are discussed in the overall description of faith. They illustrate the spiritual power of faith (vv. 4-5).

Note: each of the believers illustrates a certain kind of faith. For example, glance at the title of Noah's faith above and it is seen that he illustrates a fearful, reverent faith. A glance at the Outline of Hebrews, pt. IV, will give the reader a quick overview of the various kinds of faith illustrated by the great men and women of God. They stand as dynamic examples to us, a stirring challenge for us to believe God in the midst of a corrupt, godless and dying world.

Note that many of these are covered in one verse or just a few verses at most. However, they are separated and discussed in separate outlines in order to stress their unique faith. The preacher and teacher may wish to cover several in one message or lesson. □

### I. *Hebrews 11:07 Noah's Faith and Obedience*

Noah's faith was a faith that promptly obeyed with fear (cp. Gen 5:5-8:22).

*Heb 11:7* By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.

The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The LORD was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. So the LORD said, "I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth — men and animals, and creatures that move along the ground, and birds of the air — for I am grieved that I have made them." But Noah found favour in the eyes of the LORD. Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence. 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.

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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 flood waters 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. Noah did everything just as God commanded him. (Gen 6:5-8, 11-14, 17-19, 22)

Note two points about Noah's faith.

1. There was a time back in world history when the earth had become so wicked that it was filled with corruption and violence. It was so corrupt that every imagination of man's heart was corrupt and evil. Man had reached the point of no return; he would never repent and return to God. God was left with no choice: the earth had to be destroyed. But there was one man on earth who was godly — Noah. Noah worshipped and honoured God in his life. Therefore, God warned Noah of the coming judgment upon the earth.  
=> God told Noah to prepare an ark and the ark would save him, his family, and two of every animal.  
=> God also told Noah to warn the world of coming judgment.

Note how Noah received the warning from God: he was “in holy fear.” The word “fear” (eulabethe) means with godly fear (A.T. Robertson *Word Pictures In The New Testament*, Vol. 5, p. 421). It has the idea of...

- reverence
- standing in awe of God and His warning
- taking heed lest one fall under God's judgment
- diligently taking God at His Word
- immediately acting upon what God says

Noah believed God's warning of coming judgment, and he began to build the ark with a godly fear and reverence, knowing that what God said would come true. God's 457 judgment would fall upon the earth; Noah believed it and knew it by faith.

**Thought 1.** God is going to judge the earth a second time — the whole earth, every man and woman. God has warned the earth. His judgment upon the corruption and violence of men is going to fall upon men. We must fear God, fear Him...

- with a godly fear and reverence.
- by standing in awe of Him and His warning.
- by taking heed lest we fall under His judgment.
- by diligently taking Him at His Word.
- by immediately acting upon what He has said.

Our only hope is to believe God, believe Him with a fearful, reverent faith.

2. Noah stood fast in his faith despite the mockery of the world. Noah lived far, far inland from the ocean; he was nowhere close to the sea or to the shipbuilding yards of the world. Yet, there he was building a ship as large as an ocean liner. Imagine the laughs, mockery, scorn, and abuse Noah suffered. Imagine how often he was called a fool and thought to be insane. But Noah was faithful:
  - => He preached the righteousness and coming judgment of God. In the eyes of the world he was nothing more than a *fool preacher*, but the mockery and abuse did not deter him. He remained faithful and continued to proclaim the truth and to warn the people — all just like God had told him to do.
  - => He also continued to build the ark — continued to work at saving himself and his own house and as much life as possible upon earth. Noah continued on and on, walking in godly fear, believing the sheer Word of God about coming judgment.

**Thought 1.** A world that lives by science and technology is tempted to trust in nothing beyond itself. Science and technology tend to draw and focus all attention upon the world of sense and feelings, of comfort, and pleasure, of possessions and self. Therefore, the idea of God and of coming judgment is ignored. And if anyone preaches it, he is ridiculed, mocked, scorned, and often abused. We must be faithful to God, for God exists. God does exist, and God is going to judge the world.

**Mat 25:31-32** *“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.*

**Mat 25:32-33** *All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.*

**Heb 9:27** *Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,*

**2 Pet 2:9** *If this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.*

**2 Pet 3:7** *By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.*

**1 John 4:17** *In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him.*

**Jude 1:14-15** *Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: “See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him.”*

**John 5:22** *Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son.*

**Acts 10:42** *He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead.*

*Acts 17:31* For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.”

*Rom 2:16* This will take place on the day when God will judge men's secrets through Jesus Christ, as my gospel declares.

*Rom 14:10* You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat.

*2 Tim 4:1* In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge.

*2 Th 1:7-10* And give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

*Psa 96:13* Let all creation rejoice before the Lord, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his faithfulness.

*Eccl 3:17* I said to myself, “God will bring into judgment both the righteous and the wicked, for there will be a time for every activity, a time to judge every deed.”

## II. *Hebrews 11:07 Noah's Faith Rewarded*

Noah's reward was threefold.

1. Noah's family was saved. Noah believed God — believed the warning of God about coming judgment. Therefore, God saved him. Everyone else around Noah died — to be separated from God forever. Why? Because they did not believe God's warning about coming judgment. Note that Noah's whole family was saved. Noah's wife and children were blessed to have a godly father, a father who could teach and guide them into the truth. Remember that his sons had married. The young ladies who had married them had done so despite the stigma of the family being a God-fearing family. They could have married men of the world, but they chose to join the family of God, identifying themselves with the God of God's people. Therefore, God saved them as well as Noah (Mathew Henry. *Mathew Henry's Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 941)
2. The world was condemned; that is, Noah's faith was vindicated. The world had mocked and ridiculed Noah's faith and belief in God's warning of judgment. But God vindicated Noah's faith; God judged the world. And the world saw that Noah had been right all the time.

William Barclay states it well:

*“Noah's faith was a judgment on others. That is why, at least in one sense, it is dangerous to be a Christian. It is not that the Christian is self-righteous; it is not that the Christian is censorious; it is not that the Christian goes about finding fault with other people; it is not that the Christian says: ‘I told you so.’ It often happens that the*

*Christian simply by being himself is passing judgment on other people. Alcibiades that brilliant, but wild, young man of Athens used to say to Socrates: 'Socrates, I hate you, for every time I meet you, you show me what I am.' One of the finest men who ever lived in Athens was Aristides, who was called 'the just.' But they voted to banish and to ostracise him. One man, being asked why he had so voted, answered: 'Because I am tired of hearing Aristides called the just. There is a danger in goodness, for in the light of goodness evil stands condemned' (The Letter to the Hebrews, p. 160).*

3. Noah was counted righteous (dikaios). Noah believed God and God counted his faith as righteousness. He “became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.” As Matthew Henry says, Noah had faith in the promised Seed, the Saviour whom God was someday going to send to earth (*Mathew Henry's Commentary*, Vol. 6, p. 941). There is nothing else upon earth that can cause God to count a man righteous but faith — faith in the promised Seed, the Saviour of the world, even the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Gen 15:6** *Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.*

**Acts 13:39** *Through him everyone who believes is justified from everything you could not be justified from by the law of Moses.*

**Rom 3:23-24** *For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.*

**Rom 4:3** *What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."*

**Rom 5:1** *Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Rom 5:9** *Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!*

**1 Cor 6:11** *And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.*

**Gal 2:16** *Know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified'.*

**Gal 3:6** *Consider Abraham: "He believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."*

**Gal 3:24** *So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.*

**Phil 3:9** *And be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ — the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. ■*