

A Dad Like Noah

Hebrews 11:1-7

As you may know, Joyce and I went to see the replica of Noah's Ark a couple of months ago. As a result, I find myself thinking about Noah more now than ever before in my life. Today I want to remind you that Noah was a Dad. He had three sons that endured this project with him. Like most Dad's, Noah would have been concerned for the welfare of his sons and their wives. He knew that the death of all living things was coming and that the only salvation was a boat that he was told to build. He knew he had to do exactly as God said to save his family. He knew that anything less would cause him to lose his life and that of his family. And given the statement in Gen. 6:3, he knew it would be during their lifetime! That is a lot of pressure on a Dad!! For all the Dads, I want to suggest that we a lot in common with Noah in our time, and we need to learn how to build an ark of safety for our family. God has a message of hope for us about what to do in troubled times.

God saw the corruption of man and 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."*** Gen 6:12-13

Noah lived in a time remarkably like ours. People in Noah's day were hardened toward spiritual matters, which is a like our culture today. The ancient world, like ours, was filled with heartache and turmoil, but Noah is an exception to the norm. When everyone else was swimming downstream into an abyss of sin, Noah was headed upstream, primarily because of his Godly heritage. Noah's family included some spiritual giants like Enoch, his great-grandfather; and Methuselah, his grandfather; and his father, Lamech, who lived 777 years! This is a veritable "who's who" of the Old Testament. Noah came from a very spiritual family that focused all their energy on being what God wanted them to be.

In my preparation I came across a book by Dr. Henry Morris. In this book he wrote about the meaning of the name Methuselah.

Morris wrote: “The exact meaning of this very ancient name is somewhat uncertain. It may mean, **“When he dies, judgment.”** Others say: **“When he is dead, it shall be sent”** (“it” refers to the Deluge) (Cornwall and Smith, Exhaustive Dictionary of Bible Names). Others say the name means: **“Man of the dart”** or **“...javelin”** (Holsinger/Also: Larry Richards, Every Man in the Bible).

In our tour of the Ark, Joyce and I watched a film. In that film there was a segment where Noah was being interviewed by a local newspaper reporter. In response to a question about the difficulty of building an Ark, Noah responded, **“It has been a lot of work, but my Sons and Daughters and my wife have helped a lot. Even my grandfather Methuselah helped in the first decades. Recently he has been less help...he just sits around bragging about how old he is.”** Now that made me laugh out loud, and it was the first time I connected with him as a grandfather!

If as some say the name Methuselah means **“his death shall bring”** then he may have died just days before the flood came! I don’t know of course, but it does fascinate me that Methuselah was alive just prior to the flood and his death might have been the “trigger” that God used to bring it on.

In an Apocryphal Book, the book of Enoch, Enoch (Methuselah's father) had a vision that, if his son was alive, the flood that would destroy the world would not come. So, Methuselah's death shall bring the flood. Tradition based on this teaching says that the year Methuselah died was indeed the year the flood came. Again, this is **NOT** Biblical teaching – it is from books about the Bible.

In American universities and other institutions of higher learning, there has been an ongoing argument that **“environment dictates character.”** In our text we learn that it’s a Godly heritage that really influences character. Amid completed ungodliness, Noah was a God-fearing man steadily raising his family on a daily diet of faith and obedience. Fathers, a Godly heritage is the greatest gifts you can give your children. Dad’s - live by faith before your family and raise them in a way that honor’s Jesus.

For all the young people, your parents and grandparents aren't just your history...they are your heritage!

Prov.22:1 *A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches.*

Three Ways to pass on a Godly Heritage:

1. **Obey the Gospel and Become a Christian.** Dad, you may be the first in your family to become a member of the Lord's church! It must start with someone – make it you!
2. **Get your life right.** By this I mean make the corrections that you know need to be made in your life. May be getting rid of some sinful parts of life. May be making things right with a family member. May be getting married and starting a family to be the beginning of a Godly heritage.
3. **Get with a local church.** God sent His Son to die for our sins but also to establish His church on this earth for those who are being saved. Find a local church and make yourself an active part of it with your family. Be the example of how to do it right.

One of the great lessons of this story of Noah is that God was able to pull off His plan using just one faithful man and his family? That gives me hope! Even if I feel my impact is insignificant, God can still use it to accomplish His will.

Another great lesson is that Noah and his family were **amateurs**...not **professionals** (like the Titanic!). Remember this important truth: God may want to use your family in an unusual way. God wants to use your family as an instrument of His grace through which He can release His creative plans and projects. The story of Noah is an excellent illustration of this.

For the remainder of our time this morning let's focus on three words:

By Faith Noah

Acts 16:31 *“And they said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.”*

In Acts 16:14-15--Lydia and her whole house were saved...this is a good verse for the mom's who are acting as the spiritual head of the house. Dads take the lead and show your kids the kingdom. Lead them to church, lead them in prayer, lead them to know the Lord by your life!

Everything Noah did in preparation for the coming deluge was done from simple faith about what God said. After all, they're hundreds of miles from water, and people are asking **what's a boat? What's rain?** It's not like he could show a weather report that things were heading toward such a catastrophe. It wasn't like such an event had happened before. No, it was simply because God had warned him of something to come, and he put his trust in God's warnings. Noah operated on faith!

Noah listened to God. Spiritual hearing comes from spiritual listening. The Bible is not a spiritual dessert, to be eaten every now and then...or when we have a craving...but rather it is to be our daily bread. Faith comes by hearing, so if you want to have the faith that can teach your children, you must be a man/woman of the Word.

Noah's Fear Moved Him

We do things from fear as well. Think about smoke detectors – I have them in my home due to my fear (respect) for what fire can do to a house and its inhabitants. Fear of fire is a good thing in that regard. That respect or fear keeps me from putting candles around flammable things. Fear or a healthy respect for something makes us take steps to guard. Listen again to Heb. 11:7: ***“By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household”***

If Noah had no fear of God, he would not have been motivated to build the ark that saved their lives. Year by year, Noah built the ark for the saving of his family. Nothing more important than the saving of his family. Noah did this by walking with God which was a witness to his family. As a result, his faith led to his family's salvation in the Ark that God told him to build. Dad, can your fear protect your family? Noah's did!

Noah's Family Followed Him

I read a humorous statement about the flood once. "Noah's stock was riding high while the rest of the world was in liquidation!"

There's no greater sense of accomplishment than to have the **followship** of our family! Dads, if we lead by example there is a strong possibility that our family will follow our lead. No guarantee mind you, but when we witness Godly behavior and our heart is malleable, we can be led and so can our children and grandchildren and generations yet to come. Some family won't follow like the families of all the wives, but it is thrilling when we have some get on board.

3 John 1:4 - *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.*

Dads, we're not almighty, but we do trust in the God Who is! Are you constructing your house by God's design plans? Are all the children safe within?