



Wk 4: Noah : Judgment Comes - Chs 6-10

This Weeks Summary

This week we saw the devastating effects of sin culminate in a worldwide flood, and yet we saw the hope of the gospel mirrored as God saves Noah and his family.

For Study:

- Read **Revelation 20:11-21:8** and meditate on the seriousness of the final judgment that is one day coming.
- Read **Matthew chapter 24** and **2 Peter chapter 3** - what can we learn from these chapters about what it means to wait for the final judgment?
- Read **Ephesians 2:1-9**, **Romans 5:1-11** and **Colossians 2:9-15** and marvel again at the grace of God to us in Jesus.

Here are a couple of areas that come up in our passage today:

The faith of Noah

We thought last week about how the issue dividing the sacrifices of Cain and Abel was the issue of faith. Hebrews 11 tells us Abel brought his offering in faith, and the implication is that Cain didn't. This same chapter also says this about Noah:

By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. (Hebrews 11:7)

This verse tells us a few things about Noah - firstly that he had a proper sense of the fear of God. He held Him in the reverence which is needed when we come to God and because of this, when God spoke - Noah listened. Noah knew the implications of Genesis chapter 1 that the whole of the world belongs to God because He made it, and to ignore or rebel against Him was and is utter foolishness. Next we find that Noah acted upon His reverent fear. The truth is that if Noah had not acted upon what God said it would have shown that he didn't actually hold God in the reverence he ought to have, but thankfully for us he did act, and built the ark that would save both himself and his family. This reality reminds us of some verses in James 2 where it tells us that 'faith without works is dead' (James 2:17). To live a life of faith means not just to say we believe certain things, but it means to be so committed to those truths that we live entirely in accordance with them - everything we do reflects the truth that we say we believe. We'll come back to this idea a lot over the coming weeks as we study the life of Abraham, the Father of faith, but for now it is a powerful and important question to ask ourselves whether the lives we are living truly flow from the truth we say we believe as Christians, or whether they are actually influenced more by our culture or upbringing. We're told later in our verse in Hebrews that Noah was a recipient of righteousness, imputed to him because of the faith he had in the word of God, and it's exactly the same for us. We're justified (made righteous) by faith - simply believing in the truth of the Bible and confess-

ing our belief in it (Romans 10:10) - but for that faith to be proved genuine it must be shown by the way we live. We're not talking about perfection, but a life motivated by the desire to please God, and striving to live according to the truth He has revealed to us.

Condemning the World

The next statement in our verse in Hebrews 11 is a powerful one. It tells us that in building the ark to save his family, Noah had a part in condemning the world around him. We know that it wasn't all about Noah - in one way the people were condemned already because of their wickedness which caused God to act as He did, but they were also given a way out. As far as we understand it, anyone could have got onto the ark and been saved from the flood if only they had believed Noah's pleas for them to avoid the destruction that was coming but they wouldn't listen. They acted in unbelief where Noah acted in faith and in doing so they made their condemnation as clear cut as it could be - they rejected the means of salvation God had prepared for them and perished because of it.

In the same way we too are just like Noah - we should realise that the message we have believed and that we have been entrusted with is just as important and just as urgent as the message Noah gave to the world at his time. The truth is, when we have the privilege to share the Gospel with someone wherever that might be, we are literally holding out in front of them a choice between life and death. There is a scary reality that if people reject what we are saying, that may well be the biggest thing that condemns them on judgment day. We are all condemned already because of our sin, but God has made a way of escape in Jesus, and if people reject us, they reject their only way to escape the judgment that is to come. It's a sobering thought, but it's one that should cause us to take our evangelism and witness extremely seriously - though we may be in some way condemning the people who reject us, we cannot hold back from them an opportunity to hear the words of life and respond.

For GC Discussion:

- How should the knowledge of God's judgment affect the way we live our lives?
- How should it impact us that God can be grieved by our sin?
- What can we learn from Noah's faithful obedience to what must have seemed a strange command from God?
- How can we apply the symbolism of the ark to our lives?

For the Kids

What do you think it would have been like to do what Noah had to do? What can we learn from Noah about what it means to be a Christian?

In 2 Weeks:

We will conclude this first part of our series by looking at the Tower of Babel (chapter 11)

Notes & Questions

For Worship: listen to '***For the Cross***' by Bethel Music - you can find it on YouTube, or on the Hill City Church blog on the website.