



Sunday 6th September 2020
Welcome to our Sunday Service
Prepared by Emma and Dave

**Noah – What a Man, What a Man,
What a Mighty Fine Man!**

Genesis 6:5-8

The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. The Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled. So the Lord said, "I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them." **But Noah found favour in the eyes of the Lord.**



Guardian by Ben Cantelon

King of love and grace my guardian
All my hopes and fears
Are in Your hands, I'm in Your hands
Where You go I'll go show me the way
Every step I take, be now my guide
God on my side
You go before me, You're there beside me
And if I wander, love will find me
Goodness and mercy will always follow
You go before me my Guardian
When I hear You say trust and obey
I will walk by faith and not by sight
God of my life
So let Your kingdom come your will be done
All Your promises will stand forever
You're my defender
You are God our great defender
Strong in love forever faithful
We are Yours and we will trust in You

I find the story of Noah really challenging. Right from the very first, Noah challenges me. For example, the Bible says that the earth was corrupt and full of evil in God's sight - we could say similar things about the earth today. Noah, however, is described as a righteous man, blameless among the people and one who walked faithfully with God. So, there you have it, challenge number one. How would people describe me? Would they say that I am righteous and blameless among the people around me? Would they say I walk faithfully with God?

We see the instructions God gives Noah about the ark, and then in Chapter 6 verse 22 it says - Noah did everything just as God commanded him. Challenge number 2 - do I do everything as God commands me? Oh dear!!

And it goes on like this, throughout the rest of the Chapter and into Chapter 7 and 8. So, this

morning, let's have a look at Noah and see what we can learn from him about his relationship with God and how this might affect our relationships with God. I want to share with you a few things I have been challenged by when reading and thinking about Noah, by looking at his character. The four aspects of Noah's character I want to explore this morning are:

RIGHTEOUSNESS, OBEDIENCE, FAITH, PREACHING.



We have already touched on the fact that Noah was a **RIGHTEOUS** man, the only one when God looked at the world. The Bible doesn't mention that Noah talks to God like Abraham or Moses. The Bible tells us Noah listened to God, then did what God told him and we see a second character trait - **OBEDIENCE**.

Righteousness



God gave Noah very specific sizes when building the ark, told him to cover it inside and

out with pitch, and then take his family and go into the ark, with two of every animal. And what does Noah do? He does everything that God tells him. When God tells them it's time to come out of the ark, again Noah doesn't question it, he just does it. He doesn't question God. He does what God says fully and completely, with no complaining. He doesn't cut corners in building the ark. He doesn't just get most

animals into the ark; he gets them all.

There's no doubt from Noah. If this was me I would have so much doubt and loads and loads of questions. Where is all the water going to come from? How can we keep so many animals alive? How can we catch all the animals and get them to go into the ark?

Each step of building the ark would bring more questions. Where can we get all these materials? There isn't even any gopher wood available in this area. How can we support ourselves and build the ark at the same time? What are

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Where can we get all these materials? There isn't even any gopher wood available in this area.

How can we support ourselves and build the ark at the same time?

What are our friends going to say when we start building this big boat in the middle of nowhere? There isn't a cloud in the sky, not a drop of rain in sight. Sixty years later, we've been working on this for 60 years and can't even see the end in sight, and for what?

When commanded to get in the boat, how are we going to close the door?

Why get in, I don't see anything?

You could go on and on thinking of questions and yes buts and yet it doesn't appear that Noah did. The Bible says, "Noah did all that the Lord commanded him."

Would you do all of that without questioning God? I'm really not sure I would!! But this brings us to our third point, Noah's **FAITH**. This task needed a huge amount of faith to see it through from beginning to end. And it surely must have got harder and harder over the years as Noah waited for this prophecy to come true. Having told his wife and his sons about what God had said, having started

building the ark, the months and years must have gone by, and there was still no sign of water, surely doubts must have crept in and made him question. And yet there's no record of this in the Bible. Noah trusted God in his ordinary, everyday life before God told him about the ark, and so Noah trusted God and had faith in Him for the really **BIG** things in his life!"



This is why Noah is listed in the Hall of Faith in Hebrews chapter 11. The writer of Hebrews describes faith as being "confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see." Noah had this in bucket loads.

In a few minutes we are going to take a moment to reflect on what we have learnt about Noah and the challenges his life sets us.

But before that, let's just take a quick look at Noah's ability to **PREACH**. He lived his life not just by what he did but what he said. Building the ark must have given him so many opportunities to tell people what he was doing and why. I imagine his project was famous around the area, today we would have had BBC, ITV, SKY all the news channels, on his doorstep. He must have had so many opportunities to talk about what he was doing and why. A few people might have respected Noah for his integrity and care for others.



A few people might have become more interested when the animals started showing up on their own. A few people might have felt guilt when Noah cried out against the evil and corruption in his society. But no one had enough faith to step on the ark with him. They all rejected the invitation and refused to repent from their evil thoughts and ways. Even those who might have been interested were unwilling to step onto the ark for fear of ridicule from their own friends.

This preaching was a sad and tough task for Noah. He knew that it would be fruitless to keep preaching, but he did it anyway. He knew they would mock him, but he did it anyway. In this aspect his ministry was much like Isaiah or Jeremiah's. He would keep preaching, but with no fruit.

So, let's recap for a moment - Noah was a righteous man, he was obedient, he had faith and he was a preacher. Now let's go back to the questions I asked right at the beginning of this talk.

Challenge number one - let's compare Noah's righteous life to ours. How would people describe you and me? Would they say that you and I are righteous and blameless?

Would they say you walk faithfully with God?

Challenge number two - how obedient are you when God calls you? Noah waited 120 years for the floods to arrive, and during that time he waited patiently, without complaining or moaning or questioning God. During that time,

he did everything that God asked him to do. Are we obedient to God? And how patient are you? Dave and I put our house on the market three months ago, after much prayer and discussion, because we absolutely believe God wants us to move and He will provide the right house at the right time. However, in those three months we have questioned God, we've wondered if we are doing the right thing, we've got cross with God when nothing's happened and that's only after 3 months!! Never mind 120 years!!

Challenge number three. What condition is your faith in? Noah doesn't waver in his faith and trust in God, he just keeps going. He knows that God has been with him in the past and he believes God will be with him in the future. If God says a flood will come, then a flood will come. The good news for us is that faith isn't reliant on us. The man who brought his demon possessed son to Jesus for healing, tells Jesus, "Lord I believe, help me overcome my unbelief." Jesus tells us we only need to have faith as small as a mustard seed to move mountains. I absolutely believe that God wants us to come to Him willingly, with as much or as little faith as we have, and it's God that does the work in us. We can trust God that when we say yes to Him, He says "Hurray, now we can get to work together!"



And lastly, challenge number 4. Are you a preacher? I'm not, I'm a talker though, as many of you will know. But do I talk to my friends, neighbours and work colleagues about all the amazing things Jesus has done in my life? Have I talked to the people around me about the last time God answered my prayers? Not really! Noah is a lone voice among his neighbourhood and yet he keeps telling people what God has told him, even though people laugh at him, even though they don't take any notice. Not one person follows him onto the ark, apart from his family. If we have a voice, if we can speak, then we can talk about God to the people around us. It's our choice. But again, we don't have to do this on our own. God doesn't say to us, "off you go then, I'll see you later." He says, "come on, let's go together - I will be with you."

If we ask God to help us believe in Him, to trust Him and have faith in Him, He will. No ifs, no but, no conditions. Noah is living proof of this. One of my favourite passages in the Bible, which has kept me going for many years and which I return to time and again is Isaiah 41. Note how positive this is:

'I took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners I called you.
I said, "You are my servant"; I have chosen you and have not rejected you.
So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
'All who rage against you will surely be ashamed and disgraced;
those who oppose you will be as nothing and perish.
Though you search for your enemies, you will not find them.
Those who wage war against you will be as nothing at all.
For I am the LORD your God who takes hold of your right hand
and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you,

Verses from Isaiah 41

Father God,

Thank you for the inspirational characters in the Bible who teach us about your love and who show us that you are a faithful God. You tell us that you have chosen us, you promise to take our hand and never leave us, that you will help us and uphold us, and we thank you for the promises we read in your word. Today we choose to put our trust and faith in you. We say to you Lord, we believe, help us in our unbelief. So, would you help us to live righteous lives, to be obedient to you and as we place our mustard seed of faith into your hands, would you give us the courage to share your love with the people around us. Amen.



CHALLENGE:

Is your walk with God a righteous walk?
How obedient are you when God calls your name?
What condition is your faith in?
Are you a preacher?



May grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be
with us all now, and evermore. Amen.