



## Sacrificial Faith

Genesis 8:15-22

- Most of us have memories of learning about Noah and the Ark at some point in our childhood. Maybe it was at VBS or Sunday school.
- My memories of Noah and the Ark are etched in my mind just as much as my memories of cool aid and cookies in Sunday school.
- We have kid's songs, stories, artwork, and movies about the story of Noah and the Ark.
- We have to be careful, though. We need to make sure our understanding of this story is formed and shaped by what God has said in His Word rather than the cute caricatures we have from our childhood.

- Truth be told, this isn't a very cute story at all. I guess the story has become a child's story because of the idea of the animals getting on the ark, two by two. Who doesn't love a good story about animals?
- It's actually a very heavy and weighty story. It's a story that's true. A story that involved God's judgement because of the humanity's sin.
- Of course, it's also a picture of God's mercy and grace. He sees Noah and spares him and his family. From Noah, there is the repopulation of humanity. God promises not to flood the earth again. He is willing to use imperfect people who will trust in His plan.
- There is the symbolism of the rainbow. What a beautiful picture of God's mercy. The rainbow is the antithesis of pride. The rainbow is about our humble submission to the plan of God and His mercy and grace towards us.

**Main Point: God calls us to follow Him sacrificially in trust and obedience.**

- We've been in a study going through the people that are mentioned in Hebrews 11 as being heroes of the faith. Looking at their stories and what we can learn about their walk of faith.
- There are principles here that apply to all of us in our walk of faith.

#### **I. Noah's obedience**

- a. Noah had to follow very specific directives from God all throughout this story. From the size of the ark to believing that God would send the rain for a flood to come, there were a lot of times Noah just have to step out in obedience.

- b. God gave instructions on the kind of wood to use, how large it should be, how many of each kind of animal to bring, when to close the door of the ark, when to come out.
- c. Every step of the way was a test in obedience.
- d. The time that they spent on the ark must have been overwhelming.
- e. Could you imagine the smell?
  - i. When I was a youth pastor, I had to room one year with the sixth-grade boys. It smelled like Axe body spray, hot Cheetos, and sweat.
  - ii. I will never forget that smell for as long as I live. I am sure Noah experienced something similar.
- f. Noah was on the ark for approximately **one year and ten days**, based on the biblical account in Genesis. The timeline can be calculated as follows:
  - i. **Genesis 7:11:** The flood began when Noah was 600 years old, on the 17th day of the second month.
  - ii. **Genesis 7:12-13:** The rain lasted 40 days and nights, and Noah and his family entered the ark on the day the flood started.
  - iii. **Genesis 7:24:** The waters prevailed on the earth for 150 days.
  - iv. **Genesis 8:3-4:** After 150 days, the waters began to recede, and the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat on the 17th day of the seventh month.
  - v. **Genesis 8:13-14:** The waters continued to dry up. On the first day of the first month in Noah's 601st year, Noah removed the covering of the ark and saw dry ground. By the 27th day of the second month, the earth was completely dry, and Noah left the ark.

- g. That's the difficult thing about obedience – things don't always happen on our timeline. There may even be times where God is taking longer than we ever wanted Him to.

i. If the Lord Jehovah makes us wait, let us do so with our whole hearts; for blessed are all they that wait for Him. He is worth waiting for. The waiting itself is beneficial to us: it tries faith, exercises patience, trains submission, and endears the blessing when it comes.

- ii. Charles Spurgeon

## II. God-honoring stewardship

- a. It's amazing that God led Noah in bringing all these animals on the ark.
- b. It's even more amazing to me that it seems they all left the ark after over a year.
- c. VERSE 17
- d. Of course, this is the sovereign hand of God. He is the one that made sure all these animals didn't eat all the other animals.
- e. He's also the one who made sure they had what they needed to survive. The Ark in Kentucky that is ran by Answers in Genesis does a fantastic job of visualizing how all of this could have happened.
- f. I would encourage you to look on the website for Answers in Genesis if you would like to study it further.
- g. One thing I really noticed when visualizing this was that this required diligent effort from Noah and his family to be good stewards of the resources God blessed them with.

- h. They didn't know how long they would be on there, but God guided them every step of the way.
- i. We're in a similar circumstance in that we don't know how much time we have left, but our job is to steward well whatever the Lord has blessed us with.
- j. Our prayers shouldn't always sound like this:
  - i. God, please give me more.
- k. Instead, they should sound like this:
  - i. God, help me to be a good steward of what you have already given me.

### III. Our primary response

- a. VERSE 20
- b. There are other acts of worship recorded before the flood, but this was the first explicitly recorded use of an altar.
- c. This was the first established place of worship recorded in scripture.
- d. Notice what he did and how he did it.
  - i. This was the first thing he did.
  - ii. It was an intentional offering
  - iii. It was a generous offering
  - iv. It was a sacrificial offering
  - v. It was pleasing to the Lord.
- e. What about what we bring to the Lord? Can it be described the same way? What about our approach to God and His plan for our lives?

### IV. God's consistent mercy

- a. VERSE 21 – such a beautiful picture of God’s mercy. A promise that still rings true to this day.
- b. One day it was raining really bad, and Maggie said, “I thought God was never going to flood the earth again!”
- c. But God has been faithful in showing us mercy.
- d. Unfortunately, Noah didn’t always respond exactly how he should have. He was drunk later in this story and was shamefully exposed.
- e. That’s the amazing thing about so many of these people listed in Hebrews 11. They weren’t perfect, but when you consider the trajectory of their lives – they trusted in the Lord. And God showed His mercy.