

WHAT WILL YOU GIVE FOR SALVATION?

***Hebrews 11:7** By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the **saving of his house**; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.*

Allow me to first frame the context of this message to avoid any misunderstanding. There is only one salvation approved of by God: the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord and God, Jesus Christ. ‘Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved’ (Acts 4:12). However, the apostles Peter and Paul mention a ‘salvation’ which we are to undertake. Just as Noah was ‘moved’ by faith to do something, what we do in response to Jesus’ salvation is the ‘evidence’ of our faith in Christ’s work.

***Act 2:40** And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.*

***Phil 2:12** Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out **your own salvation** with fear and trembling.*

The first thing to note about Noah’s great faith is that he walked with God for 500 years. During those years, nothing special happened – no miracles or anything to suggest that he had a special advantage. We do not read that he was filled with the Holy Spirit or that God spoke to him before. Noah’s faith was extraordinary because it was **simple and ordinary**. A preacher once said, ‘I am not impressed with latter-day saints, the everyday ones are better’. For 500 years, the entire world was wicked and yet Noah was righteous. He lived a separated and holy life. If he needed a reason to backslide, there was plenty. He did not say like Elijah that he alone was left. Noah did not look for an excuse; he just served God in the everyday.

***Heb 3:7** Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice,*

***Heb 3:8** Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness:*

To build an ark upon dry ground was a very expensive undertaking. For 120 years, Noah used all his money to invest in the ark because he knew that the ark was God’s vehicle for his family’s salvation. He clearly must have employed laborers whom he paid for not to mention the cost of material. While others were building houses to plant on solid ground, **the only building in the entire world being constructed for water** was Noah’s ark. The Lord Jesus

Christ is the ark of our salvation today. How much are we investing in him? The people of Noah's day invested in dry ground; Noah invested in the coming waters while we Christians invest in the salvation which shall come in the air riding upon clouds:

***Luke 21:28** And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.*

The second observation about the faith of Noah is his steadfastness despite the lack of results. 'And spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, **a preacher of righteousness**, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly' (2 Peter 2:5). Imagine preaching for 120 years without fruit! It is enough to discourage the most persistent preacher, but not Noah. The truth is this: the message of salvation is not the problem; the people are. The people's hearts must change for the Gospel, not the Gospel for the people. He had no saints around him to encourage him except his family. Where did his strength of conviction come from? Each time he went to work on the ark and remembered the warning of God, this recharged his spiritual 'batteries'. What will keep us going until Jesus returns in the clouds, brothers and sisters? The answer is what you have 'built' or 'invested' in the name of Jesus Christ. All of Noah's money was invested in the ark – and all his **reputation**, which is next.

***John 12:42** Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:*

***John 12:43** For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.*

Reputation is an interesting word. Solomon said, 'A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold' (Proverbs 22:1). If you invest everything in building a gigantic boat on dry ground when it never has rained before, while everyone else has faith in old mother earth, your reputation will suffer irreversible damage. There are French chefs who commit suicide if they lose one Michelin star. Such is their total investment in their reputation. Generally, those who have a good reputation in heaven are regarded poorly on earth and vice versa. Blessed are you indeed if both heaven and earth love you! Again, Noah's strength to continue came from the fact that his reputation was now inescapably linked to the ark. The only way to redeem his reputation was if what he was preaching came to pass – and it did.

Most important of all, Noah obeyed God down to the **smallest detail**. Have you noticed that the God of the Bible has always been very meticulous and detailed? Consider the plan for the

Tabernacle: he told Moses, ‘And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount’ (Exodus 25:40). Now consider what God commanded Noah:

Gen 6:15 *And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.*

What if Noah decided that 200 cubits would be better? His ark would without doubt sink. And yet, astonishingly, there are Christians who tell us that there is another way to be saved other than Acts 2:38. That is a boat that will not float when the flood of God’s judgement comes! Jesus is the author of salvation! His salvation has been planned from eternity. We cannot add or deduct from the details that he has prepared. Humans are the sinful creatures and we cannot help him any way – just obey as Noah did.

Gen 6:22 *Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.*

One Noah fulfilled his part of the covenant, all he could do was sit back and wait. How his heart must have rejoiced when, after 120 years, he saw Mr. and Mrs. lion going towards his ark. That was the day the world knew that perhaps Noah knew something they did not. What power was sending all animals in pairs to the ark? We can only speculate as to why they did not repent and enter the ark at that moment. It was an indictment of humanity that animals heard the voice of God, but not humans. Noah had no Bible to meditate on daily; only 500 years of everyday faith. He was a man who trusted God while in the house, in the field, while eating and every mundane activity in life. He teaches us that God speaks to those who determine to walk quietly every day with him; those who are quick to obey and invest their money, reputation and future into the command of God. Now, finally, let us take heed for the God of heaven warns us:

Luke 17:26 *And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.*

Let us be glad that Noah’s faith conquered his generation. We can conquer our generation through the faith of Noah also. Focus on the ark you are building for Jesus; never let go of it; keep investing everything in it and you will reap the reward of Noah.

1Co 3:13 *Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.*

1Co 3:14 *If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.*

1Co 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.