

Noah's Fall and Salvation

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)

How did people in Genesis get saved? We know in the New Testament that genuine faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ results in salvation. One amazing example of this is found in Acts 16:25ff. After a great earthquake and a little bit of dialogue, we read: "Then he [the jailer] brought them [Paul and Silas] out and said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' And they said, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.'" Verse 32 continues with Paul and Silas sharing more about the Lord to the household and we have a record that the jailer's household believed and was baptized. But what about Noah and his household?

Before we talk about Noah's salvation, let's talk about his fall. In Genesis 6-9, Noah becomes Adam 2.0. God starts over with Noah. Noah is righteous, blameless, and he walks with God. This is why God chose him to be the father of humanity who would be saved from the necessary cleansing of the earth through a global flood that would result in the death of everything living "that was on the face of the earth, man and animals" (Gen 7:23). But not Noah. God preserved Noah's life. God would start over with a new Adam (Noah) and his three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

According to Answers in Genesis (a website and ministry dedicated to teaching the truths found in Genesis), Noah probably spent 55 to 75 years building the ark. This is based on the years his sons were born and the time it would take for them to grow up and marry. Remember, Noah's wife and the wives of the sons are on the ark as well. Think about the faith and perseverance it would take to dedicate 55 to 75 years of your life to building a boat for a flood that no one had ever experienced. "By faith Noah being warned by God concerning" a flood God would bring "in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household" (Heb 11:7). Then, after over a year on this ark, which had to be utterly miserable beyond comprehension, Noah was saved from the flood. The ark landed, and all are safe. The water abated, and God tells Noah to go out onto the dry land. The first thing Noah does is worship Yahweh with burnt offerings (Gen 8:20). Noah, our righteous father, still believes. God has saved him and his household, and He is worthy of worship. After some post-flood instructions from God described in chapter 9, Noah, Adam 2.0, falls hard. Adam and Eve fell in the Garden of Eden, and now Noah has fallen. This is not to suggest Noah was innocent or perfect prior to his time on the ark. Instead, let the reader see Noah as Adam, and God starting over with the most righteous man alive. And yet, our Adam 2.0, our patriarch, experiences a fall.

Consider the parallels between Adam and Noah. They are too intentional not to communicate that Noah can't do what Adam also couldn't do. The earth needs a new Adam—a Son of God who can keep God's law perfectly.

Adam's Fall (Gen 3)	Noah's Post-Flood Fall (Gen 9)
Cultivated the ground* in the garden	A man of the soil* who planted a vineyard
Ate of fruit from the wrong tree	Found drunk from the fruit of the vine
Painfully aware of his nakedness	Needed someone to cover his nakedness
*The Hebrew [Strong's H127] is identical between Gen 2:5 and 9:20. Noah's occupation after the flood is the same as Adam's in the Garden.	

Let's reiterate the concept of righteousness by faith as a gift from God. Despite being described as righteous, Noah was still a sinner in need of a Savior. His personal righteousness was not sufficient—it was found to be wholly inadequate. He was drunk and naked. How then could Noah be saved prior to Jesus? Hebrews 11:7 tells us. Noah by faith received a righteousness, NOT his own, described as "the righteousness that comes by faith." Notice the word "heir." Noah was an heir of "the righteousness." Like a person who inherits someone else's money, Noah was an heir of a righteousness that was not his own. Noah believed what God told him concerning an impending judgment by water and built an ark as evidence of the authenticity of his faith. And God counted Noah's faith in Him as righteousness just like Abraham's (see Gen 15:6). "The righteousness" that comes by faith is a gift from God. One could imagine our unrighteousness as a filthy, nasty, smelly jacket, like one you might see on a destitute person, and the righteousness of Christ as a brand new, top-of-the-line jacket never worn by anyone. God took Noah's nasty jacket off and clothed him with a perfectly fitting, immaculate jacket from Christ. And God will do the same for you—if you believe the gospel—like the jailor in Acts 16.