

From Genesis 5-8 we learn that nearly 6000 years ago there lived a man who built a boat 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 30 feet high. Into that boat went two of every air-breathing, land-dwelling unclean and seven clean animals. He was 500 years old when he had his three sons, and at 600 years old he became captain of the history’s most famous ship. After it rained for 40 days/nights, his vessel eventually came to rest upon Mount Ararat. He exited about one year later and died at the ripe age of 950. His single name was Noah. Most everyone has some concept of Noah. A closer examination of the Bible’s references to Noah gives a deeper appreciation of the spiritual depth to this patriarch.

Noah was one in a billion (Genesis 6:1–8). Population experts say there were possibility as high as a billion people on the earth at the time of the flood. The sons of God (Seth’s descendants) saw the beauty of the daughters of men (Cain’s descendants) and chose to marry outside their faith (Genesis 6:2). This led to genetic giants but moral pygmies (6:4) and initiated 120-years of evil living (6:3). After noting that mankind had become so evil, it repented the LORD that he had made man, and it grieved Him at his Heart (Gen 6:6). Yet scripture records for us this single exception: ***“Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord” (Gen. 6:8).***

This is an interested statement. Noah found GRACE in the eyes of the Lord. A simple definition of grace is “unmerited favor.” Applying that definition, Noah received a favor from God that he did not deserve or merit. What Noah received from God was salvation. ***Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah, ... prepared an ark to the saving of his house.***

So Noah was saved by grace through obedient faith. But to receive the benefits of God’s grace, Noah had to do anything. ***Genesis 6:13 And God said unto Noah... Skipping down to vs22 Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he.*** For the next few minutes I want us to notice what Noah did to receive God’s grace.

It’s interested that Noah did as God instructed without knowing about the flood. God told him that he was going to destroy mankind and then commanded him to build

the ark. Nothing was said about the flood and/or rain. Since it had not ever rained, Noah likely had no comprehension of why he was building the ark. Yet Noah devoted many years building in obedience.

Genesis 6:14-16 Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. The ark was Noah’s project and it was to be made with **gopher wood**. Teak is thought to best represent gopher wood today. No other wood was to be used. Cedar or cypress would not work. While these are good woods for construction of water craft, if Noah had substituted gopher wood with one of these other wood types, he would have drowned in the flood.

The ark was to be covered inside and outside with **pitch**. The pitch worked to waterproof the wood. God told Noah to cover it with pitch inside and outside, which makes it possible that the ark could be preserved for a long time. Some geologists claim that Noah could not possibly have built the ark in the manner described in Genesis because pitch could not have been used to cover the ark and make it waterproof since is derived from oil or coal which did not form until during the time of Noah’s Flood.

Pitch is a black glue-like substance that belongs to the same family of substances as asphalt. Today, it is largely produced by heating coal, but coal tar and petroleum are not the only source for pitch. Pitch can be extracted by distilling or heating certain types of wood. In fact, prior to the rise of the petroleum and coal industries, this was how pitch was made.

(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.

The ark was about 450 feet and it was about 75 feet wide and 45 feet high. This would equal to 1 ½ football fields in length and half a football field in width. What is described is not really a boat, but a well-ventilated barge, meant only to float and not to sail anywhere. After all, an **ark** is a chest, not a ship; this refers to the “shoebox” shape of the vessel. ***(16) A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower,***

second, and third stories shalt thou make it. The ark was about the size of the Titanic and had a cubit-wide opening (18 inches) all the way around the top. It was not until 1858 that a boat bigger than the ark was built; the Great Eastern. She was the largest ship ever built at the time of her launch, and had the capacity to carry 4,000 passengers from England to Australia without refueling.

Critics often say that the ark was not large enough to hold all those animals. Let’s consider the size of the ark. It was roughly the size of a four story football field with one door and had one window at the top. If the ark carried two of every *family* of animal, there were around 700 pairs of animals; but if the ark carried two of every *species* of animals, there were around 35,000 pairs of animals. The average size of a land animal is smaller than a sheep. The ark could carry 136,560 sheep in *half* of its capacity, leaving plenty of room for people, food, water, and whatever other provisions were needed.

Let’s put it another way. Using 18 inches as the length of a cubit, the floor space of these dimensions would be about 100,000 sq. feet (450 ft x 75 ft x 3 floors). If crates were used and stacked one on top another, the total volume space would be over 760,000 cubic feet. This would equate to about 1875 railroad box car. A railroad box car is approximately 60 feet. To accommodate the square footage of the ark would require a train length of over 21 miles. There was plenty of space. Today, there are only about 200 animal types larger than a dog.

Success to God is obedience, not numbers we can tally. Noah was such a success that God was still talking about him twenty-five hundred years later. As the Spirit looked back over history and chose fifteen individuals to list by name in Hebrews 11. By average, this is only one person for every two and a half centuries. To give this a frame of reference, it would be the equivalent of choosing one Christian in the entire history of America.

Noah made the final cut. His 950 years of life are summed up in one tremendous sentence: ***“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” (Hebrews 11:7). Let’s analyze this statement:

By faith Noah It took a lot of faith to believe he could build a boat that size, especially not knowing why. It took a lot of faith to think it could rain enough to flood the whole world. Genesis 2:5–6 suggests that it had not ever rained at all up to that point. This is way the verse says “*warned of things not yet seen.*” *Being warned of God ...* Noah had a divine revelation—whether by voice or vision we do not know (Genesis 6:13), but he received divine intervention. The word “warned” in Heb 11:7 is the same Greek word for “admonished” in Heb 8:5 where it says “*Moses was admonished by God.*”

Prepared an ark Likely using only wooden hammers, crude metal saws, and hand axes to cut the trees and form the ark from wood, Noah built a barge-like structure that measured 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and approximately the height as a four story building.

By the which he condemned the world ... Noah condemned the world in two ways: his preaching and his example. Noah did more than build a boat—he preached to the world the coming wrath of God. ***2 Peter 2:5 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;*** None of Noah’s neighbors will be able to say at judgment day that they did not know a flood was coming. They can say they did not believe the old ship builder, but not that they did not know. The flood generation had time to repent for God did not strike without warning. The world of that day discovered that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. So we too are warned. ***Heb 10:31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.***

Noah was a faithful example to his generation. He lived by God’s standard. Others could have, too, but chose not to. Noah’s lifestyle stood out in sharp contrast against the wickedness of his day.

Since the ark was nearly one and a half times the length of a football field and more than four stories high, it could hardly be hidden from scoffers. Although the Bible

does not say so, I can imagine the mockery and jeering that Noah endured on a daily basis as he built this huge ship. It was a hundred miles from the nearest ocean and far too big to move. Noah was likely dismissed as a lunatic and his preaching as negative and out of touch. Noah’s work encourages us to be faithful to what God has for us to do, so don’t give up.

People today still accuse one who sets a good example, in the workplace or at school. We too may be ridiculed and mocked for what we believe and for what the Word of God teaches. Nevertheless, as Noah did, we must be faithful to it. What about our lives and the reflection of our faith? Noah trusted God’s warning and God’s promise and did the work put before him, consistently for some 120 years. He was steadfast in the faith. ***He became an heir of the righteousness which is by faith.***

As a final act of faith, Noah and his family stepped into the ark and God closed the door. If we expect to be saved in the great day of the Lord that is yet to come (2 Peter 3:10), let us now “prepare an ark” and get in the boat before the door is shut, for there is no other way to be saved (2 Corinthians 6:2; John 14:6).

Noah was saved by grace through faith. This is exactly the way we are saved today. ***Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.*** Our commandments are different as we are not told to build an ark. Today we are expected to obey the gospel.

Let us close by summarizing three points regarding **HOW WAS SALVATION ACCOMPLISHED?** THE FIRST IS THAT NOAH WAS SAVED BY GRACE. ***Genesis 6:8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.*** God could have justly wiped away the entire world, including Noah and his family. But Noah received a gift from God that wasn’t earned on Noah’s part. We too are saved by grace. ***Ephesians 2:4-5 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, (5) Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)***

█ In addition to God’s grace, NOAH WAS SAVED BY FAITH. ***Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah, ... prepared an ark to the saving of his house.*** God’s gift of

grace would have been wasted on Noah, if Noah didn’t believe God’s warning and obey his instructions. Understand that God didn’t force Noah to be saved. He offered Noah a way to be saved, but that required Noah to believe and obey God. But the fact that Noah believed and kept God’s commandments did not lessen the gift that God offered him.

Likewise with us; we cannot please God nor can we be saved without a faith that leads one to obey God. It is this kind of faith coupled with grace that leads to salvation. ***Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*** Do you see both elements in this verse?

¶ Noah was saved by grace; Noah was saved by faith, and NOAH WAS ALSO SAVED BY WATER. ***1 Peter 3:20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.*** At first this seems strange because we think of the flood waters were what destroyed the world, and indeed it did. But from a different viewpoint, Noah was being saved from a world of sin by the same water that God used to destroy sin. Peter says that is the same way we are saved. ***1 Peter 3:21 The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:***

Peter makes sure we understand that this is not a physical outward cleansing that brings salvation. It is the obedient heart responding to the call of God; it is the answer of a good conscience. The water isn’t the salvation, but the means God used to bring about salvation.