

People may not have a Bible or even read one but almost everyone has heard of Noah's Ark. Knowledge of the flood is universal. Accounts of the flood are found on every continent and they all refer to a totally destructive flood that happened very early. The earth was in terrible shape. Everyone except Noah and his family had turned away from God. They were all doing their own thing, ignoring God. The scripture says Noah was righteous, blameless and walked with God. What made Noah different from everybody else was his faith and obedience. (*Gen. 6:11*) ***The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. (12) And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. (13) And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.***: Because of the corruption and violence on the earth, and the extent of the corruption, God told Noah that He would destroy them with the earth: Some wonder if this is too harsh a judgment, or if it shows God to be cruel or a monster. However, since the fall in Gen. 3:1-24, every human being has a death sentence. The timing and method of that death is completely in the hands of God.

Notice that v 13 begins with **And God said to Noah**: God told all of this to Noah with the intention of saving Noah and his family. In the midst of such corruption and judgment, there is also grace. Instead of wiping out the entire race, God preserved a remnant.

Let's take a closer look at Noah here. *Genesis 6:9* ***These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.*** **First**, scripture tells us Noah was a "just man" or as the ASV says a "righteous man". He was a man who did what God wanted him to do, not what the world expected him to do. He did what was right, earning him the title of "righteous". He lived his life according to God's standards. He was uncorrupted by Satan's attempt to sow a "virus" among the genetic pool of mankind.

Secondly, he was a perfect (blameless) man. Even though Noah lived according to God's standards, no one had anything against him. He must have had a good relationship with his neighbors. No one would have doubted his honesty and he would have been trusted and respected by his friends.

Lastly, he walked with God. This means he spent time with God. He didn't just show up to "check-in" with God. It was a strong and steady relationship that had been built up over the years. When someone is described as righteous, blameless, and walking with God that says a lot. It says something about the depth of their relationship with God. It means there is a strong desire to actively seek God and be close to Him, and because of this closeness and their relationship, the instructions Noah received were very specific. This is where the obedience and faith springs into action. There was a clear call from God and Noah had the choice to respond or refuse. This task would include accomplishment by Noah and accomplishments by God. Noah was asked to build an ark. They had 120 years (6:3) to get it done. It wouldn't be easy, but it could be done. But then God added the animals. That made it a "God" accomplishment. Noah and his family couldn't have gathered up all those animals without God's power.

But Noah's first task was building an ark. One of the things that jumps out from this text are the specific details regarding the Ark's dimensions and how it was to be put together. The amazing thing about these plans given to Noah about this ark is the detail. God tells him specifically what materials to use, how much to use, and the design of the ark. ***(14) Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.***

First notice that God tells Noah to, "***Make thee an ark...***" This means that this was Noah's job alone to complete. No subcontractors. This was all done by hand. NO POWER TOOLS! The ark was to be **made of gofer wood**. Gopher wood is a bit of a mystery. Apparently it was a wood available at the time and apparently too it was a wood that could withstand water, much like cypress or teak wood of today. Since "Gopher" appears only here in Genesis 6, we cannot look at other contexts to help us identify it. Since the Bible does not provide enough information for us to make such a determination, we simply have no way of knowing what gopher wood is today. But I am convinced that if Noah had used some other type of wood, the ark would not have withstood the duration of the flood waters.

Cover it inside and outside with pitch: Pitch can be likened to today's tar. 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 was preserved for a long time. Pitch is a petroleum product and because of this mention of **pitch** in what most people think is the Middle East, John D. Rockefeller looked for (and found) oil in that region. 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 dimensions were 300 cubits x 50 cubits x 30 cubits. Given that a cubit is approx. 18” that makes the ark 450 feet long x 75 feet wide x 45 feet tall. Putting it into perspective, this is 1½ football fields long, ½ width of a football field, 4 and ½ stories high. What is described is not really a boat, but a well-ventilated barge, meant only to float and not to sail anywhere. The ark, roughly the shape of a shoebox, was plenty large enough (about the size of the Titanic), and had a cubit-wide opening (18 inches) all the way around the top. 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.

So, the ark was big enough to carry everything necessary. God gave Noah the detailed plans on how to build it and what to use to build it. He gave Noah 120 years to build the ark. God also gave Noah neighbors that probably had great fun at his expense.

(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.

Although many people have imagined Noah's ark as having one small window 18 inches high by 18 inches wide, the phrase "you shall finish it to a cubit from above" does not give any clear dimensions of the opening. The text just says that Noah was to "finish it to a cubit from the top". The truth is, the size of the lighting apparatus mentioned in this verse is unspecified. The text indicates only the distance the opening was from the top of the ark, rather than the actual size of the window. The Hebrew word for window is *tsohar* which means "light or mid-day." So it seems the window is for light and not ventilation.

Notice vs 16 also mentions one door. This of course was for entering and exiting the ark. Finally after the completion of the ark and all was on board, the God closes the door, not Noah. ***Genesis 7:16 And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the LORD shut him in.***

Verse 17 tells us that **Everything that is on the earth shall die**: We can only wonder what Noah felt when he heard this remarkable announcement from God. God called Noah to an essential role in the greatest judgment and greatest salvation the world had seen. **But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall go into the ark**: Despite the dramatic judgment coming, God will make a covenant with Noah, and he and his family will be saved. God will also use Noah to save a remnant of each animal so the earth could be populated with people and animals after the flood. Then (v21) there is the huge task of gathering all the food that would be needed. There must be a lot of food for Noah and all the animals.

(22) Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he. Thus Noah did: When given this staggering job to do, Noah did it. We don't hear of him complaining or rebelling; he simply obeyed. The words, "so he

did” cover an awful lot of material and years; yet Noah did not shrink from what God told him to do. **According to all that God commanded him, so he did:** The Bible presents Noah as a great hero of God and an outstanding example of righteousness.

Question! Will you do what the Lord has commanded you to do to be saved? Will you obey the gospel of Jesus Christ?