

Having Godly Children In An Evil World

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Simply amazing. How did Noah do it? I'm not talking about building that titanic ark. I'm not talking about the herculean task of preaching righteousness to a world whose every thought was evil continuously. I'm not even speaking of the incredible persecution and ridicule he must have faced for an entire century while building that ship.

The above things do indeed testify to the greatness of this ancient patriarch. But I believe the crowning glory of his remarkable life is found within the text of Hebrews 11:7, which says, "*By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark **for the saving of his household**, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.*"

Yes, the phrase, "for the saving of his household" refers principally to the physical saving from the flood. But there is more to those words than at first glance. Remember, the Bible says, "*The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*" (Gen. 6:6). It was so bad that God repented that He had made man. Now, considering that "*God is love*," and that "*God so loved the world*" (1 Jn. 4:8; Jn. 3:16) this earth must have been rotten to the core, with no redeeming value. Humanity was totally depraved, not by birth, but by choice. This old world had to go.

Into this depravity Noah and his wife decided to have babies! Yes, you read that right. It seems Noah had already been told of God's plans when they decided to start their family. Note carefully the wording of Genesis 11:10. "*This is the genealogy of Shem: Shem was one hundred years old, and **begot Arphaxad two years after the flood.***" If I have done the math correctly it means Noah's oldest son was 97 years old at the time of the flood. (back pg)

Noah was told when he was 500 of the coming flood, but did not enter the finished ark until he was 600. The recorded genealogy in Genesis 5:32 says, "*And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*" This makes it interesting when later in Genesis 7:6 it says clearly, "*Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters were on the earth.*" It repeats that in verse 11, "*In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up.*"

So, if I have the math right, when Noah "*found grace in the eyes of the Lord*" and was called "*a just man, perfect in his generations*" and "*walked with God*" (Gen. 6:8-9) he was 500 years old and without any children! A century later the flood came after his 600th birthday. Yet Shem, his oldest child, must have been born AFTER God had revealed the coming flood, for it says Shem begot his son at the age of 100 "*two years after the flood.*" That would have made Shem about 97 years old when the flood came. If Noah was 500 when he fathered Shem, that means he didn't have any children when told by God He was going to destroy the earth. Interesting.

Where am I going with this? I've heard it said often by young couples that it would be unwise to bring children into this wicked world that is spiraling out of control into the depths of sin. I'm so glad Noah and his wife didn't reason this way. Knowing the Lord was going to end the world as they knew it, they still chose to bring children into it. It only stands to reason that Noah's faith, as later recorded in Hebrews 11, would be among the greatest examples in human history.

Noah began his family with the same attitude I began mine, and the same as many others too. I knew, as did Noah, the world is a wicked place, full of atheism, agnosticism and humanism. Even among the so-called religious world many live as if there is no God and no judgment to come. Yet I wanted children because I wanted "*lights*" who would grow up to shine in this dark world, and "*salt*" to preserve this rotten earth (Matt. 5:13-16). Noah didn't think it futile to bring children into this mess, and I don't either. If Noah and his wife had become pessimistic and opted to remain childless, think of the consequences. The

three women who married Shem, Ham and Japheth would have likely been lost, and their children would not have produced the generations that later brought into the world the one who called Himself, "*The Light of the World*" (John 8:12; 9:5).

Noah, by being a just man who walked with God, along with his faithful wife, was able to raise three faithful sons, who married three faithful wives, and all in a period that could truly be called "The Dark Ages." During those 100 years of building that boat, he did far more than just "*prepare an ark for the saving of his household.*" He saved the world! And he did it by bringing his sons up in the nurture of the Lord, just like we are called to do today (Eph. 6:4). Please, do not hesitate to have children due to the evil about us. You can raise godly children in an evil world! Just as God was with Noah, so will He be with you. May the Lord increase your tribe.