

HEROES OF THE FAITH #3
Noah - He Obeyed God
Hebrews 11.7

INTRODUCTION ... Walking with God is not always easy; often, it is very difficult! Walking with God is sometimes a lonely thing, something that does not make you a popular person. Ask ENOCH about that ... or ask NOAH - he also walked with God ... he is today's HERO OF FAITH - HE OBEYED GOD.

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I. "Hello! I'm NOAH. ...

"You were asking about how hard it is to walk with God. I know that it is often hard for you to walk with God. That was hard for me and my family too. Last week you heard about my great-grandfather ENOCH - he walked with God, and God took him to heaven. During the next 750 years the world seemed to become worse every year. Even the descendants of Seth began to forget God, to ignore His will for life. More and more they married the evil descendants of Cain and some of the gangs in your cities are bad! We had people just as bad and even worse! Sometimes they made life hell for those of us who loved the Lord and wanted to walk in His ways. More and more people gave up and began to walk with those terrible people, or just walked their own ways. So few of us walked with the Lord!

"Then one day the Lord told me to start building a big boat - bigger than a football field! - and we didn't live close to deep water! Can you imagine what people would say about me and my three sons? - you know how hard it is for young people to walk with God when their friends laugh at them! Then God explained WHY we should build that ark ... He would send a great flood to destroy all the people, all the living things! God became so angry about the sinfulness of the people He made, so upset, so sorry - that He decided to destroy them all, and then begin new! We could not imagine anything so awful - worse than an big earthquake or a bombs that destroyed cities in World War 2.

"And the Lord chose me and my family to begin the human race anew. Why me? Some of your Bibles say "the Lord was pleased with [me]" (Gen 6.8 TEV) That might give the wrong idea. Yes, I walked with God, but I was a sinner, too. Really the Lord showed mercy to me and my family - and so He chose us and decided to

save us from the flood. I believed that He would do what He said - both the destroying and the saving - therefore, He called me 'righteous' ... and because I believed Him, I obeyed His command. We built that ark. And even though the people called us crazy and worse, we continue to obey - hard as it was sometimes! We told the people about God's warning - we urged them to repent - but they just laughed.

"You probably know the story: we built the ark ... God led the animals to it - two of every kind ... He closed us in the ark, and it started to rain! - 40 days and nights it poured! ... the water rose and covered everything ... but inside the ark we were safe for the year that we lived on that boat ... finally the water went down, and we could leave the boat and see the destruction all around - awful! ... the first thing we did was build an altar so we could offer God a sacrifice of thanksgiving for His love and mercy to us. Then God promised that He will never again destroy the earth or its people with a great flood, even though they are sinful ... He will show mercy ... He will be patient ... and the rainbow is a sign of His promise."

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II. 'Walking with God' means obeying Him.

It was true for Noah ... it is true for us. God chose us and saved us, why? - not because we are good people or obey Him? - but because He shows love & mercy to us sinners! Jesus accepted all God's anger about our sin and the whole world's sin ... He died on the cross instead of us and all other sinners ... and by faith in Jesus we become 'righteous' ... God announces that 'your sins are forgiven' ... by faith we belong to God ... by faith we walk with God.

That walking with God means that we obey His commandments and do His wants (not the world's wants, not our own wants!) - even if most of the people around us (those whom we may call 'friends!') think we are foolish, or stupid, or crazy to do so! We can learn from Noah how to obey even though the world is all against us, because we have God's promise: His Son is with us always ... His Spirit is in us to strengthen us for faith and for life ... and the Father loves us and cares for us always. Look at the rainbow ... remember the Lord's mercy and His wonderful promise - a promise that came true in Jesus, our Savior!