

Part 2: Noah

Hebrew word Noach, meaning rest

Noah stands as a pivotal figure in the biblical narrative. His story, recorded in Genesis chapters 6-9, centres on the construction of the ark to save life during the Flood. Noah's legacy is also one of faith, obedience, and the renewal of humankind.

8 people saved in the ark, 150 days in the ark, 40 days and 40 nights of rain.

Noah's Faith and Obedience

Noah is described as "a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God" (Genesis 6:9). In a world marred by corruption and violence, Noah's steadfast faith distinguished him. When God revealed the coming flood, Noah "did all that God commanded him" (Genesis 6:22; Genesis 7:5), building the ark against prevailing scepticism. His unwavering obedience is often cited as a model for trusting and following God, even when circumstances are unknown. Obedience for Adam and Eve, don't eat the fruit, to Noah, don't eat blood.

The Covenant with God

After the flood, Noah built an altar and made offerings to God (Genesis 8:20). God responded by blessing Noah and his sons and established a covenant: "Never again will all life be destroyed by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth" (Genesis 9:11). The rainbow was set as a sign of this enduring promise (Genesis 9:13-17). This covenant marks the first explicit agreement between God and humanity, emphasizing themes of mercy and enduring relationship.

The Renewal of Humanity

With Noah and his family as the sole survivors, the Bible declares: "From these the whole earth was populated" (Genesis 9:19). Noah is tasked with repopulating the earth and cultivating righteousness, echoing the role of Adam. The passage affirms the possibility of renewal and redemption, even in the aftermath of judgment (Genesis 8:21-22).

Noah's Legacy

Noah's impact extends beyond Genesis. He is mentioned in the New Testament as a paragon of faith: "By faith Noah, when warned about

things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family” (Hebrews 11:7). Jesus refers to Noah in teachings about preparedness and judgment (Matthew 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27). In Christian theology, Noah’s ark is a symbol of salvation and refuge (1 Peter 3:20-21). Noah’s significance in the Bible emerges from his exemplary faith and obedience (Genesis 6:9, Hebrews 11:7), his participation in God’s covenant with humanity (Genesis 9:11-17), and his role in the renewal of the world after the flood (Genesis 9:19). His story continues to inspire themes of trust, hope, and renewal, grounded in scripture and tradition.

Character traits of Noah

1. Righteousness and Integrity

Noah is described in the Bible as a righteous man, meaning he lived justly and did what was morally right, even while surrounded by a corrupt society. His commitment to righteous living set him apart from others in his generation. Righteous living, blameless, non-conformist, complete, faultless.

A preacher of righteousness, 2 Peter 2:5

Noah found favour in the eyes of God, (Gen. 6:8) Hebrew word KHEN, a gift given with delight, a supernatural enabling to carry out a task. He was not a boat builder by trade.

2. Obedience

Noah demonstrated extraordinary obedience to God’s instructions. Despite the enormous task and ridicule, he followed God’s commands to build the ark precisely as instructed, showing unwavering devotion and respect for divine authority.

3. Faith

Faith based action, James, faith without works is dead.

Noah’s faith was remarkable. He trusted God’s warning about the coming flood and acted on it, even though there was no visible evidence at the time.

4. Perseverance

Building the ark was a massive undertaking that took 99 years.

5. Leadership

Noah showed leadership in guiding his family through a period of unprecedented crisis. He not only ensured their physical survival but also their spiritual well-being, encouraging them to remain faithful and united.

The Rainbow as a Noahic Covenant

The rainbow first appears in Genesis 9:12–17. Here, God establishes a covenant—a solemn promise or agreement—with Noah, his descendants, and every living creature on earth. The rainbow is presented as a sign of this covenant:

"I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth... never again shall the waters become a flood to destroy all flesh." (Genesis 9:12-17)

In this context, the rainbow is not merely a natural phenomenon but a visible, enduring symbol of God's mercy and commitment to humanity. It represents the assurance that despite human failings, God will never again destroy the earth with a flood.

Symbolism and Interpretations

- **Divine Mercy and Hope:** The rainbow is often seen as a symbol of unconditional, hope, reminding people of God's mercy and the possibility of renewal after destruction or hardship.
- **Universal Promise:** The covenant is not only with Noah and his family but with "every living creature," signifying the inclusive and universal scope of God's promise.
- **Peace:** The reference to "bow" (as in a warrior's bow) being set in the clouds can be interpreted as God laying down arms—choosing peace over continued judgment.
- **Reminder of Responsibility:** The rainbow also serves as a reminder of humanity's responsibility to live justly and care for the earth, in light of God's mercy.
- **Re affirmation of creation, be fruitful and multiply, Adams instruction still stands.**

Character Flaw? Mister meaner?

Despite his virtues, the Bible does hint at Noah's imperfections. The most notable incident occurs after the flood, when Noah becomes drunk from wine he had made from his vineyard (Genesis 9:20-21). He becomes intoxicated and lies uncovered in his tent. This episode is often interpreted as a lapse in judgment or self-control, highlighting his human vulnerability.

- **Lack of Self-Control:** Noah's drunkenness shows that even the most righteous individuals are susceptible to weakness and poor decisions.
- **Family Discord:** The aftermath of Noah's drunkenness leads to conflict within his family, particularly with his son Ham, who saw his father naked and told his brothers. This incident results in Noah cursing Ham's son, Canaan, which some see as an overreaction and a sign of flawed judgment.