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An Ark-sized Obedience

Theme verse: Proverbs 3:5-6 (ERV) "Trust the Lord completely, and don't depend on your own knowledge. With every step you take, think about what he wants, and he will help you go the right way."

A man named Noah lived a long time ago and lived a very long life of 950 years (Genesis 9:29). You may think, "Wow, that's a really long time to live!" The Bible shows us that the way he chose to spend all of this time led to him finding favor in the eyes of the Almighty God (Genesis 6:8). He was obedient to God in building a huge ark (Genesis 6:14, 22), saving himself, his three sons, his wife, his three daughters-in-law, and two of every kind of animal (and 7 pairs of certain animals) from a worldwide flood that killed every living thing on land (Genesis 7:7,15, 21, 22, 23), and even being a great-great-great-great-great-great… (you get the point) grandfather of Jesus, our savior (Luke 3:36)!

All of these accomplishments might lead you to think that it was because of his long life that he could do all of these things. While he did a lot, his life was still very short, as Psalm 103:15-16 (CEB) says "The days of a human life are like grass: they bloom like a wildflower; but when the wind blows through it, it's gone; even the ground where it stood doesn't remember it." And Psalm 39:5 (ERV) says, "You gave me only a short life. Compared to you, my whole life is nothing. The life of every human is like a cloud that quickly disappears. Selah". Other people in the Bible lived a long time but were not as righteous or pleasing to God as Noah, such as his son Ham. Just because we have a lot of time does not mean that good habits and being pleasing to God come automatically. Like Noah, we are sinful and must make minute-by-minute choices that are in obedience to what God's word tells us to do. Proverbs 3:5-6 (ERV) says, "Trust the Lord completely, and don't depend on your own knowledge. With every step you take, think about what He wants, and He will help you go the right way."



How did Noah follow what God told him to do day by day, and how can we do the same in our lives? We can see a big difference between Noah's life and our lives. He had to build a great big ark, so big that it was around 510 feet or one and a half football fields long! It had three floors and was around 50 feet tall, even higher than a four-story house! And it could hold as much cargo as around 450 semi-truck trailers! All this construction would take time, planning, organization, materials, help from others, self-discipline, and most importantly, God's wisdom and leading. Noah would have needed help from others, but he also needed to be able to control his emotions and his own will to do the work when he may not have wanted to. In the over 100 years it likely took to build the gigantic ark, there were probably days that the people around him sneered and made fun of him loudly, his family had disagreements, the materials broke, and he got overwhelmed, but despite all of this, God was with him and he was obedient and did the work that God had told him to do (Genesis 7:5). Noah did not give up but chose each moment to spend his time in



a way that he knew God wanted, and in a way that would help him get further towards his goal of finishing the ark, and saving himself, his loved ones, and God's precious creation from the flood.

At some point, we will experience something similar. If you read God's word with an open heart, you will see one or more ways that He commands you to live, and this may match up to a goal you have in your life. If you want to get good grades, this takes daily actions like remembering to take your homework home, sitting down and doing it, paying attention in class even if you don't want to, and studying before a big test. None of these things are easy, but hard work is important and is worth it in the end, as Proverbs 14:23 (CEB) says, "There is profit in hard work, but mere talk leads to poverty." Like Noah, God has given us a certain amount of time to accomplish what He has asked us to do. At this point in your life, He may ask you to be kind and obedient to your parents, to work hard and learn a lot at school, to be a supportive teammate on your sports team, or to read your Bible and pray to Him every day. None of these things come easily, but the rewards of hard work will be very great, not only now but especially in the future as you get older.

As in Noah's lifetime, many distractions around us make us want to give up and give in to what is easy and fun to do but is not good for us now or in the future. The people around Noah were very wicked (Genesis 6:5,12), and it displeased God so much that He destroyed them. He did this out of His mercy because the people were stopped from becoming even more wicked. Thanks to God, they will be resurrected in His perfect kingdom on earth and taught to obey and delight in God's ways (1 Corinthians 15:22, Acts 14:15). Before they were destroyed, they probably laughed at Noah, mocked him and criticized him for doing something so strange – he was spending everything he had to build an ark to save himself from a flood, something that no one had ever seen or heard of before! They continued to live how they wanted, ate and drank, and got married (Matthew 24:38), but they did not see the worth of Noah's daily work he did in obedience to God. In our own lives, our friends, teammates, or classmates might look at us and say that we are weird if we do things to obey God instead of making ourselves happy. Think about Ephesians 4:32 (CEB), which says, "Be kind, compassionate, and forgiving to each other, in the same way God forgave you in Christ." If there was a new kid in your class and you went out of your way to follow this verse, and were kind, compassionate, and sat next to them, how would that make God feel? How about if you had an extra hour before bed and you chose to spend it reading a Bible story instead of scrolling on TikTok? 2 Timothy 3:16 (ERV) says, "All Scripture is given by God. And all Scripture is useful for teaching

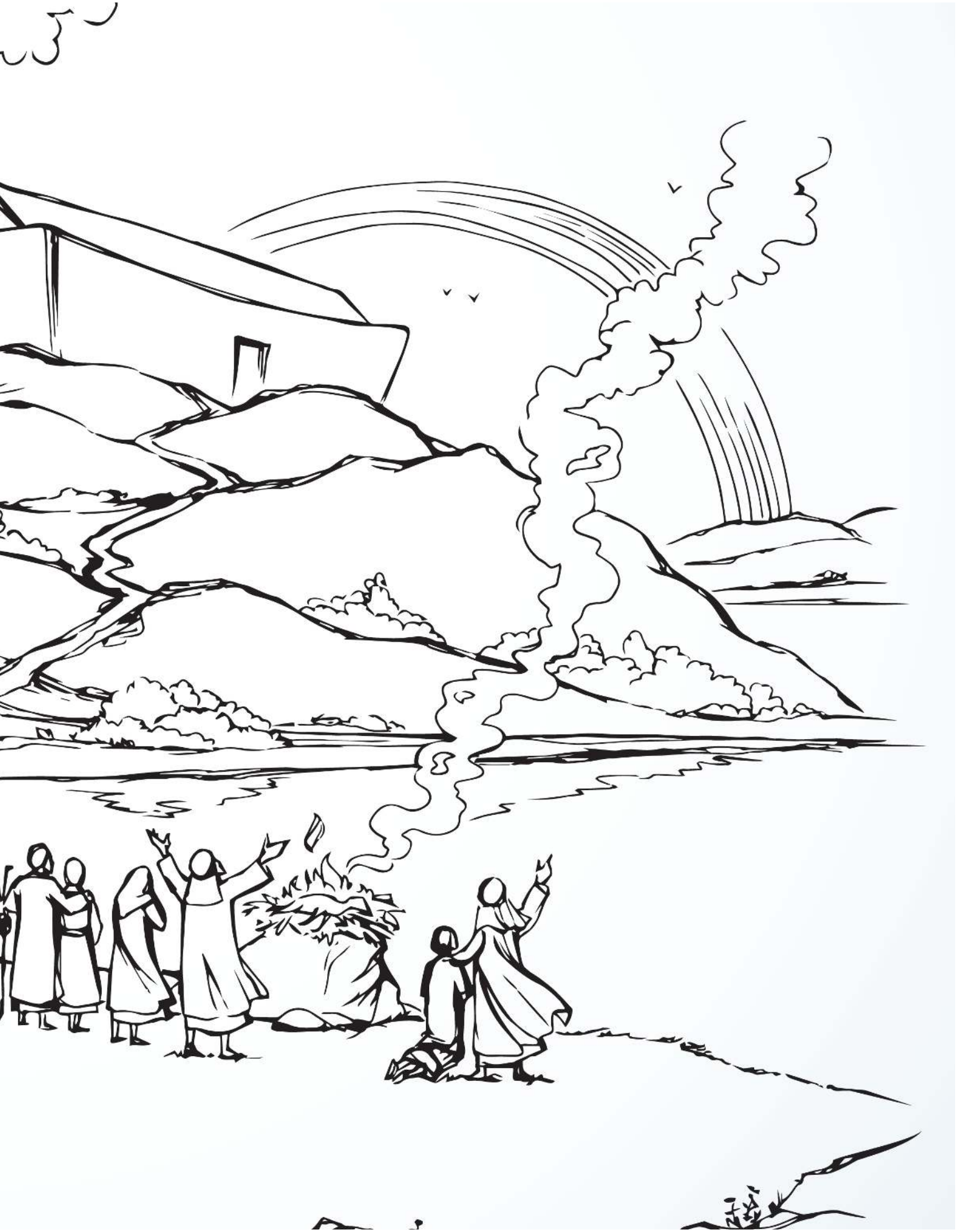
and for showing people what is wrong in their lives. It is useful for correcting faults and teaching the right way to live".

It is not easy to choose to do the hard things minute-by-minute and day-by-day, especially when the people around us do the things they want to and don't seem to have any bad consequences. They may spend all weekend scrolling on their phones, playing video games instead of doing homework, ignoring their siblings, or talking back to their parents. The Eternally Wise God teaches us that these sinful things only lead to emotional pain, damaged relationships, unmet goals, and a lack of success in the future. Think about the following verses and how they show us the blessings of doing things God's way: Galatians 6:9 (ERV) "We must not get tired of doing good. We will receive our harvest of eternal life at the right time. We must not give up.", 1 Corinthians 15:58 (ERV) "So, my dear brothers and sisters, stand strong. Don't let anything change you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord. You know that your work in the Lord is never wasted.", 2 Thessalonians 3:13 (ERV) "Brothers and sisters, never get tired of doing good."

We have seen that Noah chose the harder way in life as he took daily actions that pushed him toward his goal of finishing the ark, protecting his family, and being obedient to God whom he loved. It probably took all the time, money, strength, faith, and willpower he had to complete this huge task, yet the Bible shares no details about this and only mentions that he did everything that God had commanded him to do (Genesis 7:5). Thousands of years later, we are blessed by the results of his hard work because we are his descendants and are alive! Noah was given the honor of being in our Lord Jesus's earthly lineage, but even more, he is mentioned in God's precious word as being a hero of faith whom we can look to as an example! Hebrews 11:7 (ERV) says, "Noah was warned by God about things that he could not yet see. But he had faith and respect for God, so he built a large boat to save his family. With his faith, Noah showed that the world was wrong. And he became one of those who are made right with God through faith." His faith was tested every day as he prepared the ark for a never-before-seen, worldwide disaster that God told him was coming. Noah needed strong faith to trust that God's word was true, that the flood would come, and that two of every kind of animal would come to him (Genesis 6:20). He needed faith to believe that the building instructions that God had given him would make sure that the ark was well-built enough to handle keeping afloat for one hundred and fifty days of the flood itself (Genesis 6:24) plus multiple months resting on the mountains while they waited for the earth to become dry (Genesis 8:14). He needed faith to believe that since God told him to prepare food for his family and the animals (Genesis 6:21), God would make sure that the food would last, and that nobody would starve. God rewarded Noah's faith as Noah saw how God's word came true, He protected him and his family, and He even made a covenant with Noah and promised to never destroy the earth with a flood again, with this promise being shown by a rainbow (Genesis 9:8-17). Hebrews 11:6 (ERV) promises that God will reward our faith too, "Without faith no one can please God. Whoever comes to God must believe that he is real and that he rewards those who sincerely try to find him". Whenever you see a rainbow in the sky, remember God's promise to Noah to never destroy the earth again with a flood, and remember how God will reward us for our faith, as He did for Noah.







As you go through each new day, think of Noah and choose to... “Trust the Lord completely, and don’t depend on your own knowledge. With every step you take, think about what He wants, and He will help you go the right way.” (Proverbs 3:5-6 ERV). Your decisions to put your phone away and read your Bible, walk over and comfort a sibling, go out of your way to smile at a stranger, thank God in the middle of doing something, or say something you’re thankful for instead of complaining, all of these will add up to a life that is pleasing to God and blessed by Him. You will have peace and joy and experience God’s love and transformation of your heart more each day. More than this, you will bring joy to our loving Heavenly Father, and He will bless your children and your children’s children for your obedience, just like He did for Noah. Deuteronomy 7:9 (ERV) says, “So remember that the Lord your God is the only God, and you can trust Him! He keeps his agreement. He shows his love and kindness to all people who love him and obey his commands. He continues to show his love and kindness through a thousand generations”.

As we choose to obey God in our daily decisions, let us make it our goal to be like Noah, someone who God says is righteous, blameless in our time, and someone who walks with God and finds favor in His eyes (Genesis 6:8,9)!

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Feel Free to Ask Miss Molly Questions!

If you have suggestions for future newsletters, we would love to hear from you!

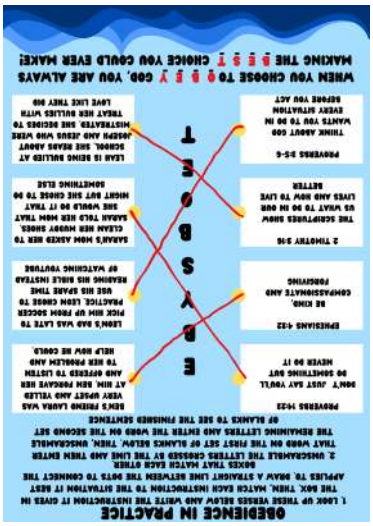
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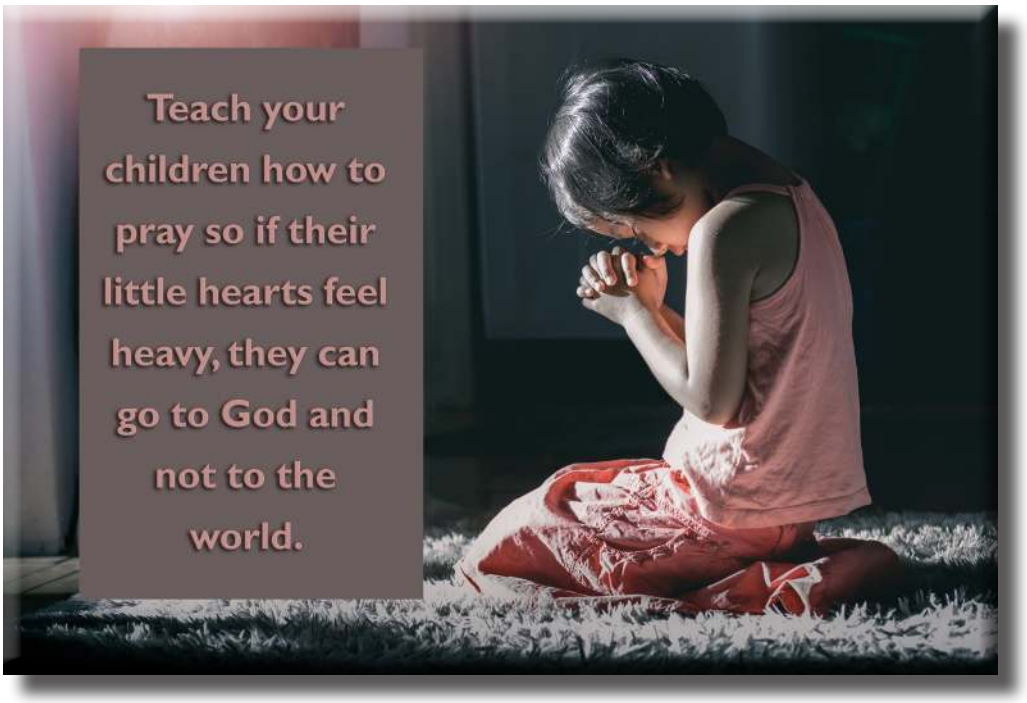
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OBEDIENCE IN PRACTICE

1. LOOK UP THESE VERSES BELOW AND WRITE THE INSTRUCTION IT GIVES IN THE BOX. THEN, MATCH EACH INSTRUCTION TO THE SITUATION IT BEST APPLIES TO. DRAW A STRAIGHT LINE BETWEEN THE DOTS TO CONNECT THE BOXES THAT MATCH EACH OTHER.
2. UNSCRAMBLE THE LETTERS CROSSED BY THE LINE AND THEN ENTER THAT WORD ON THE FIRST SET OF BLANKS BELOW. THEN, UNSCRAMBLE THE REMAINING LETTERS AND ENTER THE WORD ON THE SECOND SET OF BLANKS TO SEE THE FINISHED SENTENCE

PROVERBS 14:23	E B Y S B O E T	BEN'S FRIEND LAURA WAS VERY UPSET AND YELLED AT HIM. BEN FORGAVE HER AND OFFERED TO LISTEN TO HER PROBLEM AND HELP HOW HE COULD.
EPHESIANS 4:32		LEON'S DAD WAS LATE TO PICK HIM UP FROM SOCCER PRACTICE. LEON CHOSE TO USE HIS SPARE TIME READING HIS BIBLE INSTEAD OF WATCHING YOUTUBE
2 TIMOTHY 3:16		SARAH'S MOM ASKED HER TO CLEAN HER MUDDY SHOES. SARAH TOLD HER MOM THAT SHE WOULD DO IT THAT NIGHT BUT SHE CHOSE TO DO SOMETHING ELSE
PROVERBS 3:5-6		LEAH IS BEING BULLIED AT SCHOOL. SHE READS ABOUT JOSEPH AND JESUS WHO WERE MISTREATED. SHE DECIDES TO TREAT HER BULLIES WITH LOVE LIKE THEY DID

WHEN YOU CHOOSE TO _ _ _ _ GOD, YOU ARE ALWAYS MAKING THE _ _ _ _ CHOICE YOU COULD EVER MAKE!

"Faith opened Noah's heart to receive revelation and warnings from God about what was coming, even things that had never been seen. But he stepped out in reverent obedience to God and built an ark that would save him and his family. By his faith the world was condemned, but Noah received God's gift of righteousness that comes by believing."—Hebrews 11:7 TPT

Let's say that you want to become a doctor. To become a doctor you need to have good grades, good attendance and lot of studying on very hard subjects for many years. It can take over ten years of training after high school to become a fully licensed doctor—that is a long time. More than half your lifetime is you are just about ready to graduate high school.

Every weekend your friends say to you—lets to hiking, lets hang out, lets go to a movie. These are not bad things, but you have midterms coming up and you are having a hard time understanding calculous or science and you really want to hang out with your friends or cousins, but if you don't pass that test or understand how to do the math, it might affect your grades and maybe you won't get into the school you wanted to become a doctor.

You focus on what is important and your friends laugh at you and nag you even more to come with them. They remind you that what you are looking forward to is a lifetime away and they are here now and they may not always be here and if you loved them you would spend time with them hiking, biking, cooking, going out to eat, going to the movies, traveling around and so forth.

What do you do? You say. "No, I have to study." Then they get even more persistent and keep calling you or texting you and sending you pictures of all the fun they are having without you. And when you still won't go, then they start to get mad and start calling you names and talking behind your back.

Have you ever experienced something like that?

Do you think Noah had experiences like these in the one hundred and twenty years it took him to build that ark? Noah didn't even have his three sons when he started this project.

You can almost hear what they said to Noah as he dedicated himself to obeying God.

"Noah, what are you wasting your time for, you know it has never rained, forget about this flood you keep telling us is coming!"

"Noah, its one thing to waste your time on this nonsense, but now you are wasting your son's time as well! Let them have fun! Don't impose your crazy beliefs on them! "

How many years did Noah have to put up with this bullying?

When he started building, everyone came out to see what he was doing and as he told them what God told him was coming, they just laughed and made fun of him. He just kept building, but also encouraged them to come along with him and they just laughed all the more.

It's hard isn't it do not do what everyone else is doing? It is hard to be a leader and not a follower isn't it.

Let's Pray: Dear Heavenly Father, I'm having a hard time when my friends, family or others make fun of me for choices that I make to do thing right and follow You. I know You want what is best for me and they can't understand that. Give me strength to keep standing when they try to knock me down. In Jesus' name Amen!

