

Noah • Gen. 5:29, 6:5-8, 9:7-11,18-28

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Introduction

How many of you enjoy being the hero? Let's be honest. There's a part of us, isn't there, that secretly—or not so secretly—loves the idea of swooping in to save the day. We want to be the strong one, the dependable one, the one others turn to when the chips are down. We want to beat the boogeyman. We want to be the one who makes everything right. There's a satisfaction in fixing things, in offering a helping hand, in knowing that our presence made a difference. This isn't an inherently bad impulse. In fact, a desire to serve and protect others is a reflection of God's own heart.

But, my friends, this desire can become dangerous. It can morph into something unhealthy, something that ultimately hurts ourselves and those we're trying to help. This yearning to be the hero can lead us to take on a role we simply cannot fulfill. We start believing the lie that we are capable of handling it all, of solving every problem, of being the ultimate savior. The truth is, we are not the heroes of our own story.

And more importantly, when we try to be, we actually prevent ourselves from being rescued. When we attempt to save someone else on our own strength, both we and the other person end up drowning. Playing the hero, clinging to that illusion of control, damages our relationships, weakens our faith, and ultimately leaves us exhausted and empty.

This is a lesson we will learn in our next major story in this series called "The Whole Story." In this series, we want to help you see the bigger story of the Bible by highlighting the key stories that move the overall plot forward. Our goal is to give you the big picture so you can see how all the pieces fit together. We are following a rhythm of reading and understanding the Bible. We ask you to look "down, back, and forward." We look "down" at several passages to understand their immediate context. We also look "back" to see how the story has developed so far and "forward" to see how it ultimately points to Christ. Today, we will be switching between these three perspectives quickly.

Big Idea: We are all Halloween heroes. We dress up in costumes, pretend to be someone else for a night, maybe even feel a surge of confidence and power. We can wear the cape, say the tagline, get candy and applause from others, but at the end of the day, we cannot save the world. We can't even truly save ourselves. And that's where the story of Noah comes in.

A Father's Hope for a Hero Son

Genesis 5:28-29, ⁴²⁸ "When Lamech had lived 182 years, he fathered a son ²⁹ and called his name Noah, saying, 'Out of the ground that the Lord has cursed, this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the painful toil of our hands.'"

In the long genealogy of Genesis 5, filled with names and ages, this short passage stands out. Lamech is the only father in this list given the opportunity to explain the significance of his son's name. Moses, the author of Genesis, deliberately highlights this moment. Why? Noah's name sounds similar to the Hebrew word for "rest," or "comfort." Lamech hopes his son will bring "relief" from the curse on the ground, the curse God pronounced after Adam and Eve's sin, a

curse that made work a struggle, a constant battle against the earth itself. Lamech yearns for an end to the hardship, the sweat, the pain.

Think about the weight of that expectation placed on this newborn child. Lamech is not simply naming his son; he's anointing him, projecting onto him the hope of redemption, the longing for a savior. He's essentially saying, "This is the one! This is the one who will fix everything!" In a way, Lamech is doing what we often do. We look for heroes, for someone to solve our problems, to alleviate our suffering. We pin our hopes on individuals, on leaders, on movements, believing that they will finally bring the change we desperately desire.

Lamech is hoping that his son will be the "seed" of Eve, who will crush the serpent's head. Is he the hero we have been waiting for? By naming his son this, Lamech is signaling, like Commissioner Gordon turning on the "Bat Signal," hoping his son will be the "Batman" who saves the day. That puts a lot of pressure on Noah. But here's the irony: Lamech's wish, his fervent hope for a heroic son, is twisted into a nightmare. The relief that comes is not the gentle easing of hardship he envisioned, but a cataclysmic flood that wipes out nearly all of humanity. God, not Noah, brings relief to creation by destroying all of humanity apart from Noah and his family, preserving the minority faithful to God and keeping them from the corrupting influence of sinful humanity.

Genesis 6:5-8, "5 The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. 7 So the Lord said, I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens, for I am sorry that I have made them." 8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord."

The situation has deteriorated to an unimaginable degree. The "seed" of the serpent, the influence of evil, has spread like a malignant tumor, infecting every aspect of human life. The seed of satan is multiplying. Left unchecked, the seed of satan could overtake this one faithful family. We struggle to comprehend the depth of depravity described here. "Every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Every thought, every desire, every action consumed by wickedness. It's a chilling picture of a world consumed by sin.

It is hard to imagine things getting this bad. But, if we trust God's appraisal, we must conclude that God sees the sinful cancer that has corrupted His good creation as being on the brink of destroying the whole thing. The act of judgment that is about to take place will save humanity. This judgment is a painful means of salvation, like removing an infected limb. The flood, as terrifying as it is, becomes a necessary act of divine surgery. It's painful for God to take this course of action.

Notice the contrast of hearts; man's is filled with evil, and God's is filled with pain. We can't overlook the fact that God is an emotional and relational being. The words translated as "regretted" and "sorry" share the same root word, which is used elsewhere in Genesis to describe mourning a lost family member. God is mourning His creation. He is watching it cannibalize itself and must take drastic measures to ensure His creation's survival amid this corruption. He doesn't delight in destruction; He grieves over it. But even in this moment of judgment, there is grace. "But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord." Noah, a single point of light in a world of darkness. Noah, who walked with God, who obeyed God, who found grace in God's sight.

Noah obeys God and builds an ark or boat that will preserve life during the flood. God shuts the ark door. The heavens release heavy rain, and the rest of humanity is wiped out from the earth. Noah and his family emerge from the ark into a cleansed world, a new beginning. They step into God's creation as the only human family. This "reset" makes them resemble Adam and Eve. They are given the same mandate as Adam and Eve: be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth. It's a chance to start over, to build a society based on righteousness and obedience. Interestingly, this is how God speaks to them, which makes us wonder if Noah and his family can succeed where Adam failed and become the snake-crusher God promised. Can Noah, the son whose name means "rest," finally bring the promised relief? Is he the hero we've been waiting for?

The Stage is Set for a Hero

Genesis 9:7-11, "7 And you, be fruitful and multiply, increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it." 8 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, 9 Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, 10 and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. 11 I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth."

God makes a covenant with Noah, a promise that He will never again destroy the earth with a flood. He sets a rainbow in the sky as a sign of this covenant, a visible reminder of His faithfulness. Covenants can be either started/"cut" or extended/established. The word "establish" indicates that this is not the start of a new covenant but a continuation of the previous covenant with Adam, which is also affirmed by the Adamic commands of being fruitful and multiplying (Gen. 1:28), given to Noah and his family. God is reaffirming His commitment to humanity, His desire for a relationship with them. Is Lamech's prayer being fulfilled? Is his son the hero we have been waiting for? The stage is set. The world is cleansed. The covenant has been reestablished. Noah, the righteous man who found favor in God's eyes, is given a second chance to lead humanity back to God. But, my friends, the story doesn't end there.

Noah is a Halloween Hero

Genesis 9:18-28, "18 The sons of Noah who went forth from the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.) 19 These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the people of the whole earth were dispersed. 20 Noah began to be a man of the soil, and he planted a vineyard. 21 He drank of the wine and became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent. 22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside. 23 Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned backward, and they did not see their father's nakedness. 24 When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, 25 he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers." 26 He also said, Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant. 27 May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant."

The hero falls. Noah, the righteous man, the one who walked with God, gets drunk and exposes himself in his tent. It's a shocking and disappointing end to the story. Noah's drunkenness leaves him in a state of shame. Both drunkenness and exposure were considered sinful by the people of Israel. Ham's sin was not just looking at his father's nakedness, which was shameful, but also his open delight in his father's disgrace, demonstrated by his revealing the situation to his brothers. Shem and Japheth acted like God did to Adam and Eve by covering their father's nakedness. This is not the behavior of a savior, of a righteous leader. Noah, like Adam before him, succumbs to temptation, to weakness, to sin. He's not the hero Lamech hoped he would be. He's just another flawed human being.

After recovering from his drunkenness, Noah made a very dysfunctional prayer. God is not cursing Canaan; Noah is. He asks God to curse Canaan, Ham's son, and to bless Shem and Japheth. The stories of the nations descended from these sons of Noah are similar to his prayer, but not exactly the same. Canaan's descendants will commit great evils (Lev. 18:3-30), but Isaiah describes a future time when Ham's descendant, Egypt, will be reconciled with Shem's offspring (Isa. 19:23-25). Also, Shem's descendants, Israel, will serve both Egypt and Babylon, Canaan's descendants, for a period.

Looking ahead to Genesis 11:4 reveals Noah's descendants uniting to challenge God at the Tower of Babel by disobeying His command to be "fruitful, multiply, and *fill the earth*." Adam's pride and ambition to overthrow God continue among humanity. They multiplied, but they did not fill the earth. Noah's lineage is not heroic. Noah is a Halloween hero. He may have looked the part for a while, but underneath the surface, he was just like us: flawed, broken, and incapable of truly saving himself or anyone else.

Conclusion: The Real Hero

We are Halloween Heroes. This theme runs consistently through the Bible's story. Every hero may seem impressive for a time, but then falls short. Each time God makes a covenant with someone (Adam, Noah, Abraham, Israel, and David), they fail to keep it. God repeatedly teaches us a vital lesson: we cannot save ourselves. Humanity cannot save itself. We won't evolve enough to eliminate evil within us. The story of Noah, like many other stories in the Bible, highlights a profound truth: we cannot rely on ourselves, on our own strength, to overcome sin and bring about true redemption. We are all, in a sense, Halloween heroes—dressing up in costumes of strength and competence but ultimately unable to live up to the image we project.

But there's good news! Thankfully, a hero arrives who is not just human but also divine—Jesus Christ. He is the only one who can save us from our sins and unite us with our loving Creator. He is the true and ultimate hero, the one who perfectly fulfills God's covenant, the one who offers us forgiveness and new life. He is the one who lived a perfect life, died a sacrificial death, and rose again to conquer sin and death. He is the one who gives us hope, not based on our own abilities but through His unfailing love and grace. So, let's stop putting on the costume. Let's stop pretending to be something we're not. Let's acknowledge our weakness, our brokenness, and our need for a Savior.

Steps

Turn on the bat-signal! Don't pretend to be Batman! You are not the hero over your addiction. You are not the hero over your bitterness. You are not the hero over your anger. You are not the hero of your life. Ask for help this week. Through prayer, ask God for help. Through conversation, ask a friend for help. Where is your "I can't" point? Maybe you say: I can't stop sleeping with my girlfriend, or I can't stop drinking when I am sad, or I can't stop looking at pornography, or I can't let go of bitterness in my heart, or I can't stop battling anger with my kids, or I can't stop worrying about my job. Whatever it is, and we all have that point, when you get there, pray, "God help me." Take off the costume and turn on the bat-signal. God will show up. The healing won't always be instant, but it will start when you stop playing the hero.

Life Level Application

Head: Read Jeremiah 17:5-8. How did Lamech's hope for his son Noah illustrate the human desire for a hero? How did the reality of Noah's life challenge that expectation?

Heart: Read 1 Corinthians 10:6-13. The sermon mentions specific "I can't" points like struggling with addiction, bitterness, anger, or worry. Which of these resonates most with you, and what steps can you take to stop trying to overcome it on your own?

Hand: Read Galatians 6:1-5. What is one way you currently try to "play the hero" in your relationships, work, or personal life? How does this behavior prevent you from experiencing true help and support from God and others? How does Paul think this lack of self-awareness prevent us from helping others? What specific steps can you take to stop this behavior?

Habit: Read James 5:16. The sermon encourages us to "turn on the bat-signal" and ask for help. What new habit can you start this week to actively acknowledge your need for God's help and the support of others in a specific area of your life?

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sonrise Youth Summer Study | Tuesdays, July 8th to Aug. 12th | 2:30-4:30PM | Sonrise Church
Join us for a 6-week study on Tuesdays July 8th-August 12th from 2:30pm-4:30pm. We can provide rides if needed! Register on Church Center.

Family Fun Night | Wed., July 16 | 5:30-7:30 PM | Sonrise Church Parking Lot
Join us for a free family fun night here at Sonrise on Wednesday, July 16, at 5:30 PM! There will be fun activities for kids of all ages – bounce house, inflatable obstacle course & other fun inflatable activities! We'll also have a toddler zone, crafts, and a BBQ dinner. Invite your friends and neighbors! We have fliers available at the kids' check-in area. For more information, please email BethB@isonrise.com or come see us in Kid's Ministry!

Sonrise Youth Hike Day | Mon., July 21 | 9AM-5PM | Meet at Sonrise @ 9AM
Youth! Join us on a hike! We'll meet at the church at 9:00 AM and head out for our hike. Please bring the following with you: a sack lunch, a full water bottle, sunscreen, a backpack or sling pack to carry your belongings, and a hat if you prefer. Wear comfortable shoes that you can hike in for a few miles. We should return no later than 5:00 PM. Sign up on Church Center.

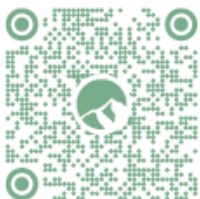
1st Annual Garden Party BBQ! | Sun., July 27 | Right after the 11AM Service | Dining Hall
All are welcome to enjoy burgers, good company, and a stroll through the garden. Don't miss this summer celebration!

Family Campout | Aug. 7-10 | Mt. Hood Village RV Resort
Join us for the Sonrise Family Campout this year at Mt. Hood Village at the base of Mt. Hood. Bring your family, dog, and neighbor for some mountain fun! Registration will close on July 16th. Nonrefundable after July 31st. For more info, please contact Emily Kukis at 503. 309.3534 or email at coreyandemilykukis@gmail.com. Additional details can be found on Church Center.

Volunteer Day at the LifeChange Center for Women & Children | Sat., Aug 16 | 8AM-5PM
In partnership with Women's Life Change, join us for a hands-on day of purpose as we prepare their new center to welcome women and children overcoming homelessness, addiction, and abuse. Help us make this space a place of healing and hope! All the details (what to expect, shift times, etc.) can be found by scanning the QR code for more information.



Songs from this morning:
House of the Lord – Phil Wickham
Gratitude – Brandon Lake
Trust in God – Elevation Worship
Came To My Rescue – Hillsong United
Firm Foundation (He Won't) – Maverick City



For more info or to register, visit isonrise.com or explore events/groups on the Church Center App.