

Abel, Enoch, and Noah: When God Speaks, Do You Listen?

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I. Introduction

Have you ever asked God a question? Has He ever answered you? If He has, did you believe Him? If you believed Him, did you actually act on what He told you or did you just stay on the same path? God says that He's placed the Spirit of His Son deep in our hearts, which means that we can cry out to Him the way His Son did. He tells us to cast all our cares on Him because He cares for us. Have you experienced this care or is Christianity nothing more than that thing you do on Sunday?

II. Abel, Enoch, and Noah: When God Speaks, Do You Believe It.....and Act on It?!

How do you define faith? God says faith is that concrete thing which represents the things you hope for, the evidence of things not yet seen. Since the beginning of time people have been acting on what God told them. They believed what God said and then did something about it.

Who was Abel? We don't have much information about Abel but what God does say about him reveals a lot about who this man was and his faith. He was the second child born into humanity, Cain's younger brother. He was a shepherd but also the first martyr (Genesis 4:1-8; Matthew 23:35).

How did Abel respond to God's voice compared to his brother? Adam and Eve taught their sons to worship God. Well aware of what God required, one day they both brought a sacrifice to God. God respected Abel and his offering, but He rejected Cain and his offering. Cain was furious and dejected. We may not know what was wrong with Cain's offering, but one thing is crystal clear: Cain knew he was committing sin and he did it anyway (Genesis 4:6-7; 1 John 3:12). Having rebelled against God's word, God reached out to Cain and gave him a chance to repent and make it right, but he refused. Instead, he took his anger out on God by killing his younger brother. God again gave him a chance to repent, but he didn't, so God punished him though not without mercy (Genesis 4:8-15). When God comments on this incident in Hebrews 11, He basically says that Abel believed and acted on what God said, Cain didn't. Both brothers believed what God said about the sacrifice; they both knew they had to offer God a sacrifice. But only Abel applied his faith and did what God asked; Cain heard God's voice, but he instead listened to Satan's (Genesis 4:7; 1 John 3:12). What was Cain's biggest fear, what did he want most in life? He wanted to make his own rules, be his own man, be his own god (Genesis 4:17); he learned the same lesson from Satan his parents learned (Genesis 3:5-6).

Who was Enoch? We know even less about Enoch than Abel. He was the great-great-great-great grandson of Adam by way of Seth (Genesis 5:1-18). He was extremely faithful to God and was also a prophet who foretold what Jesus Christ would do with sinners at His Second Coming: execute judgment on them for their ungodly words and deeds (Jude 1:14-15).

How did Enoch respond to God's voice compared to Cain's descendants? In Genesis 4-5 God is showing us the difference between the line of Cain and Seth (the Messianic line). Both lines have two individuals named: Enoch and Lamech (4:16-24; 5:18-25). But there's a giant difference in these individuals. Cain's Enoch had a city named after him by his father: his father Cain wants him to strive to make a name for himself like his father. And Cain's Lamech took his father's sinfulness even further: God promised to avenge Cain as an act of mercy to protect Cain's life (4:15). His son Lamech turned this act of mercy into a boast and added a sick twist, i.e., he took vengeance on a young man who hurt him by killing him (Genesis 4:23-24). Cain's line was following the sinful ways of their father. Seth's line, however, followed after God. In fact, Scripture says that after Seth had his firstborn, "then men began to call on the name of the Lord." Seth's Lamech was Noah's father and instead of boasting, he looked to the Lord's promise that one day He would send a Savior to undo the death and destruction Adam and Eve brought into the world; he thought perhaps Noah was that Savior (Genesis 3:15; 5:29). As for Seth's Enoch, after he had Methuselah (Noah's grandfather), it says that Enoch walked with God 300 years!! And Enoch never died. Why? Because "God took him" directly to heaven. Twice it says that Enoch walked with God. Cain's descendants followed after Satan's voice like their father Cain. Enoch, however, heard God's voice, believed it and followed it all his life, until the day God took him, which is why God says that He was pleased with Him in Hebrews 11.

Who was Noah? He was the tenth generation from Adam. Like his great grandfather, Noah walked with God; he obeyed everything God said (Genesis 6:9, 22; 7:5). He was a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter 2:5). Regarding Noah's righteousness, God compares it to Daniel's and Job's (Ezekiel 14:14).

How did Noah respond to God's voice compared to his contemporaries? God chose Noah as the new head of humanity. That is, Adam and his descendants, through the line of Cain had corrupted the entire human race (including all of Seth's descendants, except Noah, his three sons and their wives). So God decided to kill Adam, i.e., "Adam" is a Hebrew word that means "man," "mankind." This is the word God uses over and over in Genesis 6:1-7, when He pronounced judgment on mankind. Noah's contemporaries, like Cain and his line, refused to listen and obey God's voice. The only thing on their mind was evil continually (Genesis 6:5). So God decided to start over with Noah, which is why He repeated the two key responsibilities—He originally gave to Adam—to Noah: be fruitful and multiply and have dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:28; 9:1-7). Why Noah? Because "Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God" (Genesis 6:9). When God told him to build an Ark because a flood was coming, though it had never rained, he built it (Hebrews 11:7). The building of the Ark was the concrete evidence of Noah's faith. If you're familiar with Noah's story, you're wondering why God calls him just and perfect (Genesis 9:21). God knows we're sinners; what He looks for is a repentant heart that keeps seeking after Him.

When God speaks, do you listen? Circumstances get the best of us and instead of God's voice, we listen to the enemy's. But God is merciful to us...a couple struggles with bad news.

III. Conclusion

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.