

Daily Devotional, April 25, 2020 When the Rains Come

It was by faith that Noah built a large boat to save his family from the flood. He obeyed God, who warned him about things that had never happened before.” Hebrews 11:7 (NLT)

I had been getting a bit antsy looking out the window over the gloomy grey skies and rain the past few days, hoping to get outdoors for some sunshine. I imagine that many of you are feeling the same. You set some recreational goals for the day and then you are at the mercy of the weather.

It's kind of like the moment you attempt to step out in faith, or when you set any kind of goal--there will most always be people who say, "Are you sure about that? Maybe you should rethink that. I'm not so sure that's such a great idea, especially for *you* to try." There are always critics and cynics amongst us. They might even be your family or your best friends. But the biggest doubts will come from the way you talk to *yourself*. You are the most influential doubter that you need to overcome!

The question is whose voice are you going to listen to? Stepping out in faith means listening to God's voice and not the voices of doubt, no matter who those voices belong to.

Just imagine all the doubters in Noah's life. How would you like to be Noah's next-door neighbor? "That guy Noah is whacked! He thinks his God speaks to him, but all he's doing is creating an eyesore and making all of our property values tank by building that ridiculous ship in his front yard!" And can you imagine the push back that Noah was getting from his own family? "Dad, you're embarrassing us. Why do we have to help you with this? Everybody thinks we're weird!"

The Bible tells us that Noah listened to God. He had a unique direct relationship that no one else had. And what did he hear? "*God warned him about things that had never happened before*" (**Hebrews 11:7 NLT**), things no one had ever seen or imagined. There had never before been a flood!

Now, Noah could have easily taken a step back and doubted himself. He could have easily dismissed God's voice as a bout of indigestion from some bad lamb or matzo from the night before. He could have second guessed the instructions God had given him. But Noah *didn't* listen to the voices of doubt from without or within. Instead, Noah remained faithful and followed God's instructions.

In response, God remained faithful to Noah and to us as well. God placed the rainbow in the sky as a sign of His commitment to graciously save His creation. Never again will there be a flood that destroys the whole world. Instead, God says, "I have placed my rainbow in the clouds. It is the sign of my covenant with you and with all the earth. This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come" (**Genesis 9:12-13 NLT**).

This covenant means that God now promises that no matter what, no matter how wicked humans become, God will not abandon the creation He has made. So, as with Adam and Eve, and with Cain, God's judgment contains mercy. God will restore His creation.

Rainbows remind us of possibilities, opportunities and hope. Rainbows are God's promise – His miracle. In the midst of life's storms, it is often hard to spot a rainbow, but I think the most important thing is to remember, these miracles of the sky only appear after the storm. We will get through life's storms if we stop doubting, stop fearing, and remain faithful.

In Ireland rainbows symbolize blessings from heaven, and this is reflected in some of the wise old words from generations past. I want to close by sharing this with you:

**"May God give you...For every storm, a rainbow, For every tear, a smile,
For every care, a promise, And a blessing in each trial.
For every problem life sends, A faithful friend to share,
For every sigh, a sweet song, And an answer for each prayer." An Old Irish Blessing**

