10470 - Who Is Noah?

the question

I would like to have some information about the prophet of Allah Noah (Nuh, peace be upon him).

Summary of answer

Prophet Noah was one of the messengers of Allah. Noah called his people, and he remained among them for one thousand years less fifty (i.e., 950 years), calling them to worship Allah Alone and to give up idol-worship. For more, see the detailed answer.

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

Who is Noah?

Allah chose messengers and prophets from among the sons of Adam, as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“Allah chose Adam, Noah (Nuh), the family of Ibrahim (Abraham) and the family of ‘Imran above the ‘Alamin (mankind and jinn) (of their times).” [Al ‘Imran 3:33]

Allah sent Noah to his people to call them to worship Allah Alone:

“Indeed, We sent Noah to his people and he said: ‘O my people! Worship Allah! You have no other Ilah (God) but Him. (La ilaha ill Allah: none has the right to be worshipped but Allah.) Certainly, I fear for you the torment of a Great Day!’” [al-A’raf 7:59 – interpretation of the meaning]

What did the people of Noah worship?

The people of Noah used to worship idols, so they transgressed, rebelled and were arrogant:

“And they have said: ‘You shall not leave your gods, nor shall you leave Wadd, nor Suwa‘, nor Yaghuth, nor Ya‘uq nor Nasr’ (these are the names of their idols).” [Noah :23 – interpretation of the meaning]

Noah called his people, and he remained among them for one thousand years less fifty (i.e., 950 years), calling them to worship Allah Alone and to give up idol-worship, as Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And indeed We sent Noah to his people, and he stayed among them a thousand years less fifty years.”[al-'Ankabut 29:14]

How did the people of Noah respond to his call?

But the people of Noah did not respond to him and they did not benefit from his advice. Rather their nobles denied his prophethood and accused him of lying, and they said that his followers were from among the poor and weak who had little understanding. Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

“The chiefs who disbelieved among his people said: ‘We see you but a man like ourselves, nor do we see any follow you but the meanest among us and they (too) followed you without thinking. And we do not see in you any merit above us, in fact we think you are liars’” [Hud 11:27]

Noah continued to call his people, treating them kindly and calling them on every occasion, night and day, in secret and openly, but no one believed with him except for a few. Most of them disbelieved in him and mocked him; they accused him of insanity and tried to stop him from conveying the message of his Lord. They threatened to stone him if he did not stop:

“They said: ‘If you cease not, O Noah , you will surely be among those stoned (to death)’” [al-Shu’ara 26:116]

When did Noah start to complain to Allah?

But Noah paid no heed to their threat, and he continued to call them until, when he could no

longer bear their mockery and arrogance, he turned to his Lord with this complaint (interpretation of the meaning):

“He said: ‘O my Lord! Verily, I have called my people night and day (i.e. secretly and openly to accept the doctrine of Islamic Monotheism), but all my calling added nothing but to (their) flight (from the truth). And verily, every time I called unto them that You might forgive them, they thrust their fingers into their ears, covered themselves up with their garments, and persisted (in their refusal), and magnified themselves in pride. Then verily, I called to them openly (aloud). Then verily, I proclaimed to them in public, and I have appealed to them in private. I said (to them): Ask forgiveness from your Lord, verily, He is Oft-Forgiving; He will send rain to you in abundance, And give you increase in wealth and children, and bestow on you gardens and bestow on you rivers.’” [Noah 71:5-12]

When did Noah start to pray against his people?

When Noah despaired of his people’s ever believing, and they threatened to kill him and they persecuted him and those who believed with him, he had no choice but to pray against them. He said:

“My Lord! Leave not one of the disbelievers on the earth! If You leave them, they will mislead Your slaves, and they will beget none but wicked disbelievers” [Noah 71:26-27]

How were the people of Noah punished?

Allah responded to the prayer of Noah and destroyed the people of Noah by drowning them. He commanded him to build a ship of salvation so that he and the believers could ride in it:

“And it was revealed to Noah : ‘None of your people will believe except those who have believed already. So be not sad because of what they used to do. And construct the ship under Our Eyes and with Our Revelation, and call not upon Me on behalf of those who did wrong; they are surely to be drowned’” [Hud 11:36-37 – interpretation of the meaning]

When Noah (peace be upon him) had finished building the ship, and the signs of the beginning of the punishment appeared, with water springing up from the ground and water falling from the sky, Allah commanded Noah to take onto the ship one pair, male and female, of every living creature and animal, so that they might continue to survive. He also commanded him to take with him his family, except for those among them who disbelieved – who were one of his wives and one of his sons. And Allah also commanded him to take with him those who believed, who were few in number.

Allah says (interpretation of the meaning):

"(So it was) till when Our Command came and the oven gushed forth (water like fountains from the earth). We said: 'Embark therein, of each kind two (male and female), and your family — except him against whom the Word has already gone forth — and those who believe. And none believed with him, except a few.'

And he [Noah] said: 'Embark therein: in the Name of Allah will be its (moving) course and its (resting) anchorage. Surely, my Lord is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.'

So it (the ship) sailed with them amidst waves like mountains, and Noah called out to his son, who had separated himself (apart): 'O my son! Embark with us and be not with the disbelievers.'

The son replied: 'I will betake myself to some mountain, it will save me from the water.' Noah said: 'This day there is no saviour from the Decree of Allah except him on whom He has mercy.' And waves came in between them, so he (the son) was among the drowned" [Hud 11:40-43]

Then Noah was seized with compassion for his son, so he asked his Lord to save him from destruction:

"And Noah called upon his Lord and said, 'O my Lord! Verily, my son is part of my family! And certainly, Your Promise is true, and You are the Most Just of the judges.'

He said: 'O Noah! Surely, he is not of your family; verily, his work is unrighteous, so ask not of Me that of which you have no knowledge! I admonish you, lest you should be one of the ignorant'"

[Hud 11:45-46 – interpretation of the meaning]

When Allah had destroyed the unbelievers by drowning , He commanded the earth to swallow up the water and He commanded the sky to withhold its rain. Then the ship came to rest on Mount Judi in Mosul. The matter was settled and the wrongdoers were destroyed:

“And it was said: ‘O earth! Swallow up your water, and O sky! Withhold (your rain).’ And the water was made to subside and the Decree (of Allah) was fulfilled (i.e. the destruction of the people of Noah. And it (the ship) rested on (Mount) Judi, and it was said: ‘Away with the people who are Zalimun (polytheists and wrongdoing)!’” [Hud 11:44 – interpretation of the meaning]

After the ship had come to rest, Allah commanded Noah and those who were with him to disembark, encompassed with peace and blessings:

“It was said: ‘O Noah! Come down (from the ship) with peace from Us and blessings on you and on the people who are with you (and on some of their offspring), but (there will be other) people to whom We shall grant their pleasures (for a time), but in the end a painful torment will reach them from Us’” [Hud 11:48 – interpretation of the meaning]

Thus Allaah helped Noah and those who believed with him, and He destroyed those who disbelieved, and made them a lesson for mankind:

“And (remember) Noah, when he cried (to Us) aforetime. We answered his invocation and saved him and his family from the great distress.

We helped him against the people who denied Our Ayat (proofs, evidences, verses, lessons, signs, revelations, etc.). Verily, they were a people given to evil. So We drowned them all” [al-Anbiya 21:76-77 – interpretation of the meaning]

Then Allah ordained prophethood and the Book among the descendants of Noah and Ibrahim (peace be upon them), as He says (interpretation of the meaning):

“And indeed, We sent Noah and Ibrahim (Abraham), and placed in their offspring prophethood and

Scripture. And among them there are some who are guided; but many of them are Fasiqun (rebellious, disobedient to Allah)" [al-Hadid 57:26]

And Allah knows best.