

The Three Eternal Destinies #206

Devout Cornelius

Gen 9:1-7 — After Noah, God made another provision to support the first (Gen 3:16-19,22), to combat Satan's seed from entering the "ovum" of man. It was the provision of civil government to execute justice for murder, for the sake of peace between mankind, and to strengthen man in his "hard struggle" against sin (Job 14:14). Today, "few men are left" who keep the everlasting covenant (Isa 24:5-6), and the judgment of Rev 16:8-9 looms ahead, even as Isaiah prophesied (Isa 24:6).

A provision is something provided — in this case, supplying a great and awesome need for man to be able to be found worthy of a second life after the first death (Rev 20:12-15). God added a clause (Gen 9:1-7) stipulating or providing a requirement to keep in order to not be judged worthy of the second death, as the first death sentence was already given to mankind (Heb 9:27; Gen 2:9,17).

The universe will be filled by the survivors who lived by the covenant of conscience (Gen 3:22) and were judged worthy of a second life according to their works or deeds done (Jn 5:28-29). The conscience is the Creator's vice-regent, providing knowledge of the natural law (Ps 19:1-6; Rom 1:18-32; 2:1-16). Rev 22:11 — The righteous, such as Noah and Lot, "walk with God" (Gen 6:8-9), but as God is spirit, for Noah this means to live by his conscience, which is God's vice-regent (Gen 3:16-22). Lot also was accounted righteous according to conscience (2 Pet 2:7; Gen 18:23-24; Isa 24:5; Rom 2:6-7,10-16).

The Creator gave fallen man a provision in order that he might maintain his created likeness of Him. Although Rom 3:23 is correct, that man has "fallen short" of God's glory, the provision was to keep him from "falling long" away from his created likeness. He gave him a way to do the deeds that would maintain His dignity in man, in whom a remnant of God's glory still existed (Gen 3:22). The word *works* in Rev 20:12,

by which one will be judged worthy or unworthy for a second life, is #2041, meaning the works of Gen 3:16-19 and 9:1-7.

It is according to one's performance in keeping a good conscience, which is one that still functions to keep him in the way. A man's works or deeds usually denote comprehensively what a man is according to how he acts (Rom 2:6-10,14-16), doing the "good" that he knows in his conscience (Gen 3:22).

Rom 2:6 — "according to his deeds" (#2041)

Rom 2:7 — "patient continuance in doing good" in pursuit of eternal life (#2041)

Rom 2:10 — "everyone who works what is good" (#2038)

God will render to each one as the judgment in Rom 2:16 and Rev 20:12-15, according to each one's deeds, when the secrets of their conscience, soul or heart, are revealed (Rom 2:16). *Secrets* is #2927, things hidden or suppressed.

Acts 10:34-35 is an example of Rom 2:10-11, of how our Father honors the one who does what is good and right (Jms 4:17). The reason it says there is no partiality with God (Acts 10:34; Rom 2:11) is because He judges only according to one's deeds — what a person *does* (Gen 3:22; Jms 4:17), even as He will judge us, the Holy, as to whether we qualify for the kingdom reign (2 Cor 5:10). It will not be because of anything else but obedience (Jn 14:21; 12:26; 14:15; Eph 2:10; 4:12-16; 4:1-3).

Rom 3:12 — There are none that do the good (Gen 3:22; Isa 24:5) of the age-lasting covenant except the few who are left (Isa 24:6) who do the good, which means there were more than a few before. So Paul is not saying that all mankind are like this (Rom 3:12), but only those who match the criterion of Ps 14:1 — those who say in their heart, "There is no God," and live accordingly. Otherwise Acts 10:35 can be thrown out the window if "all" in Rom 3:12 is meant to be absolute. But the context Paul is speaking from is Ps 14:1-3 (Ps 53:1-3; 5:9; 140:3; 10:7).

How many are as Cornelius, the man who fears God and does what is right and good? Certainly he also had fallen short of the glory of God (who hasn't?), but had

maintained his likeness of God to the degree that he was considered *devout* (#2152) in Acts 10:2. A devout man is one in this context of conscience who wants to do the right thing (as Jn 7:17). He did not know what do, but he did all he could do. He wanted to please God if he could only truly know Him. Our Father sent an angel to him in a vision, who told him where to find an apostle (Acts 10:6) — “He will tell what you must do.”

Cornelius feared God (Acts 10:22,35), just as those whom Paul addressed in Acts 13:16,26,42,44-48 — “men of Israel *and you who fear God.*” But it was the latter who responded, as Rom 10:20. Jn 7:17 is at work in all who respond to the hearing of the good news.

Here is a man likened to Abraham in Acts 10:2, for he feared God along with his entire household, just as Gen 18:19 says of Abraham. Peter in Acts 10:39 separated Cornelius’s character from that of the Jewish religion, which was just a form of godliness but denying the power of it. He exposed the spirit of it as Jn 8:37-47.

It seems as if Cornelius’s household was baptized and received the Holy Spirit. His household was made up of not just family, but also servants who were bought and who served Cornelius (Acts 10:7), just as Abraham was chosen and foreknown by Yahweh as an upright man, having slaves in his household. Cornelius’s friends and relatives apparently also believed (Acts 10:24-27).

Even as in the gospels, there is a way to treat servants and a way not to treat them (Lk 12:42-48; Mt 8:5-13). In no case did our Master reprove or correct any master for having slaves or having bought servants. Look at Cornelius and the centurion of Mt 8:5-13 — no rebuke whatsoever, but rather praise for their faith. As the judgment will reveal, most masters who chose a servant had discourse with them before they would dare purchase them to be their servants, as Cornelius in Acts 10:7. Then they waited upon their master continually. Do you think for one moment that Cornelius had to beat the living fire out of them to force them to do it? Or what about Abraham’s slaves

purchased in Haran (Gen 12:5)? So who did God choose — John Brown or slave owners?

Do you think Abraham had to beat his slaves, or were they all living together in community on his plantation? Does the Bible ever reprove slave owners? Certainly, the Old Testament and the New Testament both give instruction on how to handle slaves, and also how slaves should be toward masters that were not so good. “Yes, Master!” won the master over who was a little gruff (1 Tim 6:1-5; 1 Pet 2:18).

What were the words of our Master concerning slavery? (Mt 8:10-13)

What did Paul teach in 1 Tim 6:1-2? He told Timothy to also teach and exhort these things (verse 2), and if anyone teaches otherwise (verse 3), to withdraw from them (verse 5).

So how were the masters treating their servants that would justify the slaughter of almost 700,000 men, women, and children? That’s how many were murdered, slaughtered, ravished, and raped during the Civil War, ending with Sherman’s march through the sea of blood.

If it were not for the Civil War, Châm would have had the dignity of having bought their way to freedom on their own, and be plantation owners by now. The USA would have prospered to a greater extent, especially the South.

Many devout men of the nations have lived (Rev 21:3-4), which means men like Cornelius (Acts 10:2,7), one who reverences aright, who fears his Creator, as Paul spoke of the unknown God (Acts 17:23-28) to whom the Cornelius’s of the earth fulfill their duty in reverent fear of God.

Who knows how many slaves who submitted to their masters, dealing with the original rebellion in Châm in Gen 9, will be honored with a second life after the first death sentence for their good deeds of bearing just what the Creator put upon their necks for the purpose of dealing with their iniquity of disrespect in dishonoring their father (Gen 9:22)?