

The Three Eternal Destinies #199

Heirs of Righteousness by Faith

By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith. (Heb 11:7)

Became in Heb 11:7 means that Noah was made to be an heir of the righteousness which is by faith because of his *fidelity* to the truth he knew in his conscience. This is analogous to Jn 1:12,14. *Became* in both Heb 11:7 and Jn 1:12 is #1096, meaning formed into or made to be one with.

An *heir* holds onto and has in his power or possession what he is entitled to. Noah was a possessor, or heir, to the properties of righteousness. Righteousness is in conformity to what is right or good, which Gen 3:22 says all men have the knowledge of, although not all men retain or hold onto this knowledge. Gen 3:22 — Our Father said man was “like Us” or *Godlike*, meaning that even in his fallen state man has an inborn righteousness he could hold onto according to his fidelity to his conscience. For example, Noah’s fidelity to Gen 3:22, in all the aspects of Gen 3:16-19, was acknowledged by God in Gen 6:9. And this is *faith*, that which he was persuaded to be faithful to do, which is what he knew was the good to do in his pursuit of life eternal (Rom 2:6-7).

Faith in Heb 11:7 is #4102, which was Noah’s fidelity or faithfulness to the covenant in Gen 3:16-19,22. The record shows that he had the assurance and conviction that he was acting in accord with his faith, by which he was persuaded to do what is recorded: “...moved with godly fear, [he] prepared an ark to the saving of his household by which he condemned the world.” He did this by holding fast to the confidence and assurance and conviction that he had. Therefore he was considered *righteous* according to his fidelity or faithfulness, as Hab 2:4 uses the word *emunah* (#530), meaning fidelity, firmness, faithfulness, stability in what he knew was truth.

Dt 32:20 — Noah was the man in his generation in whom there was such *faith*, or rather, such *faithfulness*, as #530 meant in the only two places this word, translated *faith*, is found in the Old Testament. This faithfulness is inseparable from the “works” that prove one’s faithfulness and fidelity to what is right (Jms 4:17), which all men know. This is as Paul wrote in Rom 1:17, where *faith* is #4102, faithfulness or fidelity to the truth. Jms 2:14 — Faithfulness or fidelity requires *works of love* (Jms 2:17), even as Rom 1:5 speaks of obedience to what expresses the true God’s fidelity. His name and character are at stake, which takes works of obedience done in love and not just “belief.”

To Justify His Name

Believe it or not, God must be justified, His name vindicated and exonerated, and we must be the ones who provide justification or defense for His name, even as our Master pleaded with His disciples to pray for in Mt 6:9, “In this manner, therefore, pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name.’” He commanded this because His Father’s name had been blasphemed by the Jews (Eze 36:20-23; Rom 2:24), just as today the Christians have as well. Both branches of Christianity, Roman and Protestant, have blasphemed His name.

Just read history. Jews and Christians have reviled and abused the name of God more than any other people on earth, for they claim to know Him (Jn 9:41; 1 Jn 2:3-5). They, above all others, have distorted the character and image of God in man, and they prove themselves to be all liars. As Mt 27:25 says, the Jews brought the blood of His Son upon their heads and the heads of their offspring (Rom 2:17-24,28-29; 1 Ths 2:14-16). Their religion, as well as the Christian religion alike, is described in Rev 2:9 and 3:9 as “a synagogue of Satan” (2 Cor 6:2).

So, if Mt 6:9 is a command to us, what shall we do? (1 Jn 2:4)

For the Holy: “The just shall live by faith” (Rom 1:17)

The word *fidelity* (#4102) means a lot.¹ As Rom 1:5, Jms 2:14,17, and Rom 1:17 say, “the just will live by his [or this] fidelity to the truth,” for our Master’s name is at stake. Who are the *just*? The just are those who justify their Master’s name. Rom 1:17 — The just shall live by their fidelity to the Word, which is their faithfulness to Him (Jn 14:21).

For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”

Just (#1342) is a big word in Rom 1:17. So, who is among the just?² In order to be *just* one must live by his faithfulness to the covenant. This is what *fidelity* means. The just of the *nations* live in accordance with their moral standard found in Gen 3:22 and 3:16-19. The just of the *holy nation* live according to the higher standard of the Word of God and the commandments (1 Jn 2:3-5; Jn 14:15,21).

Just means that one conforms in his actions to his constitutionally prescribed character. Those who are the *just* in Messiah are justified by His death on their behalf, who are then to live according to His word (Jn 8:31,51). That is, they are *set free* to love, as Jn 8:32 says, which is what it means to *be just* (2 Cor 5:14-15,17,20). The just are those who live and will live by being faithful to the One who justified them, which He did to make them just!

¹ *Faithfulness* (#4102) also means, according to the New Testament Greek Lexicon, fidelity, faithfulness, and the character of one who can be relied on. This is in addition to the basic definition for *pistis* found in Strong’s Greek Concordance, which is #4102, from #3982, and means persuasion, i.e., credence; moral conviction (of religious truth, or the truthfulness of God or a religious teacher), especially reliance upon Messiah for salvation. Abstractly, *pistis* means constancy in such profession; by extension, the system of religious truth itself — assurance, belief, faith, fidelity.

² *Just* (#1342, from #1349) — equitable (in character or act); by implication, innocent, holy (absolutely or relatively) — just, meet, right or righteous. Again, the Lexicon has a much fuller definition. *Dikaios* (#1342) means: 1) Righteous, observing divine laws; a) in a wide sense, upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of God: innocent, faultless, guiltless; b) in a narrower sense, rendering to each his due and that in a judicial sense, passing just judgment on others, whether expressed in words or shown by the manner of dealing with them.

Rom 1:5; Lk 7:29 — “Justified God” (NKJV) is #1344, meaning to bring out the fact that He is just (as the *Three Eternal Destinies of Man* teachings do). We justify God by our lives lived for Him and for His purpose (Mt 5:14; Phil 2:14-16).

A Person’s Own Righteousness

A person’s own righteousness as Isa 64:6 says, even for righteous men like Noah in Gen 6:9, is like an unclean thing in comparison with the righteousness of God. It is unable to reconcile one’s life to the Father to become a Son of God in the Holy City of God. And still, if a righteous person hears the good news of salvation he must consider his own righteousness as Paul did his in Phil 3:9, that is, as far as its value in gaining entry into the Kingdom of God (Jn 3:3-5). But for someone who has not heard and rejected the gospel, his own righteousness, if retained in this life, would be retained throughout eternity (Rev 22:11). However, if he rejects the good news he loses his righteousness and has no claim to any righteousness.

Make no mistake about it: we are not endorsing the doctrine of work’s salvation into Messiah’s Kingdom. But we are endorsing the righteousness of God, asserting that any from all mankind will be awarded a second life if they are found righteous on the basis of their own deeds and so their name is *found* in the book of life (Rev 20:15). That is, those who have not rejected Messiah or disobeyed the gospel as Jn 3:18,36 and 2 Ths 1:8-9 and Acts 13:46-48 says, will be judged after the first death according to Rev 20:11-15 and Rom 2:14-16. Eternal life, that is, a second life based on their deeds or works (Rom 2:6-7; Rev 20:12-13) will be “rendered to each” such person who persisted in doing what was right (Rom 2:6-7).

It is true that we do not endorse the Augustinian and Calvinistic heterodoxy which makes God to be unjust and cruel and without a bit of sense, even going against His own word and purpose by not rewarding men for keeping the everlasting covenant

of conscience of Gen 3:16-19 and 9:1-7, as He said He would through His Son and the apostle Paul (Jn 5:28-29; Mt 25:31-46; Rom 2:6-16).

There is no such thing as works salvation unto the Holy City for the people who have never heard of the good news. That lack of hearing abolishes even the possibility of works salvation for them in regards to obeying the commandments of God. But by the Word of God, however, for the nations who have *never heard* the good news, in order to make possible their entry into the Kingdom prepared for them (Mt 25:34), which is distinct from the Kingdom prepared for the Saints, there is a “works salvation” for them described in the words of Messiah in Mt 25:34-46 and the apostles in Rom 2:6-10 and Rev 20:12-13. Their reward, though, is an entry into the Kingdom called “the nations” in Rev 21:24 and 22:2, over whom the holy ones will reign as Rev 22:5 says, forever and ever.