

The Three Eternal Destinies #204

Noah, a Preacher of Righteousness

2 Pet 2:4-9 — In these verses, Peter makes the contrast between the righteous and the unjust and filthy, in comparing righteous Lot with the filthy men of Sodom and Gomorrah. What kind of righteousness did Noah have, since he was a righteous or just man? Gen 6:8-12 — These verses shows the contrast in those days between the just and the unjust. But what kind of righteousness did Noah and Lot have?

Noah was righteous along with his family, and Lot was righteous along with his. Noah was righteous in his day among the world, and Lot was among the cities, which were destroyed. Noah was blameless in regards to the covenant in Gen 3:16-19, for he chose to do the good he knew in Gen 3:22 and not deliberately go against his conscience (Gen 3:16-19). He had his family in line with the natural law of conscience (Rom 1:18-2:16).

Noah's righteous life put to shame the immoral lives of his neighbors. Building the ark gave him the opportunity to explain the coming judgment and to invite people to repent from their violation of the natural law (Gen 3:22), which was inherent in all human beings. But all except for the eight people of his family had become depraved. All of Noah's entreaties fell on deaf ears. Such indifference brought the unjust or unrighteous and the filthy of Noah's day to destruction.

So, as 2 Pet 2:4-9 and Gen 19 make clear, sexual perversion (Rom 9:29) — sodomy — was the primary cause of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. As the example of both Noah in his day and Lot in his, so will it be in ours, as Rom 9:29 says: the remnant of Rom 9:25-29 will be the source of judgment as Ecc'cus 48:10-11 says:

Designated in the prophecies of doom to allay God's wrath before the fury breaks, to turn the hearts of the fathers towards their children, and to restore the tribes of Jacob. ¹¹Happy shall they be who see you, and those who have fallen asleep in love; for we too will have life.

Noah was not preaching a righteousness of God imputed to those who after Abraham would be called Israel. This was before Abraham, before anyone on earth could inherit eternal life in the Holy City. But Noah's gospel was the everlasting gospel of Isa 24:5-6, as will be preached by the Male Child (Rev 14:6-11?). *Everlasting* means age-lasting (forever = for an age), as for the last six thousand years, Gen 3:16-19 and 9:1-7 have been binding upon all men.

Noah's righteousness was not the righteousness of God in Yahshua the Messiah (2 Cor 5:21). Noah did not become that righteous. As Heb 11:7 says, Noah was the heir of the righteousness that is according to natural faith, which was the persuasion of his conscience, while Abraham's righteousness was by the faith that came from hearing the voice of our Father in his heart to call him out of the society of his day and into another covenant. Noah's righteousness continued the righteousness that all but eight people had forsaken, since they did not listen to the voice of conscience. That is to say, only eight continued to live by the faith (persuasion) that came to them from their conscience.

Faith means persuasion. A person is either persuaded by his conscience or by God Himself who speaks to him. Noah was persuaded by his own conscience (Gen 3:22) to escape this world to safety. Noah knew that God would have to cause the flood. Noah was divinely warned of things not seen and moved with godly fear prepared an ark — as a testimony of the coming devastation.

Heb 11:8 — Abraham obeyed when he was “called out,” just as the word *ecclesia* (“called-out ones”) was used to describe the edah. He was called to an inheritance of a holy land where a separated people would dwell, since the world was once again becoming so evil. A holy nation would once again give witness to the truth, as we in our day must build the Body as a witness (Eph 1:22-23; 2:19-22) for a witness to fulfill Mt 24:14.

Heb 11:9-10 — Abraham was looking for a city whose builder and maker is God. This was qualitatively different from Noah's commission to fill the Earth again (Gen 9:1).

Noah was of the nations and under natural law. Abraham was of God and fulfilling the spiritual law (Gen 26:5).

Neither Noah nor any before him became the righteousness of God. No one became the righteousness of God until Abraham and all his descendants had the opportunity to become God's righteousness by the persuasion that comes from God. Gal 3:10 brings a curse on Abraham's descendants who were not receiving faith from God to obey the Law (Gal 3:13-14; Rom 8:4). The righteous requirements of the Law (Gen 26:5) were things of which Noah never knew in the faith he received. The righteousness in Rev 22:11 is of the nations.

The holy that became the very righteousness of God (2 Cor 5:21) will rule over the righteous of the nations (Rev 22:5; 21:3). They became the righteousness of God, forming the Body of God, His Temple among men eternally — the eternal Body of God. The righteousness of God is not just qualitatively different, but quantitatively different as well. The righteousness of human beings and the righteousness of God, or deity, is a different matter altogether, not simply a different quality.

A Preacher of Righteousness

This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. (Gen 6:9, NKJV)

Noah was a preacher of righteousness, that is, of *human* righteousness, not a preacher of the righteousness of God. Noah began with his own family, a new start for the nations and races of man (Gen 10:5,20,30-32). Gen 9:1-7 was an extension of Gen 3:16-19, which was the covenant that all men but eight forsook. It now remained to the three sons of Noah to begin a new world, one that would live by Gen 3:22 in the three separate and independent geographical territories established for each of them (Gen 10:5,20,31-32).

All three sons' offspring were to live in harmony in their own territories and in their own language and culture and customs. They were to do this by the knowledge

understood by them of good and evil (Gen 3:22), demonstrating that conscience is the vice-regent of God in every man (Isa 24:5). Abel in Heb 11:4 was already righteous before his offering, and his offering bore witness to that fact. Abel did not gain his righteousness by his offering, but gave a more acceptable offering than Cain because of his righteousness. It was Cain's evil heart that caused him to give an offering not in faith as Abel did.

Abel was not "declared righteous" as Abraham was. His faith was not credited to him as righteousness because of his offering, but he was proved to be righteous by the approbation and recognition his offering received (Gen 4:4). God respected Abel because of his offering, which was never thought of as an atoning sacrifice.

Noah was like many before him, who kept their consciences from defilement, knowing good from evil, and doing what was good in the sight of their Creator, and so were blameless in regard to their covenant. But when Abraham and his seed came on the scene in Gen 17:1, they had a higher standard of blamelessness to be a light to the blameless of the nations.

Priests to God

Ex 2:16-22; 3:1 speaks of Reuel or Jethro (Ex 4:18-19), who was to God a priest in the sense that he was a man of the nations who kept the everlasting covenant and mediated to other human beings — people of the nations around him, and even to his family. In Jethro's case, he ministered even to Moshe himself before Moshe had his own encounter with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and became a priest to all Israel.

Ex 3:1-15 — YHWH spoke to Abraham, identifying Himself as who He is. For we can serve no other God except the one who gave promise to our fathers of old, to bring about for Abraham what He promised (Gen 18:19). It can be done through no other means except Acts 26:6-8 (Gen 15:17-18).

Ex 3:1-22; 4:18 — Moshe was under the authority of the priest Jethro and submitted to him in respect. Moshe was a humble man, even as Abraham his father. He was chosen like him and foreknown by YHWH to do His purpose as all are who are known as the seed of Abraham (Gal 3:26-29) — those who belong to Messiah are the Sons of God, the seed of Abraham (Jn 8:39), to bring about what was spoken to Abraham (Gen 18:19).

Ex 4:21; 7:13,22; 8:15,19,32; 9:7 — God confirmed what Pharaoh had stubbornly determined to do to keep his millions of slaves for the good of his kingdom. Pharaoh, unlike Jethro, was a priest of a false god, not representing the vice-regent of God as Jethro did. Jethro, like others before him, was righteous, blameless in not persisting in doing the evil he knew (Gen 3:22). He was a mediator between the people of the world and the God of Adam and Seth's line down to Noah, who were blameless (Gen 6:8-10). To walk with God as Jethro did as a man of the nations, as all those who kept the everlasting covenant of Isa 24:5, is to walk with (in agreement with) the vice-regent of God the Creator.

To walk with God meant a continual pattern of life, a marked contrast to the rest of society (Gen 6:9-11). Noah, as all the righteous before him who lived by faithfulness to their own conscience, even as Jethro did in Moshe's day, was "just and perfect" (Gen 6:9). This means genuine and just in contrast to the rest of the world at that time, therefore he could mediate to them, as 2 Pet 2:5-6. The righteous ones who walked with God were in contrast to those in Sodom (Genesis 18 and 19). Lot was also a priest in this sense, as Noah was to the wicked world, a preacher or a witness (testimony) of righteousness, as the Holy are to the world (Mt 21:43; 24:14). Noah's just way of life was a witness, and also the ark in its building for one hundred twenty years.

The "ark" we are building must be a greater witness, bringing an end to this age (Lk 17:26-37).