

Noah's Offering

The Eternal Spirit through the Apostle Peter describes Noah as a “preacher of righteousness”. One who heralded the coming judgements of the Almighty on one hand and his grace through faith in his promises on the other hand!

The righteousness, which he heralded, was Yahweh's righteousness and in this Noah was a clear type of the one we have come to remember brethren and sisters, namely our Lord Jesus Christ.

Importantly we must take careful note brethren and sisters that although Noah was a preacher of Yahweh's righteousness. It necessitates that the herald must, them selves conform to a certain standard of righteousness. Otherwise the message communicated would be diluted at least and negated at worst.

What of you and I brethren and sisters, we are likewise required to be preachers of righteousness in our own day. Noah as we shall see lived his life in the light of Yahweh's commandments and his revealed will concerning the judgement to come. Now we too find ourselves equally at the end of an age awaiting the return of our beloved Master, so what sort of message are we communicating through our manner of life?

Thus when individuals approach, as does happen on occasion to enquire of us, why we live differently to those around us with whom we have to do. We in response to the scriptural command are to give a reasoned answer of the hope that lives within us with meekness and fear. Yet what of us brethren and sisters? Does our lives indeed match the standard of righteousness required or is our communication of the truth diluted or negated by the failure of our lives to conform to the message we are to declare by and in our daily lives?

Noah was indeed a preacher of righteousness and when we examine what else the scriptures have to say about the patriarch Noah. What we find is that it confirms him to be a man whom our Heavenly Father was pleased to account righteousness unto.

Could this be said of you and I brethren and sisters?

Hebrews Chapter 11 and Verse 7 declares

“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith”.

So Noah believed God and acted accordingly, we read here that he “moved with fear” in preparing the ark, which was the instrument of the saving of his house. Noah took Yahweh seriously and ordered his daily life around the coming reality of the flood. Prophecy had its desired effect upon him, but does it have the same effect upon each of us?

That word “fear” more ideally carries the idea of being circumspect in the light of circumstances or knowledge. Thus the revealed will of our Heavenly Father motivated him to act in faith. In this we see him again as a type of our Master in that Noah's faithfulness, resulted in personal righteousness being accounted unto him. Now because of his faithfulness, He saved his own house, we read.

Hebrews Chapter 3 and Verse 6

“But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end”.

Noah was “moved” we read in the Greek this word is in the middle voice indicating that it was a personal choice, which motivated him to act faithfully. We, therefore brethren and sisters likewise need to be equally moved with fear having been warned of God through his prophetic word.

In Genesis Chapter 6 and Verses 5 - 7

“And Yahweh saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented Yahweh

that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And Yahweh said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them”.

Such was the wickedness of mankind in Noah’s day that Yahweh had to directly intervene to protect the way to the tree of life and his creation.

We likewise, brethren and sisters are awaiting a similar intervention of judgement from our Heavenly Father.

In Verse 8 we read

“But Noah found grace in the eyes of Yahweh”

We have all found grace in the eyes of our Heavenly Father brethren and sisters. The question is – what is our response? Is it like Noah’s response, which found him to be consistently faithful in reciprocation of the love and grace shown unto him?

Thus Yahweh decreed that He would destroy all flesh. But in contrast there was one who our Heavenly Father had respect unto – Noah.

Verse 9

“Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God”.

Three things set Noah apart in his generation and as a result he received grace from Yahweh. Because Noah lived in reverential awe and respect for our Heavenly Father and his ways, so Yahweh had respect unto Noah his servant.

Notice carefully that the first two qualities the Eternal Spirit ascribes to Noah are moral qualities; him being just & perfect in the sight of God.

Just = righteous

Perfect = whole, complete, healthy, sound – without blemish

Now just behaviour is the foundation for a righteous life, a life that is whole and complete before Almighty God. It is the primary characteristic of the third quality that of walking with God. This third quality of walking with God depicts the lifestyle of Noah. This was a lifestyle that was made possible because of the first two moral qualities, which made the direction of his life a living reality; this same reality is meant to be evident in our lives today?

What is being brought before us here brethren and sisters is not just the physical, moral, emotional and spiritual direction of this great man’s life. But more importantly we see the desire of Noah for fellowship with our Heavenly Father and the utter dependence Noah had in Yahweh his God. Do you and I have this same desire and dependence?

Noah displays and models for us total trust faith and humility before our Heavenly Father. The direction of Noah’s walking was “with God”, just like our Lord and Master there is an absence of that independent spirit, which is so common in flesh.

Noah appears from our record to have subjected his will to that of our Heavenly Father’s, so he seems to do always those things, which please him. At least until the giving of the covenant in chapter nine.

Noah then walked humbly with our Heavenly Father, as the one we have come to remember.

Hebrews Chapter 5 and Verses 7 - 9

“Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him”.

The Lord Jesus Christ was just and perfect in all his ways and we are likewise called upon to humbly walk before our God and be perfect.

Micah Chapter 6 and Verse 8

“He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Yahweh require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God”?

Now Noah’s faithfulness is constantly being referenced for us in the text for example:

Genesis Chapters 6:22 & 7:1

“Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he. And Yahweh said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation”.

So our Heavenly Father delivered Noah and his family; Noah’s faith overcame the world, it was victorious. Thus the scriptures speak of Noah being the eighth person and the number of his family saved including himself was also the number eight. Now in scripture, eight is the number of new beginnings and is symbolic of the Lord Jesus Christ and the kingdom to come. So Noah even typifies the Master in this regard as being the first of a new creation, who overcame through faith.

Now as we move on in the divine record of Noah’s life, we come to the incident in chapter eight, which intrigued me brethren and sisters.

In Genesis Chapter 8 and Verses 18 & 20

“And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons’ wives with him. And Noah builded an altar unto Yahweh; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar”.

Thus we are informed in 2nd Peter that the Old World perished being over flowed with water. How did the New World begin?

Well these two verses tell us that the new arrangement of things began with worship and specifically with the giving of multiple burnt offerings unto Yahweh.

Now this is the first time in scripture we have mentioned explicitly both the concept of an altar and of the burnt offering. So Noah’s first priority and thought when he left the ark was that of worship and in particular the continued dedication of his life unto Yahweh.

Now although the text does not mention thanksgiving, we may safely assume that Noah’s God ward response was one of gratitude and thanksgiving for his deliverance from the flood.

What about us, brethren and sisters for when our Heavenly Father breaks through into our lives and delivers us from difficult circumstances and situations, what is our first response?

I doubt a burnt offering would be the first thing that comes to our minds? No in our day and age if you were indeed spiritually aware of the Fathers providential hand in our lives. Then a short prayer of thanks giving would likely be our norm. Yet brethren and sisters Noah’s example here in Genesis exhorts us to give much more.

For firstly Noah took the time and effort to build an altar and then having done so he prepared to offer not, just one offering, but multiple offerings. The text speaks of him taking “of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar”.

So Noah’s multiple burnt offerings also cost him in resources, which brings to mind some words of David. “Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto Yahweh my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshing floor (of Araunah) and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver”.

I wonder if Noah practised what we find in the time of Job, for Job rose up early in the morning and offered burnt offerings for each of his children before Yahweh.

Did Noah then offer individual offerings for each of his sons and their wives, as well as for him self and his own wife?

Noah firstly exhorts us then brethren and sisters that when our Heavenly Father breaks into our lives his work should always evoke a response from us in appropriate worship.

Yes Noah's response was voluntary, it was a free will offering and indeed that was what the burnt offering would later be under the law. The burnt offering speaks to us of the ascent of the individual up towards our Heavenly Father in service. This is symbolised in the fact that the Hebrew word for "burnt offering" only appears twice not in connection with the offering.

Interestingly in both cases it is speaking of the physical ascent of the person into the temple of Yahweh for worship and service. Of course the Hebrew word here means, "to ascend" and speaks of the smoke of the offering rising up towards Heaven. We will come back to this point when we consider our Heavenly Father's response to Noah's offering.

Secondly then Noah exhorts us brethren and sisters that such appropriate worship in thanks giving requires a cost from us in time, effort and resources. The idea behind this offering is that of total dedication of the individual, as symbolised by the complete consuming of the animal upon the altar, with the exception of its skin. Dedication by its very nature costs us brethren and sisters; it costs:

In Mark Chapter 12 and Verse 33

"To love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices".

Thinking of the removal of the skin of the burnt offering for a moment. Our Heavenly Father was not concerned with it and He donates it to the priests for their own use. The removal of the skin indicates that Yahweh is not interested in the externals of our lives and such was the mistake of the Pharisees in the Master's day. Thus the specific externals of our lives are no barrier to us dedicating our lives unto him, unless of course there is something in those externals, which contradicts the fullness of dedication.

Thus Noah dedicated himself completely to the service and worship of his God and in this, He is once more a type of our Lord Jesus Christ whose entire life was dedicated in total service to his Heavenly Father. Likewise then brethren and sisters if we are to be part of the new order of things during the millennium in the mercy of the Father. Then we too need to follow the faithful examples of Noah and our Master in the dedication of our lives now.

Let us remember brethren and sisters that the burnt offering formed the morning and evening sacrifices under the law and so speaks to us of our daily need to dedicate ourselves to the Father's service and worship.

In Romans Chapter 12 and at Verse 1

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service".

Here the Eternal Spirit through the Apostle solves the problem for us in that we are not under the law. We are not required to go out to the back garden and build an altar and make sacrifice upon it. Rather as this passage in Romans depicts we are to present our lives in daily recognition of our Heavenly Father's mercies and in loving dedication, which is truly our appropriate and only response. Interestingly the word "service" is actually a Greek word, which is used elsewhere to describe the tabernacle service of the priests.

Thus brethren and sisters the next time our Heavenly Father breaks through into your life with some blessing or through an act of providential deliverance. Our response should be a whole lot more than a simple and quick prayer of thanksgiving. We ought to take the spirit of Noah's offering here. We need too re-dedicate ourselves in a renewed way in some manner of service, of worship, which actually costs us, over and above our normal personal level of service & worship.

Surely as Noah did here in Genesis eight our voluntary response in gratitude is to ascend in greater terms of worship and service of our God. Our desire is to give more of ourselves of our hearts, our will, our strength and our resources unto him. Indeed to ratchet up our personal response that we might more fully reciprocate the love shown unto us, in the light of the example of the emblems before us upon the table.

That our lives brethren and sisters might become like Noah's was an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to our Heavenly Father.

So we read in Genesis Chapter 8 and Verse 21

“And Yahweh smelled a sweet savour; and Yahweh said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done”.

From this verse it is evident that our Heavenly Father was well pleased with this voluntary response from his servant Noah. The smell of the savour of his offering was sweet to Yahweh. But why was this the case? I don't think it really has anything to do with the possibility that our Heavenly Father is particularly enamoured with the smell of burning animal flesh.

In Isaiah Chapter 1 and at Verses 11 & 13

“To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith Yahweh: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting”.

In Isaiah the prophets day the people were still practising the offerings, but those offerings were not having any effect upon them. They had learnt nothing from them and as such it was in the Father's eyes simple idolatry on their part. Because in the performing of the offerings they thought they would appease our Heavenly Father and He would be in their debt for their worship. Yahweh calls upon them to “cease to do evil, learn to do well”.

In 1st Samuel Chapter 15 and at Verse 22 we read

“And Samuel said, Hath Yahweh as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams”.

Rather the issue behind our Heavenly Father's pleasure at the sweet savour of Noah's response to being delivered was his obedience. It was Noah's obedience, which made his sacrifice efficacious, rather than the giving of the sacrifice it's self.

To our Heavenly Father brethren and sisters the moral condition of the offerer is as equally important as the condition of the offering being made without blemish.

Yahweh's acceptance of the offering of Noah brought about a heart felt response, in which He sought to further bless mankind. So we read in the first verse of chapter nine that “God blessed Noah”. Indeed our Heavenly Father goes on to create a wide-ranging covenant with him.

From this incident we see that our Heavenly Father takes note of our acts of worship and service, He takes knowledge of our sacrifices for the truth. Let us learn the lesson here brethren and sisters that our Heavenly Father will bless our obedience, just as He here blessed Noah.

So as we turn our thoughts to the purpose of our being here brethren and sisters to remember the sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who is symbolised here by the offerer Noah and indeed by the sacrifice the burnt offering it's self and even also by the altar.

In Hebrews Chapter 10 and at Verses 5 - 10

“Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had

no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the, which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all”.

The burnt offering brethren and sisters was also an atonement offering for sin. This burnt offering that Noah gave acknowledged what had just happened in the judgement of the flood, as well as Noah and mankind’s ongoing need of a covering for sin.

As we come now to consider the Masters offering for us. We find a similar response from the Father unto Noah, for the scriptures declare that we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are being saved.

In the bread before us upon the table, we see the word made flesh that body prepared for sacrifice once for all. Then in the wine we see how Christ hath loved us, and hath given himself for us. As an offering and a sacrifice to our Heavenly Father for a sweet smelling savour.

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