

Prayer List

Sierra
Gene
Veda
Judy
The Williams' Family
Ophelia

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 9:50 a.m.
Assembly 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Pinole Tidings

www.pinolechurchofchrist.com

Vol. 14, No. 26 - April 7, 2013

Elders:

Brad Behrens - bradbehrens@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Michael Odom - MichaelOdom@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Ernie Sprinkel - preacher@pinolechurchofchrist.com

This Week's Question:

What Egyptian king fought against Judah and murdered King Josiah?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Ammon - 1 Kings 11:5

Published by the church of Christ which meets at 755 Pinole Valley Road, Pinole, CA 94564, Phone (510) 724-1994, (Mailing address: church of Christ, P.O. Box 453, Pinole, CA 94564)

Noah: A Man Favored by the Lord

by Earl Kimbrough

THE MOST remarkable thing about Noah is not his longevity. Methuselah exceeded his life span by nineteen years. Nor is it his place as father of the human race. Adam was ahead in that department. But the most remarkable thing about Noah is his righteous character in the midst of a corrupt society. "Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6:5). Evil was so pervasive that all human inclination was toward godless immorality. Was any righteous man ever so outnumbered as Noah? Nevertheless, while living in the world's cesspool of moral filth, "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8). Why was this man favored by his Creator?

1. Noah was favored for his character (Genesis 6:9). God distinguished him from "the men of renown" who contributed to universal wickedness. When the great of the earth are notorious sinners, wickedness is compounded. But God gave Noah a special badge of honor: "grace in the eyes of the Lord." Although displeased with mankind, God found one man on whom he could smile with favor. The reason is stated. (1) "Noah was a just man" in his relation to God. He was justified before Him because of his faithfulness, which was tested and proved by the flood. "By faith

Noah ... became an heir of the righteousness which is according to faith” (Hebrews 11:7). (2) “Noah was ... perfect in his generation,” being blameless in his relations to others. The fact that others were immoral did not move him to deal with them on immoral terms. (3) “Noah walked with God.” His righteousness and integrity are attested by his fellowship with God. God looks down with favor on those who look up to Him in faith. It is easy to be just and blameless when surrounded by those of like character, but it is not easy to stand up for truth and right when one is all alone.

2. Noah was favored for his concern for others. Peter describes him as “a preacher of righteousness” (2 Peter 2:5). He implies that Noah was commissioned by God to call his wicked neighbors to repentance. Noah’s preaching apparently occurred during the 120 years “while the ark was being prepared” (1 Peter 3:21; Genesis 6:3). This was the time “when the longsuffering of God waited [patiently]” on man (1 Peter 3:21). The goodness of God is seen in the fact that even after world corruption had reached its height and brought down the sentence of divine wrath, He still granted the wicked a respite from destruction. He is “longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). God bolstered His patience with the antediluvians by an appeal to them to turn from their evil ways.

Noah was chosen for his preaching ministry because he “walked with God.” None else is qualified for such noble service. One who does not walk with God is ill-equipped to instruct others to walk with Him. If Noah’s goal in life had been to be known as a “man of renown”, he would have been an unsuitable proclaimer of righteousness. But he was qualified by temperament of character to be a messenger of God and was motivated by his concern for others to accept the challenging task. Yet the people to whom he preached chose to reject or ignore his words. To the worldly wise, the simple plan of God for the salvation of man, whether it be by an ark or a cross, is foolishness (1 Corinthians 1:18). However, the ineffectiveness of Noah’s preaching neither

diminished his responsibility in the matter, nor marked him as a failure in “soul-winning” (see Ezekiel 3:9).

3. Noah was favored for his “godly fear” (Hebrews 11:7). “By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not seen, moved with godly [holy] fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house.” Fear of God was the controlling force of his life. Faith without this force is worthless. It is godly fear that impels a person of faith to obey the voice of God. Faith comes by hearing God’s word (Romans 10:17) and this shows that Noah built the ark according to instructions he received from Him (Genesis 6:14–21). Moses summarizes Noah’s obedience, saying, “Noah did everything just as God commanded him” (Genesis 6:22, NIV). But it was “godly fear” that put his faith into action.

“Godly fear” is not a failure of nerve, nor cringing terror, that acts under the influence of fright. It is rather reverence or respect for God. “The true idea is pious care, a reverent circumspection with regard to the things enjoined by God, and as yet unseen, yet confidently expected on the strength of God’s word” (Vincent). One who walks “in the fear of the Lord” lives a reverent life before Him (Acts 9:31). In this sense, the word “describes the feeling of the man who is living in the shadow of eternity, who is always conscious of God, who never forgets that he will give account for the things he does” (William Barclay). The godly fear that moved Noah in building the ark was evidently characteristic of his life. Building the ark saved him from the flood, but the reverential manner in which it was done brought him an eternal reward. He “became the heir [a partaker] of the righteousness which is according to faith.” He possessed a true justifying righteousness without which none can be saved eternally (Hebrews 11:7).

God underscored His favor of Noah when, in declaring His unchangeable condemnation of Jerusalem, he said, “Though these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would only deliver themselves by their righteousness” (Ezekiel 14:14). Such divine testimony is reserved for the greatest of God’s servants.