

A Departure: Part II

This is the third article in a series that begins with A Common Approach. This series addresses how the LORD God has dealt with His people, the Jews. This series addresses the departure of the Jews from the word of God into Judaism. It particularly focuses upon the LORD's dealing with them in the 20th century. This series is continued with the post A Departure, Pt. III.

In the previous posts it was outlined how the Jews had departed from the doctrine of Salvation by grace through faith in the Messiah to come. Moreover, this salvation required no works of righteousness, but was and is wholly dependent upon the work of the Messiah to come. It was also detailed how this information was available to everyone, all the way back to Adam and Eve after the fall. In tracing this back, I began with the testimony of Job, who was a contemporary of Abraham.

In the passage from Job, chapter 19, Job testified that he had a Redeemer, and that Redeemer was alive, and would one day walk the earth. Moreover, Job testified that he would indeed see his Redeemer with his own eyes one day, even though his body would be destroyed in the grave. If we understand the doctrine of the resurrection, we should certainly understand this is what Job is referring to, and that Job had a good understanding of most of the doctrines we know of today.

Additionally, Elihu testified to Job and his three friends of the salvation God offers to everyman, and that salvation is effectual upon repentance. Moreover, Elihu revealed that the troubles of an individual's life are frequently due to the LORD God trying to show man that pride does not profit, and in fact will cause one to go to the grave without the ransom being applied to their life, and thus that individual ends up

in Hell. In short, young Elihu preached the Gospel.

However, the book of Job is not the only place in the Old Testament where we find the Gospel preached. If we go back to Genesis we find several instances where the terminology used plainly indicates salvation by grace through faith in Christ (or the Messiah) to come. It really won't matter much where we begin, so I choose to begin with Noah and the testimony of the LORD God about Noah:

But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God. (*Genesis 6:8*)

The Scripture testifies in the verses leading up to this that all the earth had become utterly wicked "and that every imagination of the thoughts of his (man's) heart was only evil continually." (*Genesis 6:5b*) But Noah chose to believe God and thus grace was bestowed upon Noah. Of course, we would have to ask what Noah believed and what caused God to bestow grace upon him. However, that answer is quite simple so long as we do not take this passage in isolation and look at the totality of Scripture concerning those who are justified before God. Certainly then, we could understand that Noah would have known what the LORD told Adam and Eve in the Garden after the fall:

And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. (*Genesis 3:14-15*)

And Noah would certainly know of the proper offerings and what they meant, as the correct (acceptable) offerings were made by Abel:

And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of

the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. (*Genesis 4:3-5*)

We can then understand that Noah knew all this, as Noah himself offered up acceptable offerings after the flood:

And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. (*Genesis 8:20*)

If we then put together the above bits of information, we can see the LORD had specified a certain specific type of offering that required a blood sacrifice of a certain sort of animal that was counted as being "clean." This takes us to the Levitical sacrifices that were required of Israel:

When a ruler hath sinned, and done somewhat through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD his God concerning things which should not be done, and is guilty; Or if his sin, wherein he hath sinned, come to his knowledge; he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a male without blemish: And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the goat, and kill it in the place where they kill the burnt offering before the LORD: it is a sin offering. And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out his blood at the bottom of the altar of burnt offering. And he shall burn all his fat upon the altar, as the fat of the sacrifice of peace offerings: and the priest shall make an atonement for him as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him. (*Leviticus 4:22-26*)

If we care to observe, we find a commonality between Abel's offering, Noah's offering, and the Levitical sacrifice that

was commanded above. The common elements were that the beast was to be a "clean" beast, the fat was to be offered, and it was always to be a blood sacrifice. Thus, the concept that a certain type of worship was acceptable to the LORD God was known from the very beginning, and was not specific to Israel. However, by all accounts, that was not what justified Abel, Noah, Abraham, Job, or anyone else throughout the Old Testament. What we find in Genesis tells us that being justified before the LORD God was the very same thing it is today, in that the Scripture testifies of both Abraham and Jacob and how they were justified:

And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness. (*Genesis 15:2-6*)

If we note the last sentence in the above passage, we find that simply believing the LORD God was cause for God to justify Abram (Abraham) in His sight. Because Abram believed and trusted the LORD God, the LORD God did for Abraham what He also did for Abraham's grandson Jacob:

And Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly; for Manasseh was the firstborn. And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let

them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth. (*Genesis 48:14-16*)

In Israel's (Jacob) blessing of his grandsons, he testifies that God redeemed him from, not some evil, but all evil. In so doing, Israel bears the same testimony as Job, Noah, Elihu and Abraham. In each case, they testify of a redeemer, a ransom being paid for them, and that they were made right before God. Plainly, God counted Abraham righteous, Israel testifies that he was redeemed from all evil, Noah walked in grace before the LORD continually, Job knew that he would one day stand face to face with his Redeemer, and Elihu testifies that if one repents, then the LORD God delivers him from going to the pit, and gives that person the LORD God's own righteousness. Clearly, these all speak of justification before God without works, and salvation by some other means than blood sacrifices and worship services, no matter how detailed and carefully done.

Before continuing on, there is a point the LORD God wished for Israel and all the world to consider, which He delivered through the prophet Isaiah. We would do well to consider it today:

Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, ye that are escaped of the nations: they have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image, and pray unto a god that cannot save. Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. (*Isaiah 45:20-22*)