

Noah **Noah** **Redemption Always Included All The Earth's Families****Torah:** Gen. 6:9-11:32

(1) 8:20. **"Noah built an altar to the L-rd and took of all the pure beasts and all the pure birds and he offered burnt offerings upon the altar."** This was the first sacrifice which appeased the wrath of G-d towards all humanity (besides the one which procured the skins for Adam and Eve and Abel's sacrifice).

(2) 8:22. **"As long as the earth remains, sowing and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will not cease."** He never promised that wrath would not come in the future, but that there would be no more mister nice guy the next time – no more chances to get it right. The next intervention would be final.

(3) 10:32. **"These are the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, and according to their nations. And it is from them that the nations came who spread out upon the earth after the flood."** We are all descended from the three sons of Noah (who had no more children – after the incident with Canaan, did he no longer know his wife?) The races have continued to intermingle and there is no indication that Noah was Caucasian. We are all one race, despite our colours and other characteristics.

(4) 11:19. **"After the birth of Rehu, Peleg lived 209 years and begot sons and daughters."** Noah and Shem and other oldsters were still alive when Abraham was born. Our race spread quickly and our history does not extend into great antiquity because we breed quickly (except where war, famine and disease reduce our numbers). We are all more closely related than we realize.

Haftarah: Is. 54:1-55:5

(5). 54:7, 8. **"For a few moments I have abandoned you, but with great affection I will receive you. In an instant of wrath, I removed my face from you, but with an everlasting love I will have compassion on you"**. The flood was a redemptive retribution, as was the captivity, because G-d will always be interested in the generations of mankind and never a single person, generation or nation.

(6) 55:5. **"Behold you shall call nations that you do not know and nations which do not know you shall come running to you because of YHVH your G-d, the Holy One of Israel who glorifies you."**

Israel was chosen to be the vessel through which the re-unification of redeemed mankind would occur. G-d has a double call in Israel. We are to call all nations and the redeemed of all nations have the urge to come running.

Brit Chadashah: Matt. 24:36-46

(7) 24:37. **"For as it was in the days of Noah, so will it be at the coming of the Son of Man."** The last battle is upon us, because for the first time since Noah, the conditions of his days are happening to our race again. Our genes have wandered through many generations, nations, languages and families, but the story of this pilgrimage is the3 wandering of the righteous core seeking to return to the place of rest in the L-rd all mankind is called to and either runs towards or does its best to run away from (or eradicate those who speak of it). As a community of the redeemed righteous core, may we never forget where we came from and may we always both call our cousins back to our King and welcome those who are answering His genetic and personal call to all mankind and to each person among all the nations, languages, families and countries of the world.

Psalm 29**Jewish Hero: Noah (who found grace with the L-rd and allowed us to live)**

Ephesians 2:8-10. ***For it is by grace you are saved through faith. It does not come from you; it is the gift of G-d. It is not by works so that no one can boast. You are His workmanship, created for good works which G-d has prepared beforehand in order that you should practice them.***

Last week I spoke with you about the inner spiritual drives which G-d has placed within us and this week I want to talk about His grace and its relationship to good works – because one is the source and the other is the product and we should never get the two confused.

I have seven things to say to you this morning from this passage.

(1) We are saved by grace.

Grace was once explained to me as G-d's riches at Christ's expense and as undeserved favour. I began to understand it more deeply when I became a parent and even more deeply when I became a grandparent and I have witnessed it repeatedly in many good and deep friendships. Salvation can mean many things – from saved from trials and troubles to the final salvation by which we shall escape the final destruction of this creation as fully and as finally as the passengers on Noah's ark escaped from the great flood.

Both of these aspects apply to us, because His grace is both daily and eternal. It is also both personal and generational. He is still showing grace to the children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and he is still showing grace to the scattered children of Ham, Shem and Japheth.

How are you responding to His grace in your life (in your generation)? The question of what happens to those who do not directly contact His grace in their lives (and generations) should not prevent us from seeking His grace in our lives or from encouraging others to seek it as well.

The grace He will extend on the Day of Judgment is His business and will be meted out according to both His Word and to His grace. Our job is to respond to His grace in our lives – both His daily, generational grace and His eternal grace, which is found in a personal relationship with His Son, Our Messiah and saviour.

Are you saved by grace? This is the grace the passage is talking about, because once our eternal destiny is settled, then we can begin to bring spiritual sense and spiritual order to the rest of our lives on our personal pilgrimage from conception to the grace, to the Jew first and also to the gentile.

(2) It is through faith.

How do we access this priceless grace? We access it by faith. What kind of faith? It is not the tinker bell kind of faith where we think that we have the power to bring things into existence by faith, as if it were some kind of spiritual force we could aim at things and use to get things we want and to influence people and events by an act of our will power.

It is a kind of transactional faith whereby we both acknowledge the reality of the story of Salvation in the Scriptures and just as Noah's family entered the ark and just as the ram was given in the place of Isaac and just as the children of Israel put the blood on their doorposts to escape the angel of death, so we acknowledge that the price of our salvation was paid by our Messiah who died on the cross for the sins of Israel and for the sin of all the world.

The acknowledging is the first part of the transaction, the second part is reaching out, not to take the sacrifice, but to allow it to sprinkle us with the blood and so both own it and allow it to cover our sins and remove them forever. Once this transaction is complete, we also establish a daily link with it, so that we offer regular praise for what was done and all this same blood to continue to remove sin and restore us when we surrender our sin and when we are hurt, or suffer loss of any kind.

We also have the privilege of offering our joys and hopes to this grace by faith, because it is this phenomenon which follows us as we wander through the valleys of our lives on our way home to our Father's house in glory.

(3) It is not by our efforts.

We could never do enough to earn our salvation, just as Israel could never do enough to earn her deliverance from Egypt, or even her return from the exile. Grace is received, not earned and we need to learn this truth as we extend grace to people in our lives, not because of their efforts, but because of the love of the Father which flows through the Son, through us to them. We need to learn to love because we are loved and not require that people earn our love, only that they respond to it (as we responded to His love)

(4) It is the gift of G-d.

The gift of G-d is not cheap, nor is it imperfect or limited. It was the gift he prepared before the foundation of the world to extend to those who responded to His love and whose love of righteousness and truth draws them home to the source of the deep inner drives He has planted in each one of us. Gifts are received and have to be claimed and are not automatic because they involve a personal exchange that is based on an established relationship.

The whole point of grace is relationship, where the love of the Father is both received and reciprocated. How do you reciprocate His love? We reciprocate His love by loving Him. How do you love Him? We love Him by keeping His commandments, because they are not grievous; they outline the practical stipulations of love (1 John 5:3). We do not keep them to earn or to deserve His love, but we act them out as demonstrations of the love His extended towards us and use them as indicators of the kind of love we are to show each other.

(5) It is not by works.

None of the sacrifices and none of the commandments should ever be seen as requirements we must fulfill to earn salvation, as if salvation were a salary we had to earn and that became ours because we deserved it. Works should always be seen as a heartfelt response of love and not as some kind of spiritual bribe or even a spiritual wage we try to earn enough of to pay for our salvation.

Works must always be seen as acts of gratitude for the undeserved grace of our King – which our people were first called to when they gathered around the mountain to celebrate their deliverance from bondage and to learn how this freedom was to be put into practice and maintained. G-d may respond with favour towards us as we walk in His ways and as we make choices based on His Word, but these also should be seen as acts of love, where we demonstrate that our response to His love will always be love demonstrated by our obedience to His Word and by our faith in His promises.

(6) We are His workmanship.

If you think about it, we are all masterpieces, created first in His image and activated by His grace, so that we can be true to our deepest inner spiritual drives and defeat all of those influences which would keep us from fulfilling the stipulations of our true inner spiritual image, the one He stamped all of our soul/spirits with. The world, the flesh and the enemy are influences and only become drives when we give into them and allow them to become bad habits and bad tendencies. When we understand that one of the most marvellous aspects of His image in us is the freedom to choose, we learn to respond to this aspect of grace by choosing to walk according to His Word.

We thus are responding to two spiritual wonders – first His image in us and also the grace He showed to us by both preparing and accomplishing eternal salvation through our blessed Messiah – and that in spite of all the resistance, foolishness and darkness we have encountered generationally since our first ancestors were excluded from the garden, and our next ancestors encountered as they fled into the safety of the ark and as our scattered ancestors encountered when G-d prevented them from going all rotten in the first few generations from the flood.

All of us and each of us are His workmanship. Some of us respond to that workmanship and come to Him to escape from the horror and darkness of the world, the flesh and the enemy and are activated by this grace and spend the rest of our lives fulfilling the situational potential of this eternal grace at every stage of our personal pilgrimage.

Do you realize you are His workmanship? Have you been activated by His grace and are you living through loving obedience as you respond to Him and to life through Him, or do you need some more major work?

(7) We are created for good works.

We are created for good works, not by good works. A great athlete is training for greatness and does not obtain his or her talent through training – you train a talent, you cannot train for talent. We were all born to be spiritual athletes, with all the talent we need to learn to walk with Him. Are you realizing your spiritual talent or are you suppressing it? How is your training going? Are you letting your divine coach show you how to be a champion – not because you deserve it or because you can earn it, but because of what He planted inside you and what He activates in you daily because of His great love?

Good works are not performed as a contest where we compete against each other to earn G-d's approval. They are personal and community responses to His love, both because of the way He created us (our deep inner spiritual genetics) and because of the saving deeds He has performed for us, all leading up to His supreme saving deed when He sent our beloved Messiah to open the way home for us forever.

One day our wanderings will be over and we will sit at His feet in glory, not because we paid for our seat or earned our passage, but because we responded to His grace and received our passage and spend the rest of our lives getting ready for that final day and that final joy.

How about you?

Let's pray.