

The Wednesday Word, June 4, 2014: Noah, the Big Boat and the Blood!

Just about everyone knows the story of Noah and the Big Boat! There's an endearing little children's song about it that goes; "The animals went in two by two, hurrah, hurrah! The elephant and the kangaroo, hurrah, hurrah! They all went in just to get in out of the rain." But of course, the song, cute as it is, is nonsense. They didn't go in two by two, only the unclean animals went in two by two ---- the clean animals went in by 7s.

Why 7s? Simply this; when Noah got off the boat and placed his feet on dry land he planned to build an altar and offer blood sacrifices. And that's exactly what he did! I like this man Noah; He built his altar before he built his home.

So let's consider Noah's blood sacrifice! He took animal number 7 out of the various ranks of the clean animals and sacrificed them. But why animal number 7? Because, number 7 is the number of spiritual perfection, and spiritual perfection points towards Christ.

For example, there were 7 days in the beginning of creation. The seventh day of rest declared that God's creation works were finished and perfect.

There were 7 covenants mentioned in Scripture, the final one, the New Covenant, being the perfect one.

Joshua marched around Jericho 7 times.

7 priests with 7 trumpets also marched around Jericho and on the 7th day they marched around 7 times.

Naaman washed 7 times in the Jordan.

Elijah prayed 7 times.

Every 7th day was a Sabbath.

Every 7th year was a Sabbath year.

Every 7 times 7 years was a year of Jubilee.

Three of the feasts of Israel lasted 7 days.

Between the first and second feasts there were 7 days.

The term "First and the Last" is used 7 times.

There are 7 seals in the Book of Revelation.

There were 7 churches,

7 candlesticks,

7 stars,

7 spirits before the throne of God.

The Lamb had 7 eyes.

Before His crucifixion, Christ passed through 7 trials.

Christ gives seven petitions to His people in the Disciple's Prayer

There were 7 accusations against Christ.

There were 7 testimonies to the innocence of Christ.

There were 7 questions from Pilate to Christ.

There were 7 sayings from the cross.

Here, at Noah's blood sacrifice, it was the seventh animal that was sacrificed. This points to the perfection of Christ's offering. We further see that after Noah's blood sacrifice, the Lord promised blessing to mankind (Genesis 8:20-22). The nations of the world are, likewise, blessed because of Christ and the cross (Genesis 22:18; Galatians 3:14; 3:18). In Genesis 8:21, we also read that Noah's sacrifice was 'a sweet savour' unto the Lord. It is no wonder then that we read in the New Testament that; "Christ hath loved us, and given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour;" (Ephesians 5:2).

On a very practical note, Noah's sacrifice shows that Noah knew he still must approach God through shed blood. Noah didn't get off the boat prideful that he and his family had been the ones chosen by God to be saved. Nor did he now presume on some new privileged relationship with God: Noah still knew himself to be a sinner, and thus he offered a blood sacrifice because it was the only appointed way he could approach the all- holy God.

In the same way, God has chosen us, not because we were better than our neighbours, but because of grace and grace alone. Even so, we will do well to remember that as we approach Him, we should do so exclusively through the blood of Christ. He alone is our perfect approach and acceptance before God.

And that's the Gospel Truth!