

Be Righteous in a Wrong Wicked World

Ezekiel 14:12-23

Introduction: The world is a wicked wrong place. We live in a world suffering from the curse of sin, where men and women glory in the shame of their sin. Our culture is no longer embarrassed by sin; it boasts of it! This is not a new thing. The world of Ezekiel, Noah, Daniel, and Job was much like our own. Indeed this world is as it will be when our Savior returns.

Are you embarrassed to live righteously in a world that hates goodness? Do you fear to speak the name of Him who is our righteousness? Are you ashamed of the gospel, of God, of goodness in this dark world?

Tonight's text speaks of three righteous men who were lights in their dark generations. They suffered. They lost. They shone. Their lives were characterized by righteousness when everyone around them rejected the righteousness of God. They obeyed in days of disobedience. They trusted God when others mocked. From all of history, as God called to mind those who served Him righteously, these three men shone forth and are repeatedly held up by All-knowing Omniscient God as "righteous."

Ezekiel Contrasts the Wrong of the World with the Righteous Ones

By God's grace we are going to spend three weeks encouraging ourselves to "be righteous in a wrong wicked world." We will look to the examples of Noah, Daniel, and Job to see how to live righteously and rightly when the crowd is going with the flow. We will learn to stand for God even when we stand alone. Tonight's study is of Noah.

God watches. He sees the wicked. He sees the righteous. God judges the wicked. In Ezekiel 14, God speaks of judgments through famine (13), wild ferocious beasts (15), the sword of war (17), the desolation of disease (19)-- 21 sums up these judgments. Survivors of this judgment would demonstrate the righteousness of God's judgment by their continued wickedness (14:22-23).

Wickedness universally spreads over the land in a flood of poisonous vile destruction to body and soul. The land deserves its judgment, for it has turned in rebellion against its God and its King. Jerusalem, the city of peace, has been at war against the God of Peace. It must learn that God will chasten His children and righteously keep His covenant with His people to chasten them when they are disobedient.

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1. Noah's Righteous Example Condemned His Corrupt Generation

1.1 Noah's Corrupt Generation: God came to regret making people who so corrupted His image in themselves (Gen 6:5-7). This was a place that was corrupt and violent (6:11). The corruption was universal— everyone was this way (6:12). To you and I, it would have seemed normal. Jesus comments that this generation enjoyed eating, falling in love, getting engaged, and getting married (Matthew 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27). These were people without discernment, concerned for the moment with no thought for eternity (Matthew 24:39). Eating and a certain kind of love will also characterize the end times when Jesus Christ returns. There is always a temptation to this only of the *now* and not the *eternal*.

1.2 Noah's Righteousness Came by Faith (Hebrews 11:6-7). God gave Noah news such as never had been heard before. Prior to Noah, God dealt with Adam, Eve, Cain— individuals. Now corporate judgment— judgment on the entire earth would Fall. This was staggering, unprecedented! When God spoke, however, Noah listened! He believed God would do as He said! He “reverenced” (NASB) God. He feared God Almighty and believed that God would do exactly what He said He would do. Because Noah had faith in God, He obeyed God's command to build an ark. This saved Noah's entire household, not only himself. Hebrews 11:7 calls Noah “an heir of righteousness which is by faith.”

God extended grace to Noah who believed in Him (Genesis 6:8). God remembered Noah, His servant, who trusted Him and built the ark and got on board with the animals (Gen 8:1). God was patient as Noah built, holding off the flood, giving people a chance to repent (1 Peter 3:13-22). God's righteousness brought justice to wicked angels, Sodom and Gomorrah, and Noah's ungodly generation (2 Peter 2:4-8).

1.3 Noah's Righteousness Seen in Obedience (Genesis 6-9). God spoke. Noah listened. Noah believed. God commanded. Noah obeyed (Gen 6:22; 7:5; 7:9; 7:16; 8:15-19). From building the ark, to loading the ark, to staying on the ark, to leaving the ark— Noah obeyed every command of God.

1.4 Noah's Righteousness Brought Suffering and Judgment (1 Peter 3:13-22). Christ would suffer as the righteous for the unrighteous (3:18).

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Like Noah, Jesus suffered reproach for His message and righteousness (3:19-20). Noah's deliverance through the ark became a picture of how the saved who trust Jesus are saved to obey. The Holy Spirit baptizes us into Christ (21) and we obey Christ in by identifying with the Triune God in believers' baptism (Matthew 28:18-19).

1.5 Noah's Righteousness Shown by Worship (Genesis 8:20-22).

Noah listened, trusted, obeyed, and worshiped. As He left the ark, He offered a sacrifice of praise to the Lord which the Lord rejoiced in.

2. Noah's Righteousness Rewarded by Covenant (Genesis 6:18; 9:1-16)

God saved, blessed, and rewarded (Heb 11:6) by blessing Noah (9:1-3). Blessing Noah extended to giving a covenant to all of Creation to never again destroy all the world with a Flood (9:9-16).

Every rainbow reminds Almighty God of His own mercies, His own lovingkindness, His own Word. Just as God blessed Noah and keeps His Word to Noah, He will keep His Word with all who are His own.

Chastisement of His children brings them back to Himself, brings restoration, revival, and renewed blessing (Isaiah 54:1-10).

3. Noah's blessing does not stop with His survival and the Noahic Covenant. **Noah also was a forerunner of the Lord Jesus Christ, included in His genealogy in Luke 3:26.** As the sinner Rahab received grace and became an ancestor of Christ, the drunkard Noah received grace to be included in Jesus' genealogy.

Conclusion: Noah's name rings through time and eternity as a righteous servant of God who trusted and obeyed God. May we trust our God for salvation and sanctification as Noah did to the salvation of our families and the proclamation of God's salvation to the lost world around us! Let us obey our God and worship Him in spirit and in truth!

We can rest assured, God is watching us! God rewards His righteous children; He will not forget your labor of love for His name's sake!

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Prayer Requests

Seoul Bible Church

- Missionaries & Evangelism
- Sunday Services. All those who serve, minister, and participate.
- Outreach. Pray for the gospel to go out powerfully and fruitfully.
- Fellowship Meal. Pray for the edification of God's people.
- Budget: Pray for wisdom and provision for the 2025 budget
- Growth of the church numerically and spiritually

Seoul Christian School

- Health needs
- Some families have financial needs
- Raising the Roof

BJS Seminary

- Teachers
- The new semester. Students to serve the Lord well.
- Alumni

Personal

- Health needs: shut ins, parents, sicknesses
- Financial needs for businesses; work needs for employment
- Spiritual needs: salvation of loved ones; spiritual growth
- Family relationships: husbands, wives, children, grandchildren, other relatives.