

For the Righteous Sake

- I. One of the great themes of Scripture is God's willingness to spare men for the sake of someone else's righteousness. **2CO 5:21 c/w ROM 5:19.**
 - A. There are numerous examples of where even the imperfect righteousness of one (or a few) was remembered by God and others were accordingly delivered.
 - B. There are other cases where one's righteousness would spare only himself.
- II. Sodom, Gomorrah and their neighboring cities became so wicked that God eventually destroyed them. **GEN 13:13; 18:20-21 c/w JUDE 1:7.**
 - A. Faithful Abraham appealed to God to spare Sodom for the sake of fifty righteous, based upon God's own merciful character (**GEN 18:23-25**), and God agreed. **GEN 18:26.**
 - B. Abraham got the number down to ten (**GEN 18:27-32**) but Sodom was still destroyed.
 - C. The best that could be found in Sodom was Lot, who was a righteous, just man with a vexed soul and warped priorities. **2PE 2:6-8 c/w 1CO 15:33.**
 1. When the men of Sodom sought to sodomize the angels that came to Lot, he offered his daughters as substitutes. **GEN 19:4-9.**
 2. Perhaps Lot didn't want to be charged with *intolerance* or a *hate crime*, similar to cultural pressure which today motivates otherwise rational parents to surrender their children to a pro-sodomite culture.
 3. Is it surprising that Lot's daughters were mixed-up? **GEN 19:30-36.**
 4. Lot's righteousness did not save Sodom and it scarcely saved himself, his wife and daughters. c/w **1PE 4:18.**
 5. "Remember Lot's wife" (**LUK 17:32**) who squandered her own deliverance (**GEN 19:26**). How foolish is the person whose lusts are more important than than his/her deliverance from destruction or the lusts which invite it.
 - D. Sodom's fate should be considered in light of what Jesus said about cities which reject Him in the face of incontrovertible evidence. **MAT 10:14-15; 11:23-24.**
 1. Christ would have done for Sodom what angels could not do: make them repent unto their own salvation. Angels justly desire to look into the gospel. **1PE 1:12.**
 2. Christ's gospel can do likewise for sodomites (**1CO 6:9-11**). What Catholicism needs is less fascination with angels and more emphasis on the gospel.
- III. Judah had become so corrupt that God determined their destruction by the Babylonians. **2CH 36:16-20 c/w JER 5:1.**
 - A. They had outrun their space of repentance. c/w **REV 2:21.**
 - B. Their beautiful city and land would be laid waste. **2CH 36:21; LAM 2:15.**
 - C. Ezekiel prophesied that even if Noah, Daniel and Job were around, they would only deliver themselves by their righteousness. **EZE 14:12-14.**
 1. That the Jews might know that God's favorites are not unique to the Jewish nation, Noah and Job (rather than Moses or Samuel) were likely selected.
 2. Noah was a preacher of righteousness for whose sake the world was not spared from a flood. **2PE 2:5.**
 - a. But seven of his family were spared. **HEB 11:7; 1PE 3:20.**
 - b. However, he would deliver none but himself in Ezekiel's day.
 3. Daniel's righteousness was the deliverance of the Chaldean magicians, astrologers and sorcerers and also his own Hebrew brethren. **DAN 2:1-49.**
 - a. But he would now only deliver himself *if still in the land* (and he wasn't).
 - b. God spared superstitious Chaldeans by Daniel to the disregard of Jews.
 4. Job's righteousness was the blessing of the land in which he lived and the

deliverance of his friends who had not spoken rightly of God (**JOB 42:7-10**) but perfect Job would deliver no more than himself now. c/w **EZE 14:16**.

- IV. A similar situation to Ezekiel's day occurred at Christ's first coming when Judah's sin would bring God's wrath upon them at the hands of Rome.
- A. The word of God to the Jews was one of repentance, faith and to "...Save yourselves..." (**ACT 2:38-41**) c/w **ACT 3:23**.
 - B. The presence of the godly in Judah would not prevent its judgment. Instead, God provided for the deliverance of only the godly. **LUK 21:20-21**.
 - C. **2PE 3:9** did NOT say that God was *not willing that any should perish and would therefore spare the nation for the sake of the Christians*.
 - D. *Wrath to the uttermost* (**1TH 2:16**) came from Him Who can *save to the uttermost*. **HEB 7:25**.
 - E. NOTE: It is foolish to assume that personal repentance and personal righteousness are unnecessary because of association with someone of godly character.
 - 1. This speaks against ancestral salvation, hero salvation, national salvation or any other form of associative salvation which assumes insulation from the judgment of God against sin in the absence of personal repentance.
 - 2. This speaks against the notion that attendance to, or even membership in a good church, or having a faithful pastor, is a substitute for personal obedience.
 - 3. All are responsible to *prove their own work* and *bear their own burden* (**GAL 6:4-5**) and *work out their own salvation*. **PHIL 2:12**.
- V. There are still *temporal* salvations that work along the same lines as Noah, Daniel and Job.
- A. Believers are a savory preserving force while they retain their saltiness. **MAT 5:13-16**.
 - B. Believing spouses are saving elements to their families (**1CO 7:14**) and woe unto the unbelieving spouse who despises or undermines the faith of the believing spouse.
 - C. Faithful saints in a disorderly church may be the reason that the church's candlestick remains. **REV 2:18-25; 3:1-5**.
 - 1. A disorderly church only fools itself to think that God will never judge the many for the sake of the righteous few.
 - 2. God's word to the believer whose calls for reform are not heeded is to withdraw from that church. **2TH 3:6**.
 - 3. God may take away that church's ministry (**EZE 33:30-33**). Deliverance is only promised to the faithful man of God and *them that HEAR him*. **1TI 4:16**.
- VI. Noah, Daniel and Job by their righteousness saved themselves and those around them *temporally* and only in a specific season. Their salvations of others were not universal models to be relied upon by sinners as a substitute for personal holiness.
- A. What those three *imperfect* saints once were to their fellows in a *temporal* sense, Christ is to His elect *perfectly* in an *eternal* sense.
 - B. Christ could not save Himself so that He would save us by His righteousness. **MAT 27:42** c/w **GAL 3:13; 2CO 5:21**.
 - C. Christ has "...delivered us from the wrath to come" (**1TH 1:10**), *eternal* wrath that makes all others pale in comparison. **MAT 25:41**.
 - D. None shall escape THAT wrath by their own righteousness (**TIT 3:5**) nor by riding on the coattails of another sinner's righteousnesses or even his grace. **ISA 64:6; MAT 25:1-13**.
 - E. Noah, Daniel and Job could not eternally save themselves, let alone eternally save others. That power and honor is uniquely Christ's.