

OPEN

Covenant: God Pursues

Questions

1. Why was Noah considered righteous? Why would it say that Noah was righteous unless it was significant in some way to the favor he received from the Lord?

Noah is called righteous because he FOUND FAVOR with God. That is the only way that ANY of us can be made righteous. Abraham is called the father of those who believe. He received righteousness – NOT by works or by the act of circumcision – but by faith.

Genesis 15:6 ⁶And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

Galatians 3:6 just as Abraham “believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”

Roman 4:11-12 ¹¹He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, ¹²and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised.

2. Who is Brian McLaren?

He is one of the leading influences in the “Emergent” movement.

3. How does God’s choosing and blessing of Abraham and Noah reconcile with New Testament verses which say there is no partiality with God?

Partiality in the context of the New Testament has do to with giving special attention to someone on the basis of social, economic, political, or cultural status.

James 2:1-4 My Brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. ²For if a man wearing a gold ring and

fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, ³and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," ⁴have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

With God – there is no such partiality. He is willing to save ANYONE who would come to Him through Christ. Jesus died for sinners – whether they are losers or winners in the eyes of man.

God's choice of Abraham and Moses had nothing to do with any human measurement of status. God sovereignly chose these men – that is – He made the decision in and of Himself without any influence outside of Himself.

4. How does Brian McLaren rationalize having a problem with God's so called favoritism if it is so clearly illustrated in Scripture?

He is the classic example of 2 Peter 3:15-16

¹⁵And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, ¹⁶as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

5. What does 'covenant' mean?

A Covenant is a life and death relationship with God on His terms. In the covenants of Scripture, God sets out the terms of that relationship.

6. Can you address dispensationalism a little more? (Gal 3:28-29)

Dispensationalism is a system of interpretation that seeks to establish a unity in the Scriptures through its central focus on the grace of God. Although dispensationalists recognize differing stewardships or dispensations whereby man was put under a trust by the Lord, they teach that response to God's revelation in each dispensation is by faith (salvation is *always* by grace through faith).

Dispensationalists arrive at their system of interpretation through two primary principles: (1) maintaining a consistently literal method of interpretation, and (2) maintaining a distinction between Israel and the church.

The Moody Handbook of Theology

7. How much of an old covenant is valid when God initiates a new covenant?

Each of the covenants build upon each other. The next covenant does not do away with the previous. For example — the Mosaic covenant does not cancel the promise of God in the Noahic covenant (to never again destroy the earth by a flood.) Neither does the New Covenant, established in the blood of Jesus, do away with the Davidic Covenant and the promise of a king to sit on the throne of David and rule the world in righteousness.

The conditions of the Mosaic covenant (the Mosaic Law) are binding upon the nation of Israel.

EXAMPLE: Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread

Ex. 12:14-17 “This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord; throughout **your generations**, as a **statute forever**, you shall keep it as a feast. ¹⁵Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven out of your houses, for if anyone eats what is leavened, from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. ¹⁶On the first day you shall hold a holy assembly, and on the seventh day a holy assembly. No work shall be done on those days. But what everyone needs to eat, that alone may be prepared by you. ¹⁷And you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day, throughout **your generations**, as a statute forever.

Example: The Sabbath

Ex. 31:16 Therefore **the people of Israel** shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath **throughout their generations**, as a **covenant forever**. ¹⁷It is a sign forever between me and the people of Israel that in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.”

NOTICE — These are binding upon ISRAEL and not the gentile world.

It is interesting to note that Ezekiel references sacrifices being offered in the Temple during the Millennium. Under the Old Covenant, the sacrifices prescribed by God through Moses POINTED FORWARD to the FIRST COMING of Jesus and how He would be “*the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the World*” by the sacrifice of the Cross.

However, in the Millennium (1,000 year reign of Jesus upon the earth Rev. 20:6) these sacrifices are not offered looking FORWARD to the coming of

Jesus as the lamb of God; rather they POINT BACK to the suffering of Jesus in His FIRST COMING, in order to identify the One who is seated on the throne of David, ruling in righteousness for 1,000 years, as the One who died for the sins of the world, who must even then be trusted for salvation.