

創造記 回聲

The Genesis Echo is an ongoing investigation of pre-Babel history as recorded in both the Bible and the characters of the Chinese language.

Noah

We first read about Noah in Genesis 5, found at the end of a genealogical list beginning with Adam and going through his son Seth. Noah is our English translation from the Hebrew word No'akh. In the Chinese, this man is called Nuòyà (諾亞). The phonetic similarity between the Hebrew and the Chinese is not the result of translation, as is the case with English, French, German, or other languages. Noah's name was in use among the Chinese people prior to Moses recording it in the Hebrew Scriptures. The ancient Chinese people did not read about Nuòyà in the Bible, they learned about this man hundreds of years before it was written.

Nuòyà

諾亞

NOAH

As we look at the etymology of Noah's name, we find that he is the SECOND (yà, 亞) APPROVED (nuò, 諾). There are only two men of whom it has been said in the Scriptures, he "walked with God." The first man to receive such approval from the Lord was Noah's great-grandfather Enoch, of whom it was said,

Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him. (Genesis 5:24, NKJV)

One chapter later, we find that

Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations. Noah walked with God. (Genesis 6:8-9, NKJV)

The word nuò (諾) not only means APPROVED, but can also mean PROMISE. As true as it is that Noah was the SECOND APPROVED, we find the Genesis record also affirming that he was the second promise. The first promise found in the Scriptures is in Genesis 3:15, where we are told that the seed of the woman would conquer the seed of the serpent. The next promise, the second promise, is in the giving of Noah's name. We read,

Lamech lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and had a son. And he called his name Noah, saying, 'This one will comfort us concerning our work and the toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD has cursed.' (Genesis 5:28-29, NKJV)

nuò

諾

PROMISE

However, the significance of Noah's name in the Chinese language can be further seen as we consider the etymology of the word nuò (諾). There are several words in the Chinese language which could be used to speak of a promise. It is wonderful to note the word chosen by the ancient Chinese people to picture Noah as the SECOND PROMISE.

In nuò (諾), we see the following: WORDS (yán, 言) about the MAN (kǒu, 口) through whom the WEEDS (cǎo, 艸) curse would be removed, and LIFE (p'ieh, 丿) would be restored to the EARTH (yī, 一). This is the very thing that Lamech has said about his son when he named him (see Genesis 5:28-29 above). This promise would be fulfilled in Noah, for after the flood had taken place, and he and his family had existed the ark, we read the following:

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...Noah built an altar to the LORD ...and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the LORD smelled a soothing aroma. Then the LORD said in His heart, 'I will never again curse the ground for man's sake, although the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; nor will I again destroy every living thing as I have done. (Genesis 8:20-21, NKJV)

In this verse, not only does the LORD say that He will not again destroy all flesh with a flood again, but He also indicates that He will no longer curse the ground for man's sake. That is not a statement about the flood, but about the weed curse which resulted from Adam's sin in the garden (see Genesis 3:17-19). It was in the days of Noah, when he came forth from the ark that the weed curse was no more.

Next time, we will consider the distinction between Noah and the generation in which he lived, and see how he followed in the way of Abel, while the rest of the world followed the way of Cain.

Other Resources

Nelson, Ethel R., and C.H. Kang. *The Discovery of Genesis: How the Truths of Genesis Were Found Hidden in the Chinese Language*. St. Louis, MO : Concordia Publishing House, 1979.

Nelson, Ethel R., Richard E. Broadberry, and Ginger Tong Chock. *God's Promise to the Chinese*. Dunlap, TN : Read Books Publishers, 1997.

MDBG Chinese-English Dictionary. usa.mdbg.net/chindict/chindict.php