

A Dictionary
of Biblical Tradition
— in —
English Literature

David Lyle Jeffrey

GENERAL EDITOR

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about the propensity or fleshy appetites to undermine spiritual health that he gathers a host of classical authors to support an argument (despite "the liberty of the Gospel") for vegetarianism as a preventative against carnal arousal (2.14). Similar sentiments abound in the writings of St. Augustine, for whom, as he writes in his *Confessiones*, weakness of the flesh in sexual matters especially had been a major impediment to spiritual development. For the author of the 12th-cent. *De Fructibus Carnis et Spiritus* (ascribed to Hugh of St. Victor [PL 176.997-98]), the fruits of the flesh, from the "forbidden" fruit tasted in Eden on, are by nature corruptible, while the fruits of the spirit, love, joy, peace, etc., are not. In later theological writers and in Reformation theologians (e.g., Calvin, *Comm. sup. Matt.* 26.41), the weakness ascribed to the flesh is broadened to include general human limitations and frailty.

Both biblical and patristic notions of the frailty of the flesh became proverbial in medieval literature; one has only to reflect on Chaucer's Wife of Bath, for whom both the biblical text and Jerome's *Adversus Jovinianum* are authorities to be challenged, and whose motto is "Freletee clepe I." Much the same philosophy is claimed by another vivid personification of the weakness of the flesh, Shakespeare's Falstaff in *1 Henry 4*. When Prince Hal chides him for his behavior with Mistress Quickly, Falstaff rejoins: "Dost thou hear, Hal? Thou knowest in the state of innocency Adam fell, and what should poor Jack Falstaff do in the days of villainy? Thou see'st I have more flesh than another man, and therefore more frailty" (3.3.172-76; cf. *Richard 2*, 1.3.195). Byron's *Don Juan*, which offers a considerable catalogue of the temptations to which flesh is vulnerable, includes the observation that in warm Mediterranean climes,

howsoever people fast and pray,
The flesh is frail, and so the soul undone;
What men call gallantry, the gods adultery,
Is much more common where the climate's sultry.
(1.501-04)

Later in the same poem he inverts the relation in parody (5.878-80). Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* is a kind of fictive treatise on the frailty of the flesh. In *The Mayor of Casterbridge* Hardy applies the phrase to an incident of deception, as a rationale (chap. 13). In one of his *Letters* D. H. Lawrence uses the text to mask his lack of resolve to visit a sometime friend (385). Aldous Huxley offers a modernist rewriting of the biblical text which nevertheless constitutes a plausible psychological insight into the original remark of Jesus: "It wasn't a case, he reflected ruefully, of the spirit being willing and the flesh weak. That was altogether the wrong antithesis. The spirit is always willing; but the person, who is a mind as well as

FLESH POTS OF EGYPT The phrase "flesh pots of Egypt" is based on Exod. 16:3, where the Israelites, hungry in the wilderness, expressed a longing to be back in Egypt with its "flesh pots," or pots of meat. Meat was not a poor man's dish, and this wish amounted to a desire for luxuries. The term "flesh pots" (which dates from Coverdale's 1535 translation of the Bible) came to symbolize high living and self-indulgence. St. Jerome observes of such appetites that they lead to spiritual dullness: "In short, the people ate and their hearts grew thick, lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart" (*Adv. Jov.* 2.15). Subsequent interpretation focused also on the tendency for affluent living to produce obtuseness to the Spirit and neglect of spiritual food (i.e., the Eucharist). A visual representation of the theme is found in Peter Breughel's "Kermis Flamande" ("Flemish Fair"), in which a whole village is preoccupied with flesh pots and related indulgences while only one woman with a small child enters the church for Mass.

The fierce anti-Puritan Thomas Nashe felt the essence of a decline in fortunes was to fare "from the flesh-pots of Egypt, to the Prouant of the Lowe countreyes" (*Pierce Penniless, His Supplication to the Divell* [Works, 2.74]). Swift, in a letter to Sterne (17), talks about expecting "to hear . . . two ladies lamenting the flesh-pots of Cavan Street." Benjamin Franklin in his *Autobiography* observes of his friend Keimer's agonized perseverance with their experiment in vegetarianism that he "long'd for the flesh-pots of Egypt, and ordered a roast pig." Emerson, in *Nature*, opines that "some theosophists have arrived at a certain hostility . . . towards matter, as the Manichean and Plotinus. They distrusted in themselves any looking back to these flesh-pots of Egypt. Plotinus was ashamed of his body." Thackeray's characters in *The Newcomes* have no such qualms; as the narrator says of an unusually abstemious denizen, "Nor was he a supping man (in which case he would have found the parties pleasanter, for in Egypt itself there were not more savory flesh-pots than at Clapham" (chap. 2). In a variety of 19th- and 20th-cent. English texts other place names or locations (e.g., a Pacific island [*Spectator*, 12 May 1939]) have been substituted for "Egypt" in the phrase. George Meredith coined the nonce word "flesh-pottery" (*Beauchamp's Career*, chap. 29).

See also LEEKS, ONIONS, AND GARLIC.

DAVID F. PAYNE

FLOOD Gen. 6-9 describes the flood by which God punished sinful humanity, sparing only Noah and his family, along with representatives of all the animals, in an ark constructed according to divine directions. The waters

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came from forty days of rain (Gen. 7:4, 12) heightened by primeval waters erupting from the "fountains of the great deep" and pouring through "the windows of heaven" (7:11).

The Genesis story resembles the flood narrative in the Gilgamesh epic and shares some characteristics with many other flood stories from all over the world. The Greek parallel, in which Jove punishes the evil world, sparing upright Deucalion and his wife, is found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and given English form in the late 17th cent. by Dryden in his translation (*The First Book of Ovid's Metamorphoses*, 193-606).

The basic structure of the Genesis version is simple: God decides to destroy his creation but to save some of his creatures; after the catastrophe he establishes a covenant with Noah, promises never again to send a Flood, and thus makes life on earth possible again. In Isa. 54:9 the Lord repeats his promise never to send another Flood (Gen. 9:9-11). In the NT the Flood and the ark are taken as examples of divine judgment and salvation (Matt. 24:37-39; 1 Pet. 3:20-21; 2 Pet. 2:5), and Noah as an example of faith in God (Heb. 11:7).

Rabbinic commentary focuses on reasons for God's wish to destroy his creation as well as details concerning the construction of the ark and the nature of life aboard ship during the Flood. Philo allegorizes the narrative, seeing the ark as the body and Noah as the righteous mind. The story as a whole is taken by him to signify the cleansing of the soul.

Early Christian commentary emphasizes the universality of the Deluge and defends the credibility of the story. Typological interpretation, which begins in the NT comparison of the Flood to "the waters of baptism" (1 Pet. 3:21) or the end of the world (2 Pet. 3:6), becomes prominent in medieval treatment of the story.

Lewis distinguishes four major typological approaches. First, in the spiritual approach, St. Augustine and others follow Philo, comparing the ark to the body, using it to signify matters of the soul. Second is the christological approach, typified by St. Justin's belief that "the water and the wood which saved Noah, along with his faith, prefigure baptism, the cross, and the faith of the Christians" (Lewis, 114). For others the ark represents the sepulcher of Christ, its door the Savior's wounds (cf. Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 15.26). Third, in the apocalyptic approach, the general wickedness of people before the Deluge prefigures the beast of Revelation while the Flood itself anticipates the fire of judgment (cf. Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 20.18, 24). Fourth, in ecclesiastical interpretation, the ark is taken to be the Church. Every detail of the narrative is then read allegorically (e.g., Hugh of St. Victor, *De Arca Noe Morali*: the ark's height expresses the hierarchy, its squared beams the learned members of

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and without significant elaboration: in the OE *Genesis* (1270-2542) God repents for having created sinners, communicates with Noah in biblical fashion, and sends waters from above and below, maintaining the "drenceflod" until waters flow fifteen ells above the mountains; the ark eventually settles on a mountain in Armenia. But typological readings are also influential in literary transmission of the story. The flood mentioned in the OE *Andreas* is linked in traditional ways to baptism — the death of the old and the birth of a new creation. *Judgment Day I*, and *Christ II* and *III* recall the connection between the destructive waters of the Flood and the fire of the apocalypse.

In the ME *Cursor Mundi* the biblical account is embellished by realistic detail and the satiric observation that for the victims of the Flood social rank is irrelevant (cf. *Piers Plowman* B.10.405-13). *Cleanness* gives a more affecting description of the victims. The medieval Noah plays make the events meaningful in contemporary terms by showing Noah as a craftsman who might belong to one of the local guilds, and as a husband who has difficulty establishing authority in his own household. Comedy pervades Chaucer's *Miller's Tale*, where a gullible carpenter prepares to save himself, his wife, and a pseudo-prophet from anticipated rain "so wilde and wood, / That half so greet was nevere Noes flood" (CT 1.3517-18).

In the 16th and much of the 17th cent. the Flood story is treated in unremarkable ways, drawing on the biblical account and its commentaries for detail. Following the example of Du Bartas's *Divine Weekes*, some writers, including William Hunnis and Francis Sabie, retell the biblical narrative in verse. Michael Drayton, in *Noah's Flood*, is especially interested in the loading of the ark, the nature and consequences of the Deluge, and the joy of the animals at the end of the Flood. He takes up a number of controversial points and insists on the veracity of the story. So also does Milton in *Paradise Lost* (11.556-900). Skillfully alternating between Michael's account and Adam's reactions to it, he emphasizes the wickedness of the antediluvian generations, Adam's sorrow about the destruction of creation, and his joy concerning Noah for whose sake God raises another world.

In Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* (3.2.105-07) references to the Flood and the apocalypse are combined in a witty dialogue between Dromio and Antipholus (cf. *As You Like It*, 5.4.35-38). In Donne's *The First Anniversary* the ark's dimensions are said to parallel the proportions of a human body and the vessel thus typifies the individual Christian (cf. "To Sir Edward Herbert at Julyers"). In "A Hymne to Christ" Donne adopts conventional baptism-salvation typology, which appears also in Crashaw's "Upon the Bleeding Crucifix." Herbert expresses grief in connection with the first return of Noah's dove ("The Church"). Elsewhere he identifies the ark with the Church ("Afflic-

bow"). Marvell draws on traditional typology in "Upon Appleton House," but in other instances provides a political application, associating Cromwell's son with the rainbow after the Deluge ("A Poem upon the Death of His Late Highness the Lord Protector"). The Royalists employed a similar strategy. Dryden begins his poem "To His Sacred Majesty" by comparing Charles's landing in England with Noah's on Mt. Ararat, a reading perhaps influenced by R. Filmer's *Patriarcha*, which Locke attacked in "An Essay Concerning False Principles" (G. Reedy, *The Bible and Reason* [1985], 70).

Sir Thomas Browne, in *Pseudodoxia Epidemica* and *Religio Medici*, defends the notion that the biblical Flood was universal but raises a number of questions about the credibility of certain details of the story. Thomas Burnet, in his influential and controversial *Sacred Theory of the Earth* (1684), also argues that the Flood was a worldwide phenomenon and provides an elaborate "scientific" hypothesis to account for the mechanics of the Deluge. His physico-theology made it possible to explain misproportioned aspects of landscape (cf. James Thomson, "Spring," 309-18) but his rational defense of the story was seen by many to promote skepticism concerning the historical accuracy of the biblical account. It also spawned a series of countertheories and "explanations" of the Flood (see Allen, 96-112).

As the literal accuracy of the story began to be questioned more openly, satiric and trivial treatment of the Flood in literature became increasingly common. Edward Ecclestone's drama *Noah's Flood* (ca. 1679) toys with biblical material and Miltonic themes. Swift makes a series of satiric allusions in "Ode to the Athenian Society," "An Answer to Dr. Delany's Fable of the Pheasant and the Lark," and "A City Shower." Hardy, in *Under the Greenwood Tree*, pokes fun at Mrs. Day, who, when furnishing the house, follows the principle established by Noah of having two articles of every sort. In *Far from the Madding Crowd* he compares Oak's shepherd's hut and its environment to a small Noah's ark on a small Ararat.

For Wordsworth the story provides a backdrop for meditation on the natural world: the dove is the happiest bird of the ark ("A Morning Exercise") and a symbol of hope ("The Waggoner," 1.53). In his sonnet "Sky-prospect" Wordsworth imagines seeing Ararat and the ark in the west, but then reassures himself that "all is harmless" — the vista innocent of any hint of destruction.

For Carlyle, heroic man finds himself adrift and clutches at literature, "wonderful Ark of the Deluge, where so much that is precious, nay priceless to mankind, floats carelessly onwards through the Chaos of distracted times." Emerson, likewise, in "The Poet" likens the poet's mind to a Noah's ark. In Tennyson's "Two Voices" the pessimistic voice seems to wreck the poet's "mortal ark,"

and in *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (4.826-28) he associates the Napoleonic era with a universal deluge for which there is no ark. Like West, Turner, Danby, and Doré in their Deluge paintings (see Landow, *Images*, 140-44), Byron sides with the victims of the Flood: his uncompleted play *Heaven and Earth* draws more on the apocryphal book of Enoch than Genesis, expanding references to a liaison between "the sons of God and the daughters of men," which in the Bible is condemned as one of the evils which prompted God's wrath before the Flood (Gen. 6:2-4; 1 Enoch 6-9, 54-55): two angels fall in love with the daughters of Cain, and, rejecting God's warnings, escape with them from the earth, which is about to be deluged.

In James Thomson's "The City of Dreadful Night" a preacher tells his melancholy brothers who are "battling in black floods without an ark" that there is no God. George Eliot, in *The Mill on the Floss*, describes young Tom's dream of building a Noah's ark in case of a flood: ironically, years later Maggie tries in vain to save Tom and herself from drowning. Hardy shows God repenting, as in Noah's time, that he "made Earth, and life, and man" ("By the Earth's Corpse") and satirizes the bourgeois who have learned to "hold the flood a local scare" and on Sundays read Voltaire ("The Respectable Burgher on 'The Higher Criticism'"). Kipling, in "The Legend of Evil," is indebted to folk legends in suggesting that the salvation of Noah and his family was ineffective because the devil got into the ark when Noah cursed the stubborn donkey.

Melville was fascinated with the Flood-story, and the continuing impact of the Flood is a central preoccupation of the characters in *Moby-Dick*. Nantucketers' boats are said to be their arks. Ahab sees waters the same as Noah's; after *Moby-Dick's* victory, "the great shroud of the sea rolled on as it rolled five thousand years ago" in Noah's days. Ishmael remarks that "Noah's flood is not yet subsided," but the sea in this instance is controlled by no mercy and no power but its own. Mark Twain describes what he perceives as the absurdity of the biblical story and comments bitterly on the victims of the Deluge ("Adam's Soliloquy").

Modern skepticism concerning the narrative is summarized by Dickinson in "The Winters Are So Short": "But Ararat's a legend — now — / And no one credits Noah — ." In his preface to *Back to Methuselah* G. B. Shaw asserts that "The feeling against the Bible has become so strong at last that educated people . . . refuse to outrage their intellectual consciences by reading the legend of Noah's Ark. . . ." Nevertheless, the vitality of the story in the 20th cent. is remarkable. Yeats deals with the Flood in *The Player Queen*; Connelly devotes three scenes of *The Green Pastures* to the Noah story. For

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C. Day Lewis in *Noah and the Waters* the Deluge serves as a convenient political symbol for breaking with bourgeois liberalism. In *The Skin of Our Teeth* Wilder associates details from the biblical source with a series of different catastrophes, asserting that his archetypal family will begin life again after each one. Odets's *The Flowering Peach* is less optimistic, transforming the narrative into a realistic family drama in which Japheth temporarily rebels against the building of the ark and the brutality of God, and Noah learns that humanity itself can make or destroy the world.

Following Jules Verne's *L'eternel Adam*, some novelists rewrote the biblical story as science fiction, often casting Noah as a scientist and the ark as a spaceship (e.g., Serviss, *The Second Deluge*; Wylie and Balmer, *After Worlds Collide*; and A. C. Clarke, *Rendezvous with Rama and The Songs of Distant Earth*). H. G. Wells, in *All Aboard for Ararat*, focuses on a utopian writer who, refusing to act like the biblical Noah, attempts to improve upon God's work by designing blueprints for the New Ark, the reconstruction of society after World War II. Anthony Burgess's *The End of the World News*, a montage of the biographies of Freud and Trotsky, and a parody of Serviss's *The Second Deluge*, makes the point that all designs for the new world will ultimately be mocked. In Vonnegut's satire *Galapagos* a few human beings escape the general ruin of the world to become the ancestors of a smaller-brained and happier race.

Apart from such modernizations of the basic story, some imaginative retellings are noteworthy. David Garnett relates in *Two by Two* how two young girls hide in the ark as stowaways and, after the Flood, begin life with two of Noah's renegade grandsons. Timothy Findley's *Not Wanted on the Voyage* deals with the sexual and other tensions in Noah's family, everyday life aboard the ark, the rebellion of Noah's wife, Ham's wife Lucy (Lucifer) and others, and Noah's manipulation of the rainbow miracle after God has failed to answer his prayers.

James Joyce alludes to the Deluge and calls attention to associated baptismal symbolism in connection with Father Arnall's sermon and Stephen's wading in the sea in his *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. More idiosyncratic references occur in *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. In D. H. Lawrence's *The Rainbow* imagery of the Flood and new beginning describes the maturation process of Ursula and illuminates Lawrence's attitude toward industrial civilization. Like R. P. Warren in "Blackberry Winter," Faulkner uses the Flood-story to characterize the religious sensibility of his African-American characters. Social injustice is the theme of Sillitoe's story "Noah's Ark," in which two poor boys steal a ride on a Noah's ark roundabout and are chased away by the owner. For Thomas Pynchon the apocalypse in *Gravity's Rainbow* is

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Flood) of the biblical one, but the nightmare of the end of the world which he and his partner face "with elate despair" turns out to be a dream after all. Beauty characterizes Rumer Godden's post-Flood vision in *In Noah's Ark* (1949): the world lies "washed and sparkling in the newborn day." *Renewal* also climaxes Lorenz Graham's Flood-story for children: *God Wash the World and Start Again* (1946).

See also NOAH; RAINBOW.

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PAUL GOETSCH
MARIE MICHELLE WALSH

FOOL, FOLLY Most uses of the word *fool* in the English Bible refer not to the literal fool, i.e., the mentally incompetent, but to the moral or willful fool whose choices identify him as one rejecting the counsel of God. In the OT these include the boaster (Heb. *halal*; Ps. 75:4); the egocentric (Heb. *kesil*; Ps. 92:6-8), the arrogant (Heb. *'ewil*; Prov. 12:15); and the fool par excellence (Heb. *nabal*), who believes there is no God (Ps. 14:1). In the NT, "fools" include the thoughtless (Gk. *anoētos*; Luke 24:25), the witless (Gk. *aphrōn*; Luke 12:20); and those who persistently choose an unworthy path (Gk. *mōron*; Matt. 23:17).

The classic biblical opposition between folly and wisdom is found in the book of Proverbs, where Wisdom (*hokmah*) is personified as a woman desirable above all forms of worldly wealth or pleasure; the harlot who lurks in alleys to lead the gullible young man of the text astray, and who would seduce him to idolatry and wastefulness, is a personification of "Folly." Dame Wisdom's function in much literature is to teach the character of folly by opposing virtue to vice and wise precept to wanton action: an impor-

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sweet wine did make, / Ev'n God himself being pressed for my sake" (cf. John 15:1). Marvell compares Cromwell, who "planted the vine of liberty," to Noah and the Puritan opponents of Cromwell to Ham ("The First Anniversary of the Government"). For Dryden, Charles II rather than Cromwell is the Noah figure ("To His Sacred Majesty").

In the 17th-19th cents. Noah is still occasionally invoked as a type of Christ (e.g., Keble, *The Christian Year*; Isaac Williams, *The Cathedral*; Francis Thompson, "The Mistress of Vision"). More frequently, however, he is relegated to trivial or satiric contexts. Byron, who mentions Captain Noah and Captain Cook in one breath (*English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, 356), characterizes Japheth first as a dutiful son, then as a disillusioned rebel who cannot understand why he should be spared when all else perishes ("Heaven and Earth"). In Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* self-righteous Joseph, like the drunk Joseph Poorgrass in Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd*, invokes the memory of Noah. The patriarch as a discoverer of wine is referred to in Scott's *Anne of Geierstein*, Melville's *The Confidence-Man*, and Twain's *The Mysterious Stranger*. In Kipling's "Sappers" Noah appears as the builder of the first pontoon, one who would not have become drunk if he had trained with Her Majesty's Royal Engineers. Peep in Dickens's *Bleak House* replays the drunkenness of Noah by dipping a toy figure of Noah "head first into the wine-glasses" (chap. 30). Daniel Webster is indirectly compared to Noah in Whittier's antislavery poem "Ichabod," the last stanza of which alludes to Gen. 9:23.

In the 20th cent. Noah appears in a variety of guises. While science-fiction writers such as G. P. Serviss (*The Second Deluge*) and A. C. Clarke (*The Song of Distant Earth*) turn him into a worldly scientist, C. Day Lewis transforms him into a bourgeois willing to join the rebellion of the proletariat (*Noah and the Waters*). In H. G. Wells's *All Aboard for Ararat* he becomes a utopian novelist, in Golding's *The Spire* an ambitious church builder, and in Burgess's *End of the World News* first the builder of a space ark, then a Nazi-like leader, and finally an imaginative science-fiction writer. In Malamud's *God's Grace*, Cohn, the sole human survivor of an atomic war, compares himself to Noah.

In Conelly's *Green Pastures* Noah is a black preacher. In Odets's *The Flowering Peach* he is a heavy drinker even before the Flood, a worried father, and a man who, however unhappy with God's commands, learns humility. He appears as a cruel brother in Robert Coover's story "The Brother," and as a stern patriarch married to a humane wife in David Garnett's novel *Two by Two*. Timothy Findley, in *Not Wanted on the Voyage*, sees Noah as an experimenter, a disciplinarian, and a pitiable man who, since God remains silent, has to seek refuge in cheap

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the subject of Zora Neale Hurston's play "The First One," which stresses Ham's willingness to leave his family and accept his fate as a black man. James Joyce, in *Ulysses*, implicitly compares Bloom to the patriarch by describing Stephen as a Japheth in search of a father.

See also FLOOD; HAM.

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PAUL GOETSCH

NOAH, SONS OF In the Genesis account (Gen. 7:13; 9:18-19) three are identified as, with their wives, survivors of the Flood and progenitors of subsequent human life: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The genealogy of each (Gen. 10) divides postdiluvian humanity into linguistically or onomastically recognizable traditions. The sons of Japheth (Gomer, Magog, Tubal, Meshech, et al.) are northern or European, the sons of Ham (Cush, Canaan, Sheba, et al.) are recognizably African and non-Semitic Middle Eastern peoples; the sons of Shem (father of "all the children of Eber," Elam, Asshur, Aram, et al.) are identified onomastically as the Semitic peoples.

See also FLOOD; HAM; NOAH; SHEM.

NOAH'S ARK See FLOOD.

NOD, LAND OF See EAST, EAST OF EDEN.

NO MAN CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS See MAMMON.

NO NEW THING UNDER THE SUN See VANITY OF VANITIES.

NOLI ME TANGERE When Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene in the garden after his resurrection (John 20) she did not at first recognize him, "supposing him to be the gardener." (This "error" has often been seen as typologically apt; in the Digby play *Mary Magdalen*, e.g., Jesus observes,

So I am, for-sothe, mary:
mannys hartt is my gardyn here;
þer-In I sow sedys of vertu all þe gere;
þe fowle wedes and wycys, I read vp be þe rote.
whan þat gardyn is watteryd with terys clere,
than spryng vertuus, and smell full sote. [2.1080-85].)

When Jesus addressed her, she acknowledged him instantly, saying "Rabboni" ("Master") and presumably, as in many artistic representations of the scene (e.g., Dürer,

Sheltered his Jonah with a gourd,
This sun (I said), here present, poured
Even this shadow that I see.

See also JONAH.

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DAVID W. BAKER

NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS Among the ordinances for social justice laid down in Leviticus are several which have to do with impartiality in judgment. In one of these, "Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbor" (Lev. 19:15; cf. Deut. 1:17; 16:19; Num. 16:15; James 2:1-9). Judgment which is above influence is likewise said to be characteristic of God (e.g., 1 Sam. 14:14); according to St. Peter this is why the gospel is sent to all peoples, and not Israel only: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35; cf. Luke 20:21). Chaucer's Parson in *The General Prologue to The Canterbury Tales* is praised as one who makes no distinction in his pastoral duty among his socially diverse parishioners, "what so he were, of heigh or lough estat" (1.522; cf. 1.516-28). The English tradition of common law, and its American stem enthrone this principle as fundamental to civil justice, and modern literary allusions typically reflect the legal context. Thus, a vigorously American frontier character in J. F. Cooper's *The Pioneers* says: "The law, gentlemen, is no respecter of persons in a free country. It is one of the greatest blessings that has been handed down to us from our ancestors, that all men are equal in the eye of the law as they are by nater" (chap. 13). J. S. Mill gives the term its more specifically legal bearing: "It is held that there should be no restraint not required by the general good, and that the law should be no respecter of persons, but should treat all alike" (*The Subjection of Women*, chap. 1). G. K. Chesterton fills out the concept with an explanation of the English usage reflected in the KJV formulation now grown archaic, however familiar. He writes: "... democracy is no respecter of persons. It is no respecter of them, either in the bad and servile or in the good and sympathetic sense" (*What I Saw in America*, "Facts and Opinions").

NOAH Noah is the central figure in two OT narratives. As a "just man" he, with his family, is preserved from annihilation in the Flood (Gen. 6:5-9:17). As a cultural hero who discovers the art of making wine, he is surprised drunk by his son Ham; Noah later curses Ham's son Canaan and blesses his own sons Shem and Japheth for respecting his shame (Gen. 9:25-27). Noah is the last of

The meaning of the name *Noah* is not clear. In Gen. 5:29 the name is explained by a play on *naḥam* ("to comfort"), possibly a reference to the fact that the wine discovered by Noah was a source of consolation (Gen. 5:29). Some commentators and the LXX relate the name to the Hebrew word *nuah* ("to rest"). Noah is mentioned in the genealogies of 1 Chron. 1:4 and Luke 3:38; he is called a righteous man (Ezek. 14:14, 20) and a preacher of righteousness (2 Pet. 2:5), and he is cited as an example of faith (Heb. 11:7). Noah receives considerable attention in the Pseudepigrapha (see index in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2.980-81).

Early rabbinical commentators tend to downplay Noah's righteousness on the basis of the statement that he was "perfect in his generations" (Gen. 6:9) and are divided about how to evaluate Noah's drunkenness. They explain Ham's crime as an attempt to sexually abuse or emasculate his father. With Noah's curse, some claim, slavery entered the world. Philo equates the biblical Noah with Deucalion and allegorizes the Flood Story as a cleansing of the soul.

For early Christian commentators Noah is an example of obedience, a colonizer of the world, and a new Adam. Later exegetes emphasize his righteousness, viewing him chiefly as a type of Christ. Some of the Church Fathers condemn Noah's drunkenness, others such as Origen excuse it on the grounds of his inexperience, while still others allegorize the incident in connection with Christ's Passion (e.g., St. Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 16.2).

Noah's wife, scarcely mentioned in Scripture, is the leading character in the lost gnostic *Book of Noria*. She attempts to prevent the building of the ark and eventually resorts to burning it (cf. M. R. James, *The Lost Apocrypha of the Old Testament* [1936], 12-15). She is given continuing prominence in later redactions of the story. In medieval drama, especially in the Chester, York, and Towneley plays, Noah's wife is depicted as a shrewish gossip (cf. Prov. 7:10-12) who refuses to board the ark. In the Newcastle-on-Tyne version she serves as an agent of the devil. Noah himself, though henpecked, is represented as a good craftsman and dignified leader. (The ME poem *Cleanness*, by contrast, stays close to the OT and concentrates on the conventional theological implications of the story.)

A parodic Noah figure appears in Chaucer's *Miller's Tale* in the character of an Oxford carpenter who fears a second flood. Shakespeare's Sir Toby refers to Noah the sailor in a comic context (*Twelfth Night*, 3.2.18-19). Drayton's *Noah's Flood* shows the protagonist in the role of preacher, as does Milton (*Paradise Lost*, 11.719-26), who regards Noah as the antitype of Adam (12.6-7) and type of the Christ to come (11.808-09, 876-77). In "The Bunch of Grapes" George Herbert sees in Noah's vine a prefiguration of Christ "who of the Laws sowre juice