

Monday 20 April 2020

Gen.18, 19: *The LORD said: "For I have chosen Abraham, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice."*

Rom.6, 22: *"But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life."*

Doing righteousness and justice – this is the Lord's way in which, surely, all ought to walk, us included. All of creation, Paul observes Rom.8, longs achingly for a humanity which will do righteousness and justice, for the slaves of God. Nature does, and so do the nations; our communities do, our workplaces, our families, our relationships, our hearts. The vision of peace and unity is circumscribed by these two words – righteousness and justice. Eternal life is the end of nothing that is not righteous and just.

Not limited, then, to Abraham and his immediate household, it nevertheless begins with his calling, God's choosing of him, and the command "to keep the way of the LORD". But what began then didn't conclude then. As is obvious from the subsequent history of Abraham's descendants – a history of disobedience to the command, leading to loss and exile and the question how and when the way of righteousness and justice would finally come about.

But what began with Abraham - and why it is relevant! – is that God gave to the world, into man's hand, in seed form the necessary "ingredients" for that out of which righteousness and justice would proceed: FAITH.

Now Abraham knew that it was but the beginning, and he looked ahead far into the future to see the day of his descendant, chosen by God, through whom God would call to Himself all who believe in him, would fulfil His promises and would give His command in a new way, in the power of the Spirit so it would be a heart concern. This descendant would be the way of righteousness and justice and so it would be that "the righteous shall live by faith" (Rom.1,17).