

Text 26. The days of Noë, Lot and Jesus (11 p.)

Explanations of the last quoted texts on Sai Baba.

We begin with excerpts from the book of Tobit (Tobias).

It is about Sarah (Sarrra). Tob. 3:8 says, “Sarah was already given to seven men to marry, but the evil demon Asmodaüs (Asmodeüs) had killed them even before he had fellowship with her.”

Tob 6:16: “Do not worry about the demon: tonight Sarah will be given in marriage to you. (...) Take the censer, put the piece of the heart and the liver of the fish on the glowing ash: as soon as the demon smells the smoke, he will flee, never to come again,” says the archangel Raphael (Tob 12: 15).

In other words, it is more than a series (‘seven’ is an ancient number) of natural deaths. There is an incantatory rite involved. When, on the wedding night, Tobias performs the recommended ritual, it reads, “He took the censer and put the heart of the fish and the liver on the glowing ash and smoke arose. When the demon noticed this, he took refuge in Upper Egypt where the angel (Raphael) put him in chains.”

Another translation lifts the veil: the angel Raphael bound him in the desert of Upper Egypt”. If one is familiar with the occult meaning both of ancient Egypt for Israel and of the desert as the dwelling place of demonic beings (cf. Matthew 12:43, where it is said that an exorcised unclean (God-hating) spirit wanders in barren places), then this second translation sheds a clear light on the event.

Incidentally, Mark 1:12/13 says that Jesus, once baptized, is driven by the Spirit into the desert, where he dwells among the wild animals and is tested by Satan.

As for Egypt, this was not only the land where the people of Israel endured a very harsh bondage but also and especially a people who harbored the religion of the “nations” (“Gentiles”: Deuteronomy 18:9 (13) which were an “abomination” as the prophets put it.

Could there be in the background of the story a residue of Egyptian magic such that Sara is being bullied by an erotic demon? It is, given the whole Biblical framework, conceivable. - In any case Tob. 6:14 vv. says that the demon does not harm Sara because he approaches them erotically, and kills any man she approaches for the marriage bed. - The deliverance from the grip of that sexy demon is called Tob. 3:17 “the healing of Sarah,” where surely the term “healing” has a more than purely medical meaning.

In summary, in at least one instance the Biblical world has an erotic approach by an angel, a demon, to a woman on earth, with or without the fault of the woman in question. With this in mind, we now turn to the following Bible texts.

Genesis 6:1/5. When men began to be numerous on earth and were born into daughters, sons of God (note: Sons of God are high, godly spirits, angels (Job 4:18; especially 1:6, 2:1) found that these “suited them”: They took to wife all the young women who attracted them.

Whereupon Yahweh: “My spirit (op.: supernatural life force, basis of immortality) will not abide in man since he is flesh (op.: earthly life force that includes mortality). At most he will live to be 120 years old”. The Nefilim were on earth in those days (and ever since) when the sons of God became one with the daughters of man and gave them their children. These were the power men of old, the infamous people.

Yahweh thus saw that the degeneracy of man on earth was great and that he was out to do evil day in and day out. Yahweh regretted that he had created man on earth and suffered grief. He said, “I am going to destroy the man I have made from the earth, - man but at once the cattle, the creeping animals, the birds in the heavens, for I regret having made them. But Noë found grace in Yahweh’s eyes (...)”.

Behold what the Bible calls “the days of Noë”.

Note: One clearly sees the same ground structure that spoiled Sarah’s life but, with this difference that the angels - in Biblical parlance: unclean (god-fearing) spirits or demons - influence the process of conception in such a way that the children share in the demonic nature of the sons of God by displaying a higher degree of life force.

In other words, during conception, the sons of gods put a kind of soul body into the child that represented their element.

One can, of course, always reject such a type of conception in the name of present-day biology, but this does not prevent that, given the limitations of biology, which is essentially physical in its reasoning, what the Bible tells us is in itself possible, especially as soon as one puts the phenomenon of possession first. This is all the more so since possessions not infrequently contain a strong erotic element.

Was it so e.g. that the intervening Son of God incarnated himself, like e.g. an avatar in India? Or was he limited to a soul body that enriched the child's soul with his life force?

Whatever the case, mankind of the time must have experienced the phenomenon as "new children" because tradition has preserved a species name of them, namely Nefilim.

As the Biblical writer depicts the situation, it is clear that the sons of God were of a very questionable if very curious type: the general decay of morals goes hand in hand with the cultural heroes that were the Nefilim. This decay of morals provokes, through the lack of God's Spirit, i.e. God's supernatural life force, a deluge, i.e. the overpowering of natural forces which only draw on earthly life force, whether or not supplemented by the life force of the sons of God and their descendants.

Genesis 18:1/33 - 19:1/29.

We summarize to make the term "the days of Lot" understandable. Abraham experiences an appearance from Yahweh accompanied by two "men" (which Gen. 19/1 calls angels). Collectively, they appear as "three men." Abraham only gradually discovers who the "three men" actually are.

Folk as the story is, it describes Abraham's vocation reason. This resembles Noë's: "Loud rises the cry for vengeance (note: Biblical term for restoration of moral order) from Sodoma and Gomorrha. Extremely heavy is their sin".

The two men who make their way to Sodoma (also: Sodom) are the testers of the moral condition there while Yahweh, the first of the three men, remains on the spot.

Note: We are here faced with an application of the Biblical concept of "vengeful sin," i.e., a moral wrongdoing that provoked some sanction even during earthly life. The reason lies in the transgressive nature of the evil committed.

The two angels arrive in Sodoma and meet Lot who gives them hospitality. "The men of the city surround Lot's house, - the men of Sodoma, young and old, all the people to the last: 'Where are the men - they cry to Lot - who have arrived with you this evening. Bring them out to us on that we may have dealings with them'. (Genesis 19: 4/5). Behold what the phrase "the days of Lot" means. Homosexuality was very widespread in Canaan but also in Israel as a pagan abomination.

The story continues:

Lot goes out, closes the door behind him, and proposes to have his two daughters “who are still virgins” abused for the reason of the hospitality he gives the two men. After all, guests were “holy” and Lot proposes to respect that sanctity associated with his hospitality.

The Sodomites urge Lot on and want to break down the door. “But the two men reached out, pulled Lot inside and locked the door. But the Sodomite men who were standing right outside the door of the house - from the smallest to the largest - they beat them with bewilderment so that these could not find the entrance (cf. 2 Kings 6:18, where Yahweh beats the Arameans with blindness).” (Gen. 19:10/11). Those were “the days of Lot.”

Note: One sees that homosexuality took extreme - we would say today ‘nihilis-tic’ - forms and gave the people - their culture a predominant stamp.

Follows then the judgment of God.

The two angels urged Lot and some of his people to make a hasty escape from the city: “As soon as the sun had risen and Lot had arrived in Soars (a small city), Yahweh “rained down from heaven” sulfur and fire on Sodoma and Gomorrah. (...). Abraham looked down at Sodoma and Gomorrha and all the Jordan region and saw a smoke rising from the earth like the smoke of a smelter. (...).” (Gen. 19: 23/28). - This judgment of God continues to reverberate throughout the Bible (in the New Testament Matt. 10: 15; 11:23/24; Luke 17:28; vv. 2 Peter 2:6; Jude 7).

The Noahist divine judgment is called the Flood.

Gen. 6: 13; 9:17. - There was a flood for forty days upon the earth”. (Gen. 7:17). - What is striking in both divine judgments in response to vengeful behavior is the exceptionality of the natural catastrophes. Once again: also in Sodoma, Gomorrah and the surrounding area, the forces of nature do not strike at people who radiate God’s Spirit, His supernatural life force, and thus control natural disasters - the bond of “friendship with God / landscape” is a basic fact throughout the Bible, as Romans 8:14/27 very clearly states) - but at “flesh”, i.e., “people” who are too much alienated from God’s commandments and have therefore been given up to death.

The Biblical metonymy regarding God’s guidance of creation.

The readers will notice that we attribute natural disasters to the lack of appropriate life force. We are lying down for a while.

The tropes

These are a stylistic figure that relies as a metaphor on similarity, as a metonymy on coherence. That resemblance or coherence is the strictly logical presupposition of a comparison which, if abbreviated, becomes a trope (trope). Thus: that man resembles a tree (so impressive is he); “that tree of a man” (metaphor). So: that man has a beard (that stands out); “the beard is there” (metonymy).

Well the Biblical language is remarkably theocentric.

Everything that happens, for example, is attributed to God as the cause. That connection “God (cause) / event (e.g. natural disaster)” leads to metonymic speaking about God.

Thus: “Yahweh rained down from heaven sulfur and fire on Sodoma and Gomorrha” means that - in the last instance, i.e. on the metaphysical background which is the basis of the metonymy - the rain of sulfur and fire, which is at first a natural disaster, is directly, understand: abbreviated, i.e. metonymically, attributed to God, where only his autonomous nature created by him is at work.

The Galatian letter says it very clearly:

“Whatever man sows, he will also reap. He who sows in the flesh will reap destruction from the flesh, but he who sows in the spirit (note: God’s life force which extends beyond nature) will reap eternal life in the spirit.” (Gal. 6: 7/8).

In Noë’s or in Lot’s days, one sowed - in a transgressive and thus vengeful manner - in the flesh and has reaped with destruction mysteriously from that “flesh,” i.e., a life force that does not even survive natural disasters, let alone live eternally with God after death.

The disadvantage of Biblical abbreviated (actually metonymic) speech:

1. One mentions God but talks about the autonomous creation-people created by him and, among other things, a natural order,

2. but constantly gives the superficial reader the impression that God is at work everywhere directly and purely. No: He works through the life force of the creatures who find themselves in sometimes very dangerous situations, such as a lava flow surreptitiously erupting or any other natural disaster.

The dynamic aspect that God has put in creation (and that stands or falls with the notion of life force (dunamis in ancient Greek as Luke 8:46 says)), is one of the most fundamental ideas in biblical revelation.

Angels. - In the story of Noë, renegade angels play an active sexual role (as in Sara's life but differently). In the story of Lot, two angels also play a role but as God-fearing characters who narrowly escape the homosexual urges of the Sodomites. It should be noted that in Lot's story it is not so much the homosexuality as such that is central, but first and foremost its massive presence and its ferociousness, together with the sacrilegious attitude towards the two high, godlike angels. This is often misunderstood by a number of interpreters of the text.

The after-effects of the previous stories.

We begin with the words that Luke puts in Jesus' mouth (Luke 17: 26 / 30). "As it was in the days of Noë, so shall it be in the days of the Son of Man (Jesus): one ate and drank, married and was given in marriage until the day when Noë entered the ark and the flood came that destroyed all. Or as it was in the days of Lot: one ate and drank, bought and sold, planted and married but on the day Lot departed from Sodoma, God rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed all. So will it be on the day when the Son of Man appears".

Jesus is talking about his return in power "at the end of time." What is striking is that, according to Jesus, there will be a very similar situation that provokes Jesus' return in power, i.e., in the form of divine judgment, - divine judgment that involves extermination of people without the resilience inherent in God's Spirit above nature's life force).

Jesus emphasizes here what the ancient Greek tragedy exhibits, namely tragic irony: the people in question, as in the days of Noah and Lot, will not even be aware of what is hanging over them, - they will be so numb and unaware of the actual situation.

Does Jesus' twofold example imply that in his days sexuality will also play a leading role? This is not so directly evident from what he predicts, but one can hardly escape the impression that it will be so.

In other words: people really do not change in the course of the evolution of sacred and salvation history. Jesus' first "appearance" in Israel now two millennia ago does not seem to have caused any significant improvement.

As an aside, the days of the coming Son of Man are described in a great deal more detail in Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians (2 Thess. 1:6 / 2:14), where the great apostasy that is coming is revealed. Also at Jesus' return - so it seems - only a (small?) part of the people will continue to believe.

Peter's letter. 2 Pet. 2:4/5.

Encapsulated in a relentless chapter on erstwhile errorists, Peter says what follows.

First generally.

God did not spare the angels who had acted unscrupulously but were placed in the tartaros (op.: the deep underworld) and delivered to the abysses of darkness where they were stored up for the purpose of judgment (op.: the final judgment in the end times). Peter wants to say: the a- and immoral errorists have no better fate than that of those high sons of God who misbehave.

Then the pair we know: the days of Noë and Lot.

The days of Noë.

God did not spare the old world (note: it existed before the flood). He did, however, spare "eight persons" including Noë, an advocate of conscientious behavior, from being destroyed, while unleashing the Flood on a world of godless people.

The days of Lot.

God reduced the cities of Sodoma and Gomorrha to ashes and condemned them to destruction, but saved Lot, the conscientious one, who suffered from the behavior full of excesses of criminal men.

Again, Peter summarizes.

The Lord carries out the shifting: godly people he manages to save from the trial of strength but godless people he brings into custody in view of their punishment on the day of the (op.: final) judgment, first of all those who, driven by desire alienated from God, involve the "flesh" (op.: the earthly life force) and reject the Lord. - We face here what Paul writes (Galatians 6: 7/8), "whoever sows in the flesh will reap from that the fear destruction; whoever sows in that spirit will reap from the spirit eternal life." But with the strong theocentric emphasis on God as causing that shifting of judgment.

Jesus' hell-raising.

1 Peter. 3:18/20. - Once he has died on the cross, Jesus has at his disposal the full measure of 'spirit', i.e. supernatural life force, and first of all he descends 'to hell' (as our Creed says), i.e. to the spirits in the dungeon (of the underworld) in order to proclaim to them the Good News - to those who had refused to believe at the time, when God's patience was in abeyance, in the days of Noë. One argues about the correct interpretation of the churched spirits: are they demons on his dead people who underwent the Flood? In any case: Peter's text shows God's willingness who does not hesitate to echo Jesus' glad tidings which he had announced on earth, in the dungeon to act savingly even there.

For those who look up in wonder.

For those who are amazed by God's presence and Jesus' descent into the underworld (the so-called hell), the following.

Wisdom 11:21 reads, "You, God, spare all because it is yours, You, lover of all that lives. For thy immortal spirit is in all things, and for this very reason thou dost punish unscrupulous people but moderately. In particular: Thou by that form of warning keep their crime before their eyes in such a way that they renounce unscrupulous behavior and remain faithful to thee." Those who, for example, commit unscrupulous magic (as Ezekiel 13: 17/23 describes, for example), who commit child sacrifices (which the Bible has consistently opposed), who consume human flesh and blood, and who practice such extreme forms of deviation from the Ten Commandments, are not rejected in principle by the so-called Old Testament God already: "Nevertheless, because they were human, you treated them with mercy" (Wisdom 12: 8).

Jude Letter.

Jud. 6/7. Again within the framework of the errant teachers of the time. - The days of Noë. "As for the angels who did not live up to their standards in higher rank but denied their very existence: it is with a view to the judgment of "the Great Day" (note: the final judgment when Jesus, in power this time, returns) that God has bound them in everlasting fetters in the depths of "darkness."

One sees it: it is about the extreme evil plus the eternal will to continue it, notwithstanding e.g. Jesus' proclamation of the glad tidings. Jesus' proclamation of the Good News there as well. This is in Biblical language not only flesh (deviant behavior from God and His commandment) but both the extreme forms of it and the eternal will to continue with it, i.e. flesh in the extreme degree that even rejects Jesus' offer without ever thinking of repentance.

The days of Lot. "Likewise Sodoma, Gomorrha and the surrounding cities which submitted to sex in the same way (as the angels just mentioned) and thereby sought other flesh, were made a model of punishment by "eternal fire".

In other words: just like the angels in Noah's days, Lot's contemporaries committed an abomination, namely they did not only seek human flesh but "other flesh", namely that of the two "men", understand two "angels". They cheated in the sphere of high God-fearing spirits, or rather they tried to do so in their sex lives.

Behold how, up to and including the very brief bill of the apostle Judas, the days of Noah and of Lot were lived out in the New Testament with extreme deviations followed by extreme natural phenomena.

The basic contradiction pair.

From Genesis 6:3 in a very explicit way (“My spirit (op.: above the cosmic-biological life force excellent life force) will not remain in mankind forever since it is flesh (op.: cosmic-biological life force”)) through John 3:6 (“What is born in flesh is flesh. What is born of the spirit (op.: of God) is spirit”) the opposition pair of “(God’s) spirit/(cosmic-biological) flesh” dominates biblical thought as an axiom from which just about all the really important texts in the entire Bible are derivable.

The great turn forward

This turn forward, towards a new and glorious future - is what the prophet Jeremias (Jeremiah), following in the footsteps of predecessors, predicted:

1. the forgiveness of unscrupulous deeds and
2. the foundation of a new covenant in which each individual is led directly (without intermediaries or beings) by God from within. This turn is called “great” because it is precisely through this dual divine intervention that God’s Spirit comes through on a larger scale than ever before.

Jesus’ action, culminating in his death on the cross and subsequent resurrection, is a large-scale elaboration of Jeremias’s perspective on the future. Jesus says it literally at the last supper (the first Eucharist), “This is (my body) my blood of the new covenant, for ‘many’ (op.: inelible) for the forgiveness of sins.”

The two aspects

1. Forgiveness and 2. new covenant - are very clearly essential to the Eucharistic event, which presents Jesus’ exemplary transition from death (flesh) to life (Spirit of God) as a ‘mystery’.

Eternal Death.

As the letter to the Hebrews (Heb. 10: 26/31) observes with the other New Testament witnesses, even among those who hear Jesus’ action and his message there are those who belittle or even thoroughly reject this transition from cosmic biological life (‘flesh’) to the resurrection energy (Spirit). This was the case, for example, with some of the errant teachers of the time.

Not that the ‘flesh’ was (and for those who do not know the Biblical message is) the absolute badness. Far from it! The whole pagan sacred world lives from that. But those who confine themselves to that are stuck in a life that is dying. He who not only limits himself to this, but absolutely refuses the resurrection-life force offered by Jesus through the Holy Trinity, yes, rejects it for ever (God knows for what reasons), falls into what the Bible calls in very clear terms “eternal death”, i.e., remaining stuck in a life that ends in dying (with the rest) each time.

The post-Christian stage.

The term is in many people's mouths. However, let us look at what the Bible says about it. The clearest text is 1 John 5:16/17. "When one sees a fellow believer ('brother') acting unscrupulously, but in such a way that this is not "to death," then it is duty to pray, and life will be given to all those who do not act unscrupulously "to death." For there is conscienceless acting that is "to death": I do not say that praying for that acting is duty. In particular: any deviation from the order of conscience is unscrupulousness but not always "to death."

The basic counterfactual pair of "life/death."

Clearly, the basic opposition pair is "life/death" in the Biblical sense. Life is possessing God's resurrection life. Death is missing that resurrection life. In other words, the opposition pair of 'flesh' (in the extreme and persevering degree) / spirit (God's life force that goes beyond the cosmic biological level)."

Clergymen refer to Matthew 12: 31/32 in this regard. He who rejects Jesus, for example, commits an error of judgment that is open to forgiveness by God: he is, after all, the Second Person the Holy Trinity but this is not universally apparent. But whoever rejects the Holy Spirit, i.e. God's primal life force, if it is clearly perceived as such, commits an error of conscience for which forgiveness is not possible either in this world or in the other. Such an unconscionable action is "to death."

In this context, we also refer to 2 Peter 2: 20/22 (a believer returns to paganism) - to Hebrews 10:26/31 and 6:4/6 (believers who renounce their faith in a deliberate manner).

One must be careful with these texts: they metonymically attribute directly to God what the apostates do to themselves, self-willed but against God's manifestly supernatural action, namely: rejecting "death" in the sense of the resurrection which Jesus very clearly demonstrated as the gateway to an eternal life liberated from all dying.

To reject Christianity as it was seen for two thousand years is partly justified and partly 'unrighteous' (it also did much good). For this "iniquity" there is forgiveness from God. It does not kill. But God's direct action in and through Christendom, self-confidently and without seriously going into the real reasons for this rejection, brings rejection into the sphere of sin against the Holy Spirit.

In other words, anyone who wants to be post-Christian can do so insofar as he has legitimate reasons for doing so, but insofar as this is done without grounds, it brings up the problem of the unfounded apostasy which the Bible texts quoted above are talking about. At the same time it raises the question of whether prayer for such a thing is still meaningful, as St. John insinuates. But that is beyond our earthly understanding.

A way out?

The Holy Scriptures, Utrecht Brussels, 1948, part II. (The New Testament, 301, n 5) contains a way out.

1. The guilty apostasy (understand: the apostasy if guilty, i.e. without sufficient reason), is already sin against the Holy Spirit, not open to forgiveness.

2. Unless - so says the note - by a very special act of God's mercy because we ourselves, by our apostasy, have knowingly and willfully deprived ourselves of the means which is repentance

There follows a comparative reasoning: just as God should show a special mercy (and, as it were, cause a miracle in the order of grace) to bring such people to repentance, so also we should perform a more than ordinary act of charity (and pray so fervently for them that God performs this miracle of mercy). Although such sinners have no strict right to such a special proof of charity, we are not forbidden to pray for them.

On the contrary: love knows no bounds and it is supreme act of love to continue praying God for these unfortunate people. So much for this note. Praying for them is not a duty as St. John says but one can do it anyway.

As an aside, this language is found in the theological texts of Sacred Heart worship which speaks of "an excess of mercy from God."

The rich young man.

"Good master, what must I do to obtain eternal life?" This is how Jesus is addressed by a very rich man (Luke 18: 18/28).

1. "No one is good (note: in the thorough sense) except only God" Jesus replies.

2. "You know the commandments: you shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, you shall honor your father and mother." "This I have fulfilled from my youth." When Jesus heard this, he said, "One thing you still lack: sell all that you possess, give it to the poor, and you will possess treasure in heaven (op.: resurrection life). Come then and follow me". When the man heard this, he was disappointed, for he was very rich.

To which Jesus replied, "How hard will those who possess riches enter the kingdom of God! A camel gets through the eye of a needle more easily than a rich man into God's kingdom". - The audience: "Then who can be saved? Jesus: "What is impossible with men is possible with God." Apparently the rich man was in need of treatment "to the death" (to use St. John's language). And yet there is a way out: wouldn't the theological footnote mentioned above be the correct explanation for Jesus' "is possible with God"? Immediately, this could be the explanation of Jesus' hell-bound journey immediately after his death on the cross to bring the glad tidings there too.