

Noah: Biblical Truth or Simply Hollywood Rhetoric?

Director Darren Aronofsky is known for his dark controversial dramas. *The Fountain*, *The Wrestler*, *Requiem for a Dream* and *The Black Swan* are only a few of his movies that are anything but family-friendly. Lately, however, Aronofsky has been reading his Bible. Not because of a desire to learn the truth of God, but because of his new project based on the biblical story of Noah.

Aronofsky already has secured \$115 million in distribution and funding. It's said that it will be a "big event" movie, similar to Roland Emmerich's disaster films *Independence Day*, *2012* and *The Day After Tomorrow*. Russell Crowe has been cast as Noah with Jennifer Connelly playing Noah's wife. Emma Watson, Logan Lerman and Douglas Booth are also attached to the project. Filming is supposed to begin this summer in Iceland and New York.

Even though the film isn't set for release till 2014, in October of last year, Aronofsky released a graphic novel in France entitled *Noe*. The official synopsis of *Noe* is this: "It was a world without hope, a world with no rain and no crops, dominated by warlords and their barbarian hordes. In this cruel world, Noah was a good man. Seasoned fighter, mage and healer, but he only wanted peace for him and his family. Yet every night, Noah was beset by visions of an endless flood, symbolizing the destruction of all life. Gradually, he began to understand the message sent him by the Creator. He had decided to punish the men and kill them until the last. But, he gave Noah a last chance to preserve life on Earth."

For Christians, Noah's story is one that reminds us of God's protection for His people. Aronofsky said this about the spiritual side of Noah: "I don't think it's a very religious

story. I think it's a great fable that's part of so many different religions and spiritual practices. I just think it's a great story that's never been on film."

This doesn't come as a surprise based on Aronofsky's spiritual themes of his previous films. The movie *The Fountain* is filled with syncretism that borrows from all types of New Age beliefs. In an interview with *Gadfly*, Aronofsky said this about the religious aspects of his other upcoming movie, *Life of Pi*, based on the popular best-seller:

"I think religion is often very different than spirituality. Religion is often about rules and people trying to control our lives who are actually very unspiritual. Another message of the film is that God can be found anywhere, and, in fact, everywhere. And so you don't necessarily need a religious dogma to get you to spirituality."

All this raises a question. Will the movie *Noah* actually be an accurate retelling of the biblical story portrayed in Scripture? Or, will it dishonor the true story of justice, mercy, and redemption?

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