

Subject: God's Covenant with Noah

Scripture: Genesis 9:1-17

Genesis 9 is our final chapter dealing with Noah after the flood. There are four important things in this chapter, and we will look at two of them in this message.

1. GOD'S COMMAND TO NOAH (vs. 1-7)

Notice that God's blessing was given to Noah in the form of a command. God's commands are all blessings to us when we obey. This command involved four things:

A. Replenishing of the earth (vs. 1)

God's command to Noah was the same as His command to Adam. Noah and his family represented a new beginning of the human race. The birth of children is God's way of saying the world will go on.

Psalm 127:3 *Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD; and the fruit of the womb is his reward.*

B. Renewal of man's dominion (vs. 2) – God causes animals, birds, and fish to fear man

Genesis 1:26 *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

Psalms 8:4-6 ⁴ *What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?* ⁵ *For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor.* ⁶ *Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.*

C. Restriction about eating blood (vs. 3-4)

God allowed man to kill animals for food, but they were not allowed to eat the blood. Later on God reminded them of this restriction on eating blood and why it was important.

Leviticus 17:10-11 ¹⁰ *And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.* ¹¹ *For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.*

D. Respect for human life (vs. 5-6)

God reminded them of the sanctity of human life. Although God sent the flood to destroy human life, God still put a high value on life. No one should ever think that life is disposable and cheap. All human life matters to God. We have already seen how quickly violence and murder filled the world.

Genesis 4:8 *And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.*

Then we read that Lamech killed a man and then bragged about it to his wives.

Genesis 4:23 *And Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt.*

Genesis 6:11 *The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.*

God instated capital punishment for anyone who murders another person. Both OT and NT support capital punishment for murder.

Romans 13:3-4³ *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:*⁴ *For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.*

2. GOD'S COVENANT WITH NOAH (vs. 8-17)

A covenant may be defined as “a formal agreement or treaty between two parties with obligations and regulations.” A biblical covenant is an agreement between God and man. The vast majority of covenants in the Bible are 1) unconditional and 2) everlasting. A covenant is unconditional because once it is in force, it must be fulfilled.

The unconditional covenants are God's covenant with Noah, God's covenant with Abraham, God's covenant with David, and the New Covenant that includes the church.

The first covenant in the Bible is God's covenant with Noah, and the first mention of this covenant is Genesis 6:18.

Genesis 6:18 *But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.*

Before the flood came God told Noah about this covenant, and now God lays out the details of this covenant. The covenant is mentioned a total of seven times in Genesis 9:9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17). We can say at least five things about God's covenant with Noah.

- A. It was a unilateral (one-sided) covenant – established by God and His sovereign will; this is true of all the biblical covenants
- B. It was an unlimited covenant – between God and all people & living things
- C. It was an unconditional covenant – not based on man's ability to keep it, but based on God's faithfulness
- D. It was an unchangeable covenant – in force then and now, and for all time

- E. It was an unforgettable covenant – confirmed by the rainbow in the sky. This sign was a reminder of God’s protection during the flood and that God’s judgment was over. A rainbow appears after a storm. The Hebrew word for “bow” is the same word used for a weapon (bow and arrow), but this is a bow without an arrow, and therefore, a sign of peace. A rainbow is a multi-colored bridge between heaven and earth.

Every time a rainbow appears in the sky it’s a reminder that His covenant is still in force today. And there is another covenant, a much greater covenant called the New Covenant that God has made with us through Christ.

Luke 22:19-20 ¹⁹ *And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.* ²⁰ *Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.*

Just like the covenant with Noah, Christ took the initiative and chose to make a covenant with us. Paul spoke of himself and the other apostles as ministers of the new covenant. Just like the covenant with Noah, the new covenant is unconditional and is not based on our works, but on Christ’s faithfulness and His promise to save us. Just like the covenant with Noah, the new covenant is unchangeable and still in force today. Just like the covenant with Noah, the new covenant is not to be forgotten.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 ²³ *For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: ²⁴ And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.* ²⁵ *After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.* ²⁶ *For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come.*

God has entered into a covenant with His people and He has sealed that covenant with the blood of Christ. Being in that covenant with God is not automatic. We enter into that covenant when we turn our life over to Christ through faith and repentance.