

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

The God of Promise

Genesis 7:23 - 9:17

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PowerPoint Presentation included: NONE

SermonAudio Blurb: The flood has done its purpose. The waters are receding and now it is time to rebuild. Before Noah is a world utterly changed. The task is daunting. And in this critical moment God speaks to him and in doing so God give several key instructions and promises to guide humanity even to this day.

I. Introduction.

- A. Read 7:23-24; 8:15-9:17.
- B. The flood is upon the world and the destruction is complete.
 1. Every living thing is blotted out.
 2. The slaughter is done.
 3. The judgment has fallen.
 4. Every proud man and woman is humbled in their death. And we are left to decide if we too are too proud to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.
- C. The ark is safely carrying animals and the family of Noah within its midst.
 1. Think of this time and the thoughts that would go through their minds.
 - a. It must have been grim and shocking. Nothing can prepare a person for this. Consider the magnitude of the term “blotted out” in 7:23.
 - b. But also a incredible sense of relief as that judgment passed over them.
 - c. Beloved, I think I can safely say that any bitterness or sorrow or anger over any suffering they endured up to that point because they were building the ark and preaching repentance to stubborn people came to an abrupt halt.

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- d. And in the same way you must not become weary of speaking of Jesus Christ in the midst of oppression or mocking. For in a moment you too shall be caught up and brought safely into eternity.
2. Peter uses the ark as a type, a picture of something greater in 1 Peter 3:18-22 (turn).
 - a. In brief it speaks of Jesus' death and resurrection that was done to bring us to bring or carry us to God the Father, keeping us safe from eternal judgment.
 - b. In a similar way the ark brought Noah and the family safely through the waters of judgment to safety.
 - c. As an aside, there is the reference here about baptism that is confusing to many. It is not a reference to water baptism, but the baptism with the Holy Spirit that occurs at salvation.
 - d. So to quickly break this whole passage down, the ark is a type/representation of Jesus Christ, the flood waters represent the final judgment/wrath of God, the placing of us in Christ is the baptism in this context.
- D. But God "remembered" Noah and all on the ark (8:1).
 1. This term, *zakar*, is used in the Old Testament to speak of moments where from our perspective it may seem like God has turned His back on us or forgotten us. But He hasn't and He turns His face and mind toward us in favor.
 2. So God remembered Noah when the earth was destroyed. God remembered Abraham and therefore saved his nephew Lot when Sodom was destroyed. God remembered Rachel in her barrenness and opened her womb. God remembered His covenant with Israel and heard their groanings in Egypt.
 3. It is always good to have God remember in this manner.
 4. The result is the flood waters begin to recede until finally the ark is settled in the mountain range known as Ararat in Moses' day. And after a year on the ark they are finally able to disembark.
- E. A new world.

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1. We are not given any information on what it looked like at this point in time so everything is conjecture.
 2. But by now all the rotting is done. Land masses have been radically changing by the incredible power of water. The water that burst from beneath likely also help create whole mountain ranges.
 3. But in the midst of all this is that the earth is re-seeded and growing plants and trees. And a new world is before them.
 4. Such a fearsome thing to consider. You enter the ark with a world filled with people and you step off to one where you are utterly alone.
 5. In many ways it should cause you to look backward to before the Fall and the new world Adam and Eve found themselves in.
- F. And it is here, when they left the ark that God made a covenant and this covenant is what we will consider today because of its far-reaching consequences.
1. Seven characteristics of God's covenant with this world after the flood.
 2. Seven specific commands and qualities related to God's promise to never flood the earth again in judgment.

II. The Covenant with Noah (8:21 - 9:17).

- A. First, the earth will not be treated in this manner again (8:21; 9:11-14).
1. The term here for "curse" means to treat contemptuously or unkindly. It is not the same as the curse given to Adam about how hard it will be to farm due to sin.
 2. It is simply stating that never again shall the world suffer a cataclysmic event on the scale of the Flood.
 3. What is sad is the reasoning. The sin of man was not erased for it was in the hearts of Noah and his family.
 4. The only answer is to have sin itself destroyed and that would only come through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He would bear away sin. He would destroy sin's power in death. And all who trust in Him for their salvation finds themselves free from the power of sin.
 5. In chapter 9 it is worth noting that though the covenant is stated to Noah and his sons it is a covenant made with the entire world.

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6. And the sign given of this covenant, the rainbow.
 - a. Like all things, it is corrupted into now an image of sinful inclusiveness. But for the Christian it is an object designed to move our minds from the troubles of this age to the truth that God remains faithful.
 - b. Signs of a covenant in the bible is of some interest.
 - (1) We see it here in Cain, who God promised to avenge if killed and a sign was placed upon him as a mark of God's protection.
 - (2) Here we have the rainbow.
 - (3) For Israel to show they were in a covenant relationship with God there was circumcision for the men and the keeping of the Sabbath.
 - (4) In the New Covenant today we show it by the sign of baptism in the name of our Triune God.
- B. Second, the guarantee of seasons and time and rhythms (8:22).
 1. It is possible that there were no clear seasons prior to the flood but it is not something we can know for certain.
 2. The point of the passage is that there is the promise of stability in the world we were created to live in. They had witnessed a one-time event that shook them to the core and these words would be very comforting.
 3. And they continue to comfort and inform and help us.
 - a. We know in the dark days of winter that it cannot last. And we experience the joy of the crocuses pushing up even through snow. And with it comes the joy of planting.
 - b. When the heat and humidity of summer weighs us down we know that the sharp snap of Fall is coming and with it the promise of harvest.
 - c. We go to sleep knowing the sun shall rise and we mark time by the passing of the moon phases.
 - d. All of this is a gift of grace built upon the firm promise of God. In fact in Jeremiah 33:20-21 God tells Israel that only if they could

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break the covenant of night and day could He then break His covenant with David and the promise of the Messiah.

- C. Third, God promises to preserve mankind (9:1, 7).
1. Building off of His continued indictment of each of us in 8:21 there is every reason for us to think that God would regularly cleanse His creation from sinful man.
 2. But here He simply calls Noah and the family to continue with the original command to be fruitful and to multiply the earth.
 3. Notice however how it is written in vs 7.
 - a. There is much here to give consideration for us in this modern culture.
 - b. First this is not a suggestion but a command. To have children and to be fruitful. In other words, within the confines of the covenant of marriage, children are to be desired and sought for.
 - c. Second, the mind set of a person ought to be more toward many rather than few.
 - (1) This is not to say that you must have many but that many children is not a bad sign or a problem.
 - (2) It has much to do with the heart and motivation. Some will seek many as some type of point of pride. Others, out of the same heart of pride will reject any children.
 - (3) The point is simply that God has ordained that people marry and then make babies. It is really that simple.
 - d. Third, over-population is a myth and it is to be rejected by a Christian.
 - (1) At the end of vs 7 how is the earth to be populated?
 - (2) Literally it is to swarm with humanity. Each of them an image-bearer of their Creator.
 - (3) We keep buying into one form of this lie or another and we do not push back in our homes like we ought.

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- (4) 6 billion people would fit in the space of England, each having 20 square feet.
 - (5) Even in teeming cities the problem is not the number of people but the policies or lack of policy in the government due to sin, folly, greed and love of power.
 - (6) Behind this whole statement is the assumption that men and women will marry.
 - (a) It is not a declaration to have random sexual encounters for the purpose of children.
 - (b) Rather it is commanded within the confines of the mandate of marriage as given by God.
- D. Fourth, mankind is still the crowning point of creation and shall rule over it but in a very different relationship (9:2).
- 1. Now the animals will be afraid of humans. Now terror will be a normal part of their relationship with the image-bearers of God.
 - 2. Now instead of trust and obedience from the animals there was to be fear. And this is still seen today. Go into the forest and make some noise, let your scent be smelled and you won't see much. The animals will shrink from your sight.
 - 3. But why? Because they went through a change after the flood. The Lord put it into their nature to fear man.
 - 4. Fathers and mothers, show this to your young children. Use this as a teaching moment to impress upon them the cost of sin. Just as Adam feared God as a result of his sin, so too, the animals fear us because of our sin.
- E. Fifth, the sustaining of life now comes through death (9:3).
- 1. Prior to the Flood humanity ate only fruits and vegetables.
 - 2. Meat is now the proper food for man. Notice how expansive it is stated, if it moves it is acceptable to eat.
 - 3. There are all sorts of people who are making their silly beliefs known via the internet. And one area that seems popular is the area of diet.

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- a. But just as the animals now will begin to eat one another so too humans are designed to eat the flesh of animals and insects.
- b. I believe that something inherent shifted in all of us, both animal and human, at the Flood.
4. Meat is good for us and meat is given to us for food. We don't have to apologize for hunting a deer or shooting a mourning dove. We can eat a big thick steak and do it to the glory of God!
5. But the lesson in all of this is that life cannot be maintained without the taking of other life. And usually it is an innocent life.
6. You and I are not in control of our lives. We are not sovereign people. We are completely dependent upon things outside ourselves for life.
- F. Sixth, blood is not to be eaten (9:4).
 1. This is not a prohibition of eating a rare steak. It is a prohibition of eating blood.
 2. The blood of an animal was to be drained from its body before you ate the meat. Notice that it does not even forbid raw meat, merely that it is to be drained first.
 3. The reason for this is simple, in some way the blood of creatures contains life. The word used for life is *nephesh* which can mean "soul."
 4. Blood was to be seen as holy. It had a very specific place in God's plan, it was used as an atonement for sin. It was unique and it was to be kept sacred and separate.
 5. In Viet Nam I have seen where they will have a live snake brought to a restaurant table, killed and the blood drained into cups to be consumed by the people. This is the idea behind the eating of blood. That is why eating the flesh of a strangled animal is forbidden in Leviticus, for the blood is still present.
 6. In Acts 15 the Jerusalem council also said that it is not right to eat blood.
 7. I do not see where this has been changed in the Word and I believe that it is proper for us to see it as in force still today. The reason is that this covenant in Genesis is never rescinded.
- G. Seven, human life is sacred and not to be shed casually (9:5-6).

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1. This is the key passage for capital punishment/death penalty in the entire bible.
 - a. We see here that there is the distinction between man and the animal kingdom again.
 - b. We are unique and made in the image of God. Therefore, there is an innate dignity that is possessed by humanity.
 - c. But man is not sovereign, as I already have said. We are to live under the rule of God and His presence. He has built into our world certain laws, natural laws, that cannot be broken. Gravity will bring you to death if you jump off of a cliff. Water will kill you if you try to breath it. Fire will burn you if you play with it.

2. In the same way, when it comes to the life of a person, God says that He will require the life of anyone who kills another. But how is that to occur?
 - a. It is through the hands of another man. Please think of that carefully. We hear too often from the church that it is God who is to judge and we are wrong to bring punishment upon a murderer. Too often we also hear that there is no value in taking a man's life as punishment for murder, it only results in another life being taken. Others say that capital punishment doesn't keep murder from occurring.
 - b. But these do not fit with this passage. God has made this standard and it is not to be ignored.
 - c. Some might say that it has been replaced by Jesus' words that we are to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. Or that we are to turn our other cheek, or that God says that vengeance is His.
 - d. In regard to the idea of God's vengeance, however, the first time He says this is in Deuteronomy 32:35; and there was clearly capital punishment going on at that time.
 - e. With regard to praying for our enemies and turning our cheek, we must understand that Jesus is speaking of an individual responsibility, not a corporate one.
 - (1) It is wrong for man on his own to seek vengeance.

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- (2) But it is right and God-ordained that the governing authorities do so (Romans 13).
- f. Please note that God is not saying in Genesis 9 that the purpose for capital punishment is so that others won't murder. The purpose is because man is made in God's image.
 - (1) We are holy in a sense, made for God by God.
 - (2) He even says in verse 5 that if an animal kills a person, the animal is to die. Again, because we are image bearers.
 - (3) We do not have the right nor the authority to kill apart from the standards of God.
 - (4) But when it is within God's standards we are to do it with a clear conscience, knowing that God has ordained it.

III. Conclusion.

- A. If you can quiet yourself for a short time and train your mind upon the story of the Flood it will become a frightening thing. It is not a point of mild interest. It is not a point of discussion or debate. It is a brutal declaration of holy judgment by our holy Maker.
 1. "But there is one who made the constellations Pleiades and Orion; he can turn the darkness into morning and daylight into night. He summons the water of the seas and pours it out on the earth's surface. The LORD is his name!" (Amos 5:8)
 2. In that passage Amos draws from God's creating work and His judgment through the Flood. But in the context Amos is telling a sinful people to repent. Turn to the God of judgment and power and live.
 3. Only the fool sees God's warning of judgment and chooses to ignore or merely despair.
- B. I heard Paul Washer the other week and he made a couple of observations from Matthew 28.
 1. Two reports: One was He is RISEN. The other is NO HE DIDN'T.
 2. The same with 6 day creation. Flood. Exodus. Red Sea. Moses. Miracles. But the highest and greatest is Jesus is risen.

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3. What do you believe? Where does your hope lie? Understand this, eternity rests on a knife's edge here.
4. There is one more reality that the bible tells us. Jesus, having risen from the dead then told us that He is coming again to judge the living and the dead.
 - a. Your response to this is important. It is either one of agreement and repentance or one of rejection and condemnation.
 - b. In the days of Noah untold millions perished under the water. Old and young alike. They were found guilty and justice did what justice must do.
 - c. On the cross Jesus our Lord willingly went to be our perfect substitute. On that cross He took sin and death upon Himself and absorbed into His being the fulness of God's justice and wrath.
 - d. You either believe that and live or you reject it and remain in your own sin.
 - e. Each time you see the rainbow it is to remind you of both judgment and promise. It is to move you to reassert your hope in God alone.