

January 25, 2015

TIME OF REFLECTION

“The founders of a new colony, whatever Utopia of human virtue and happiness they might originally project, have invariably recognized it among their earliest practical necessities to allot a portion of the virgin soil as a cemetery, and another portion as the site of a prison.”^[1]_[SEP]

~ Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864), American novelist and short story writer

“To know oneself is to disbelieve utopia.”^[1]_[SEP]

~ Michael Novak (1933-present), American Catholic philosopher, journalist, novelist, and diplomat

“Our problem is simply that we are too used to the Christian story; it is difficult for us to grasp the absurdity—indeed, the sheer madness—of the gospel about a crucified savior which was proclaimed by the first Christians in a world where the cross was the most barbaric form of punishment which men could devise.”^[1]_[SEP]

~ Morna Hooker (1931-present), British Theologian, New Testament Scholar and Professor Emerita at the University of Cambridge^[1]_[SEP]

“The rainbow, yet again, is a token that vengeance itself has become *on our side*. You see, it is an unbroken “bow.” He did not snap it across his knee. It is still a bow. Vengeance is there, justice is there; but which way is it pointed? It is turned upward...”

~ Charles Spurgeon (1832-1892), British pastor and author

“After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, ‘Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.’ At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald.”

~ Revelations 4:1-3 (ESV)

Worship through the Word

SERMON – “Welcome to the New Beginning” – *Doug Cooper*

SERMON PASSAGE – *Genesis 8:1-5, 15-22, 9:1-17 (ESV)*

¹ But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided. ²The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, ³and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end of 150 days the waters had abated, ⁴and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. ⁵And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

¹⁵ Then God said to Noah, ¹⁶“Go out from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁷Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—that they may swarm on the earth, and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.” ¹⁸ So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him. ¹⁹ Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves on the earth, went out by families from the ark.

²⁰ Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. ²¹ And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, the LORD said in his heart, “I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. ²² While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.”

Chapter 9

¹ And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. ² The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon

every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. ³ Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. ⁴ But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. ⁵ And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man. From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man.

⁶ “Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image.

⁷ And you, be fruitful and multiply, increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it.”

⁸ Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹ “Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, ¹⁰ and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. ¹¹ I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” ¹² And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³ I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴ When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶ When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” ¹⁷ God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”