

First Things – Genesis
Genesis 9:1-17
“New World, Same God”

1. THE WORLD GOD DESIRES FOR HIS PEOPLE

- A. We can be fruitful
- B. We can be fed

2. THE WORD GOD DECLARES TO HIS PEOPLE

- A. There is a logical purpose in this word
- B. There is a larger purpose in this word

3. THE WAY GOD DEALS WITH HIS PEOPLE

- A. What this covenant reveals to us
- B. What this covenant reflects for us

1. Throughout my time in school, they taught me repeatedly that on October 12, 1492, Christopher Columbus discovered the New World.

2. If you think about it, that’s not exactly accurate. Aside from the fact that Columbus didn’t even know where he was, the “world” he had discovered wasn’t really “new” at all. It had been there just as long as Europe, they just hadn’t been smart enough to know it yet.

4. Not only that, but there were already people living in this so called “new world”, and for them the only thing new about it were the strange white people who had ran into it with their boats.

5. While our modern history may be a little fuzzy in its terminology, the Bible records for us a chapter of human history that can truly be described as the discovery of a new world.

6. Speaking of the world prior to the flood, the Apostle Peter says in II Peter 3:9, *“Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished.”*

7. In many ways, the world that Noah and his family had known, before the flood and before the ark, died, never to be seen again.

8. What greeted Noah when the door of the ark opened up on the other side of the flood was a whole, new world.

9. However, while the landscape and the life that once were had been forever changed, once outside the ark Noah quickly found that His God had *not* changed.

10. As believers in this day, we are mindful that the Lord Jesus is the same “yesterday, and today, and forever” (Heb. 13:8).

11. No matter how much the world around us may shift and shuffle, we serve a Lord who remains constant in His love for us, and is still completely trustworthy as our Savior and our God.

12. In Genesis chapter 9, God makes up for his silence during the flood. Much of the chapter is taken up with the direct words of God to Noah and his family.

13. Looking at what God said in this passage, we are reminded of His constancy, and of how He remains the same, not only in Noah's new world, but in the new world of our modern lives as well.

14. Consider with me what we see in this text. First of all, notice with me:

I. THE WORLD GOD DESIRES FOR HIS PEOPLE

1. It is interesting how similar the opening verses of this chapter are to the closing verses of Genesis chapter 1.

2. There, at the close of the creation, God blessed Adam and Eve, encouraged them to be fruitful and multiply, and pointed them to the provisions He had made for their lives.

3. With that in mind, as "take two" for the earth begins in chapter 9 with Noah and his family, we find a very similar scene.

4. Verse 1 says, *"And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth."*

5. In some ways, the kind of world, and the kind of life that God wanted for Adam and Eve, is very much the same as He wanted for Noah and his family.

6. Likewise, in many ways it is still the kind of life that He wants for His people even today. Consider the kind of world God desires for his people. It is a world in which:

A. We can be fruitful

1. In a display of His continued grace, verse 1 tells us that God blessed Noah and His sons. That is, He showed His kindness and favor to them.

2. Then, He encouraged them to *"...Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth."*

3. Now obviously, this was a practical command. The sinful race that polluted the earth had been removed in the judgment of the flood.

4. It was necessary now for this family, as God's people to repopulate the planet.

5. Though the practical side of this command is still important for Christian families in this day, the spiritual side of it speaks to us as well.
6. When we are born again by the grace of God, and brought into the new life and the new world of salvation in Christ, one of the things expected of us is that we will produce spiritual fruit for the glory of God.
7. In John 15:16, Jesus spoke to his disciples and said, *"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain..."*
8. Jesus did not call you out of darkness into the light just so you could lay back and sunbathe. You were called into the light of the gospel that you might produce fruit for the glory of God.
9. With that being said, when we look at the kind of world God wants for us as His people, we are reminded not only that it is a world in which we can be fruitful, but also a world in which:

B. We can be fed

1. Look back at our text in chapter 9. Notice verses 2 and 3. God said to Noah, *"And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered."*
2. Verse 3 continues, *"Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things."*
3. Again, these are very practical things that God is telling Noah and his family. He assured them that the same dominion over the animals that Adam had enjoyed would continue with them, only this time it would be maintained by a natural fear that God would put in the animals with regard to man.
4. All of this was for the purpose of food. God was telling Noah and his family that the things around them were provided for them for the sake of their sustenance; that they might be fed and live.
5. In other words, this new world into which God carried Noah and his family was a world that was supplied with provisions for their lives.
6. When we apply this practical truth in a spiritual way, we are reminded that those who hunger and thirst for righteousness shall be filled (Matthew 5:6).

7. Spiritually speaking, when we walk with Jesus day by day, we will find plenty of nourishment and spiritual food for our journey. We don't have starve on our way to heaven.

8. In John 6:35, Jesus said, "*I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.*"

9. Like the new world that Noah discovered, our new life in Christ is one of blessing and provision from God. He wants to provide us with the resources we need to be fruitful for His glory.

10. It is estimated that as many as 11 million people in our country are battling some sort of eating disorder such as anorexia or bulimia.¹

11. Some of you are suffering from a spiritual eating disorder. You are weak and emaciated spiritually because each day you rush out into the world without stopping to feed on the Word of God and get the nourishment you need for your soul.

12. The world God wants for you is one in which you can be fed every day, and fruitful for the glory of Christ.

13. Looking at this chapter, we see not only *the world God desires for His people*, but consider also secondly:

II. THE WORD GOD DECLARES TO HIS PEOPLE

1. Having told Noah and his family of all that He had done for them in this new world, God proceeded to give them a word of warning.

2. Notice verse 4. It says, "*But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.*" That is, they were not to kill an animal, and eat it with its blood still in it.

3. With that warning, God moves further into this matter of the blood, and says that He himself will require the life of anyone who sheds another person's blood.

4. Look at verse 6. God said, "*Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.*"

5. This word of warning from God was an important new principle for the new world that Noah and his family faced. This word declared to them speaks to us of the importance of what God's Word declares still today.

6. Consider with me, as we look at what God says here, that:

A. There is a logical purpose in this word

1. Why is God now bringing up all this talk about blood and life? What is the purpose of this? The logical purpose behind it is to establish (or reestablish) the sanctity of life.
2. The pre-flood world was filled with men like Cain and Lamech; men who were violent and murderous.
3. In the new world after the flood, God wanted to make sure that men understood that human life was to be protected and honored because man had been made in the image of God.
4. We as God's people today still uphold the sanctity of life. One who sheds the blood of an innocent person is to be held accountable at the cost of their own life.
5. Practically and politically, this passage of Scripture overlaps several contemporary issues such as capital punishment, abortion, assisted suicide, and euthanasia.
6. As Bible believers, we may not have to agree on political parties, but we must agree on that which the Bible clearly teaches.
7. When it comes to human life, we recognize that the image of God is there, and therefore it is to be held in highest regard, and not to be taken without serious consequences.
8. When we read this word of warning that God declared, we are mindful that His Word to us has a logical and sensible purpose behind it. God's Word is given for our good, not our harm.
9. With that in mind, looking at what God declared here, notice with me not only that there is a logical purpose in this word, but consider also further that:

B. There is a larger purpose in this word

1. While God's Word to us is logical and practical, that is not its ultimate purpose. The ultimate purpose of what God declares to us is to point us to Jesus.
2. Again, Jesus said in John 5:39 that the Old Testament Scriptures testify of Him. With that in mind, our interest should be peaked by the presence of the blood in this passage.
3. This is the second time that the word "blood" appears in our Bibles. The first time, it was Abel's blood that was mentioned, and we saw that the blood speaks to God.

4. Now, we are told here in verse 4 that the life is in the blood. In other words, the blood represents the life of the person or animal in which it flows.

5. That being said, we are mindful that when the New Testament tells us that Jesus shed His blood for us, we recognize that His life was given up for our sake.

6. In this text in Genesis 9, the guilty man, that is the murderer, is required to give up his life (shed his blood) because he had taken the life of another.

7. But in Jesus and His death for us on the cross, we find the innocent Son of Man giving up His life for the sake of those who were murderers and sinners themselves.

8. The larger purpose of this declaration regarding the blood is to teach us of the essential power of the blood, and to point to the ultimate blood that would be shed for us by the Son of God.

9. I know some in our day have grown a little woozy and weary of all the talk of blood in Christianity and the Bible, but I would remind you that our redemption and salvation are because of the blood of Jesus.

10. So with that I say:

*What can wash away my sins?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus,
What can make me whole again?
Nothing but the blood of Jesus*

*Would you be free from your burden of sin?
There's power in the blood, Power in the blood!
Would you o'er evil a victory win?
There's wonderful power in the blood*

*And it's still the blood that saves from sin,
It's still the blood that cleanses within,
From the highest star in heaven,
To the depths of the sea,
It's still the blood of Jesus that brings victory to me*

11. Moving along in this text, we see here not only *the world God desires for His people*, and *the word God declares to His people*, but consider with me lastly:

III. THE WAY GOD DEALS WITH HIS PEOPLE

1. Along with the word "blood", there is another significant word in this text. It is the word "covenant".
2. Having warned them about the sanctity of life and the significance of the blood, God spoke again to Noah and His family.
3. In verse 9, He said, *"And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you..."*
4. The covenant is an important part of the Biblical storyline. It is a legal agreement entered into by two parties, both of which usually have some responsibility to uphold in the covenant.
5. Throughout the Scripture, including the New Testament, we find God dealing with His people on the basis of a covenant.
6. Consider with me then, a couple of things about the covenant work of God. First of all, consider:

A. What this covenant reveals to us

1. Preacher, theologian, and author D.A. Carson has a new book out called "The God Who Is There". The book is basically an overview of the whole Bible, written for someone who knows little or nothing about it.
2. One chapter in the book deals with the covenant work of God. The title of the chapter is, "The God Who Writes His Own Agreements".ⁱⁱ
3. That is certainly the case with this covenant in Genesis 9. Look at verse 11. The Lord says, *"And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth."*
4. Noah did not call for this, nor did He have a part in the drafting of this agreement. This came from God, and was to be carried out by God.
5. This covenant reveals to us that when God deals with us as His people, it is on His own terms. He writes the agreements.
6. With that being said, His covenants are for our benefit and our good. In this case, the world would never again be destroyed by a flood.
7. This covenant was a gracious promise from God to Noah and all those who would come after Him. We are beneficiaries of this covenant even today!

8. With that in mind, consider something else about the way God deals with His people in covenant agreement. Consider not only what this covenant reveals to us, but consider also:

B. What this covenant reflects for us

1. While this Noahic Covenant, as it is called, spoke specifically to this issue of judgment by flood, it reflects for us a greater covenant; that is the New Covenant.

2. Hebrews 12:24 speaks of Jesus as the mediator of the new covenant. In Hebrews 9:15, He is also called the mediator of the new testament.

3. In reality, the words "testament" and "covenant" are synonymous. They speak of an agreement and a promise.

4. At the last supper, when Jesus told his disciples to drink of the cup, He said that it was the new testament in His blood.

5. In other words, the sign of the new covenant is the sacrifice and shed blood of Jesus. With that in mind, look back at the Noahic Covenant in Genesis 9.

6. This covenant also had a sign. Look at verse 13. God said, *"I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth."*

7. The "bow" refers to the rainbow, and God said that he would put that rainbow in the cloud as a token of His covenant with the Noah and the earth.

8. Now look at verse 16. God said, *"And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth."*

9. When God sees the rainbow, it is a sign of the covenant He made long ago, and He upholds His promise because of that sign.

10. In much the same way, when God sees the sign of the New Covenant, that is the person and work of Jesus Christ, He remembers the covenant He has made with us His people!

11. When God looks at me, though I am still imperfect and prone to sin, He sees not my sin, but the blood of Jesus, and He remembers the saving covenant He has made with me through Christ!

12. Now I do not fear the wrath and judgment of God! I know whom I have believed, and I know that the covenant He has mediated with His blood shall never be broken!

13. With the songwriter I say:

*His oath, His covenant, His blood,
Support me in the whelming flood*

1. Noah and his family stepped onto the ark and left behind a world of wickedness, violence, and death. Over a year later, the doors opened to a drastically different world.
2. Yet, Noah heard from God in that new world, and he found out quickly that His God had not changed. He was still gracious and willing to bless those who trusted in Him.
3. We that are born again by grace enter into a new world and a new life in Christ. While we are different, He is not!
4. He is still the God who desires to bless us and sustain us so that we might be fruitful for His glory.
5. He still longs to give us His Word to guide us and guard us from sin. Most of all, He still remembers His covenants, and keeps His promises to His people.
6. May be we be thankful for the covenant of grace that we have received by Jesus Christ, and may we look to Him who is forever the same in an ever changing world.

ⁱ [Nationaleatingdisorders.org](http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org), facts and statistics, accessed 2/4/11,

<http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/information-resources/general-information.php#facts-statistics>

ⁱⁱ Carson, D.A., *The God Who Is There: Finding Your Place in God's Story*, (Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI, 2010), *Amazon Kindle Edition*