

God's Covenant with Noah and Us

Genesis 8:20-9:17

This text calls us to live your earthly life with an eye to Christ's return.

I. Although you do not deserve it, God has determined to sustain you in this world (8:20-22)

- A. Not a response to Noah's worship, but an act of grace → (v. 21; cf. →6:5-13)
- B. Four opposites (merisms) → Guarantee of God's sustaining hand
- C. Does this humble you?

II. While you are in this world, be fruitful and multiply (9:1, 7)

- A. Blessing associated with this → first mention of blessing in parallel passages 1:22, 28
- B. fruitful and multiply → Irony – Same term to describe multiplying flood waters (cf. 7:17-18)
- C. Fill the earth → Irony – Same term to describe the rampant wickedness in 6:11, 13
- D. This applies to the Great Commission and evangelism (**Mark 16:15**)

III. As God's image bearers, subdue the earth (9:2-6)

- A. As a human being, you bear God's image!
- B. Man is the only creature made in God's image (cf. 1:26-27) → Your life has great value!
- C. Expansion of dominion → Every animal and fish has been given as food (9:2-3)
- D. The earth has been given to you

IV. Realize that all of this has its purpose rooted in God's covenant with you (9:8-11, 15)

- A. First explicit covenant in Scripture → established with the whole earth
- B. Strong language → "*never again be cut off*" (9:11), "*never again destroy all flesh*" (9:15)
- C. No guarantee of protection from all harm, but guarantee that God will remember His covenant
- D. Do you trust in God's promise? Do you act like it?

V. He vowed to put a visible reminder for you in the sky (9:12-14, 16-17)

- A. Sun, moon, and stars are perpetual signs (days, seasons, years)
 - 1. **Genesis 1:14** *Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years;* (cf. 8:22)
- B. Rainbow (periodic)
 - 1. The rainbow signifies God's covenant faithfulness and grace/mercy
 - 2. Rainbow as an element of God's glory in Ezekiel 1:28 and Revelation 4:3
 - 3. Martin Luther: "...we should let this sign tell us to fear God and to trust in Him so that, as we have escaped the punishment of water, we may also escape the punishment of fire."

VI. His covenant will remain in force until Christ returns (9:12, 16)

- A. Moreover, the rainbow is the sign of an *everlasting* covenant (9:16)
 - 1. Sabbath & Abrahamic, Davidic, and New Covenants → (cf. 8:22, 9:9, 9:12, "*never again*" x 4)
- B. Next time you see rainbow → remember God's everlasting covenant → teach
- C. We have a guarantee from God Himself that He will sustain the earth until Christ returns
- D. In the meantime, He is patiently saving all of His elect, one by one (2 Peter 3:8-13)

Conclusion

- A. Trust God to sustain you as He promised → the earth will continue until Christ comes
- B. Know that you have been made in the image of God
- C. Be fruitful and multiply → Look forward to the return of your Lord Jesus Christ
- D. In the meantime, take dominion, rule over the earth and subdue it
- E. Take responsibility; Be a good steward → Earth's resources for your benefit and God's glory
- F. However, see the physical in light of the spiritual.
- G. Live your earthly life with an eye to Christ's return.

NAU **Genesis 8:20** Then Noah built an altar to the LORD, and took of every clean animal and of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. ²¹ The LORD smelled the soothing aroma; and the LORD said to Himself, "**I will never again curse the ground** on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth; and **I will never again destroy every living thing**, as I have done.

A:
Covenant
Promise

B:
Covenant
Duration/Sign

²² "While the earth remains, Seedtime and harvest, And cold and heat, And summer and winter, And day and night **Shall not cease.**"

C:
Covenant
Blessing

NAU **Genesis 9:1** And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "**Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.**

D:
Covenant Terms
- Allowed

² "The fear of you and the terror of you will be on every beast of the earth and on every bird of the sky; with everything that creeps on the ground, and all the fish of the sea, **into your hand they are given.** ³ "Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as *I gave the green plant.*

D*:
Covenant Terms -
Not Allowed

⁴ "Only **you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.** ⁵ "Surely I will require your lifeblood; from every beast I will require it. And from every man, from every man's brother I will require the life of man. ⁶ "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man.

C*:
Covenant
Blessing

⁷ "As for you, **be fruitful and multiply; Populate the earth abundantly and multiply in it.**"

A*:
Covenant
Promise

⁸ Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying, ⁹ "Now behold, I Myself do establish My covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; ¹⁰ and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you; of all that comes out of the ark, even every beast of the earth. ¹¹ "I establish My covenant with you; and **all flesh shall never again be cut off by the water of the flood, neither shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth.**"

B*:
Covenant
Duration/Sign

¹² God said, "This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, **for all successive generations;** ¹³ I set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth. ¹⁴ "It shall come about, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow will be seen in the cloud,

A:**
Covenant
Promise

¹⁵ and I will remember My covenant, which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and **never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh.**

B:**
Covenant
Duration/Sign

¹⁶ "When the bow is in the cloud, then I will look upon it, to remember the **everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.**" ¹⁷ And God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth."