

EXPOSITION OF GENESIS

Message #26

Genesis 9:1-17

As we come to this section, God is interested in communicating to Noah that this new beginning has His blessing. In fact, He wants to so communicate this point that He stresses that this new beginning has a blessing of His special covenant. The first 17 verses of Genesis 9 feature God's own Personal words to Noah after the flood. These important words are still in effect to this very day.

GOD BLESSES ONE WHO IS RIGHT WITH HIM AND PROMISES PROSPERITY, PROVISIONS AND PROTECTION.

Regardless of the fact that God is a God of wrath and destructive judgment, He enters into a blessed relationship of those who are right with Him. Covenant theology, if accurately understood, is Biblical. God is a covenant making and covenant keeping God.

VERBAL ACTION #1 - God promises His blessings to one right with Him. 9:1-7

The word "bless" is a powerful theological word which carries with it the idea of God having Divine favor toward someone and in having that favor, he chooses to prosper that person. This blessing includes prosperity, welfare and happiness (Gesenius, *Hebrew Lexicon*, pp. 142-143).

Element #1 - God's blessing is one of propagation. 9:1

Noah must have wondered whether God hated all life because He had destroyed it all so this challenge to be fruitful and multiply is His blessing to Noah. Notice God's statement to "fill the earth." God intended that every part of His designed earth be inhabited - north, south, east and west. From sea to shining sea. The fact that people live all over the world in various countries is due to this Noahic blessing.

Element #2 - God's blessing is one of provision. 9:2-4

God opened up the whole animal world to man for food and the only stipulation He placed upon the food was that the meat contain no blood (9:4). Man is not to eat meat as animals do with blood seeping out of the carcass, but is to respect life as that which has been granted by God. Prior to this blessing, the beasts and fowls and fish apparently had no fear of man, and would just walk up to man. All animals had been in the ark with Noah and would not fear him, so God put a fear within the animals, birds and fish, which would guarantee a protection of the species. God views man above the animals and they are to be subordinate to man.

Element #3 - God's blessing is one of protection. 9:5-6

God highly values life and He protects it by a penalty. Prior to the flood, unbridled violence filled the world (6:11,13). Murders were common with no regard for life. God promised that a death penalty would be given to anyone or anything that would shed the blood of a human. The word "require" which shows up three times in verse 5 is one that means God will seek out and demand accountability, which includes judgment and punishments for one who sheds man's blood. God is turning over to man the responsibility of holding murderers accountable by giving them the death penalty.

VERBAL ACTION #2 - God establishes His covenant with one right with Him. 9:8-17

A covenant is a legal promise that God makes to someone, thus binding and obligating Himself to do something He has promised to do. Once God promises to do something at a covenantal level, he must do it regardless of the faithfulness of a nation or individual.

Fact #1 - The covenant was established by God. 9:9a

By using the word "establish" Moses is saying that God is the One who raised up and brought into existence this covenant and man had nothing to do with this work. It was totally a work of God.

Fact #2 - The covenant was established with one man. 9:9b

Noah was the primary recipient of the covenant of God's blessing.

Fact #3 - The covenant was established with all men. 9:9c

This covenant had universal application for all men would come into existence through the Noahic family and all would be the beneficiaries of this covenant with Noah.

Fact #4 - The covenant was established with all animals. 9:10

The animal world would also benefit from this covenant, which shows that they are a special part of God's world. Notice the noun "beast" is used twice in this verse, stressing that God will even protect and care for those animals, which are less domestic.

Fact #5 - The covenant was one of life. 9:11

God promises that He will never again destroy all flesh by a flood. We know from history and N.T. revelation that God has not destroyed the world by a flood, but He will destroy it next time by a fire (II Peter 3:10-12). God will protect and preserve life not because of the faithfulness of man, but because of the faithful covenantal promise of God. This verse proves the flood was universal because otherwise it makes no sense. In fact, there have been many local floods in a variety of places, but never another universal flood that destroys all life.

Fact #6 - The covenant was established with a sign. 9:12-16

(Feature #1) - This covenantal sign was to be forever. 9:12

The word “successive” means this is eternal, this sign stands forever.

(Feature #2) - This covenantal sign was a rainbow. 9:13a

The Hebrew word for “bow” refers to a rain bow, a battle bow and broken strength. By this rainbow, God is beautifully saying - ‘I am putting away my battle bow and will never again break or destroy the world by a flood.’ As Dr. Allen Ross said, God “hung up his battle bow.” Dr. Wiersbe said three men in the Bible saw significant rainbows: 1) Noah after the storm; 2) Ezekiel in the midst of a storm (Ezekiel 1:28), and 3) John before the storm (Revelation 4:3) (Vol. 1, pp. 121-122).

Notice too that a rainbow is bowed with the target being heaven, not earth. Instead of piercing the world with His Wrath, God turned the bow toward Himself and pierced His own Son.

(Feature #3) - This covenantal sign is to be recognized by the whole earth. 9:13b

The rainbow should cause people all over the world to think about God.

(Feature #4) - This covenantal sign is recognized by God. 9:14-16

Not only does man see a rainbow, but God, Himself, looks at His rainbow and remembers His covenantal promise. When God looks at man it would be easy for Him to destroy all of life, but when He looks at that rainbow, He remembers the covenantal promise He made to Noah.

Fact #7 - The covenant is everlasting. 9:16

Those who are right with God can feel good about themselves forever.

The rainbow is a precious promise to those right with God, but it is a serious warning to those who are not. God turned the bow of His wrath on His own Son and those who believe on Him are given a gracious gift of life. However those who do not believe on Him are already under the wrath of God and do not need to worry about a flood, but do need to worry about fire. God will never again destroy the world by flood, but He will destroy it by fire. If you will believe on Jesus Christ, you never have to worry about the wrath of God, because you will have found Grace in the eyes of the Lord.