



Study #9

Genesis Chapter 9: 1-7

Chapter Summary:

Genesis chapter 9 gives information for the first time on the distance between animals and humans. It contains a new commission to replenish the earth and lays a foundation for human government to protect life and punish murderers.

In verses 1- 17 God instructed Noah and his children on:

1. The command to repopulate the earth.
2. The distance between man and animals.
3. The freedom to use animals as a source of food.
4. The basis of human government.
5. The covenant of mercy symbolized in the rainbow.

In verses 18-29 we learn about:

1. The first acts of husbandry in planting a vineyard.
2. The depravity of man in Noah's drunkenness and Canaan's sexual perversity.
3. The consequences of sin dividing men in the new world.

Key verse:

"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."

Verse 11

This is a clear promise regarding God's government of the world while the earth exists. This was of great reassurance to Noah and his family when future rain descended. Rain was no longer God's judgment, but a mercy, especially when attended by a rainbow.

Observations – Lessons from this chapter.

1. **God's blessing on Noah and his sons is linked to the altar which Noah built.** Ch. 9 begins with "and", which directs the reader back to the closing event in chapter 8 (We must not be distracted by chapter divisions in our study of the bible, for they can be arbitrary). It is significant that Noah's first act after exiting the ark was to build an altar unto the Lord (ch. 8:20). Clean animals and birds had been preserved for this act of sacrificing. God's response to the offerings on the altar was to accept the offering as a "sweet savour" this led to a decree of mercy toward sinners (v21). The formulation of the covenant that comes later in ch. 9:9-17 is premised on the blood offering that was accepted by God. Every covenant made by God is ratified by blood. The ultimate sacrifice of Christ was no different. It is the blood of Jesus Christ that makes atonement to turn away God's wrath bringing pardon and peace to sinners.
2. **God gave man dominion over the earth.** He is called to repopulate the world and to have dominion over all the creatures in the earth v1. God put a greater degree of fear between Noah and the animals and the birds than before v2. They would no longer act friendly but would be driven by fear. They would need to be hunted and domesticated. They were also given for food to eat v3. God making man to have dominion over all living things in the earth is another argument against evolution, pantheism and re-incarnation. Divinity is not in the animals, and they are not part of a cycle toward humanity. They do not have souls, and are not of eternal value, but were created by God for man's survival and pleasure. Man's dependence on animals for food and the necessities of life after the flood was increased due to a harsh climate. Note that the selection of animals for man to eat was not limited to clean animals. That came by Levitical laws under Moses, which were abrogated in the N.T. when Levitical laws no longer applied. Think of Peter's vision and the command, "arise Peter, slay and eat" (Acts 11:7). Paul's statement in (1 Tim. 4:4-5) adds weight to this truth.
3. **God established the life principle within blood by forbidding men to eat blood.**

That the life of the animal is in the blood is a Biblical doctrine every Christian should know. This is a gospel lesson which helps us to grasp the significance of blood atonement. Dr. Henry Morris in his book, *The Genesis Record*, stated in pg. 223, **“The flesh was given for meat, but the life of the flesh was given for sacrifice.”** Lev. 17:11 supports this statement.

On this principle rests the doctrine and practice of substitutionary atonement. The life given up by a sacrifice was accepted by God to take the place of the life of a guilty sinner. This principle was multiplied and rehearsed over and over in the Levitical sacrifices in Old Testament, so much so that the Israelites as the people of God became schooled in the principle of substitutionary atonement. This schooling of the O.T. people was to enable them, and all who adhere to the gospel of Christ, to apply the principle of life-giving to the death of Christ. Christ’s life was poured out when He shed His blood. So, when a sinner, exercises faith in the blood of Christ he or she is given to enjoy the life of Christ. Read Hebrews 9:13-28 to discover the N.T. application of this principle of life in the blood – the blood of Christ – shed to give life to sinners who put their trust in His substitutionary death.

Acts 15:29 teaches that N.T. Christians should abstain from eating blood. God wants the principle of “life in the blood” to live on.

4. Genesis chapter 9:5-6 lays the foundation for human government.

Up until now there was no death penalty for man-slaying. Cain was cursed and banished but not punished with death. Lamech, likewise, though guilty of shedding human blood did not face death for his crimes. But here in Genesis 9:6 God gave the command, “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood by man shall his blood be shed...” The words, “by man” call for human government for it is man who is to put to death the man slayer. When an earthly government puts to death a man slayer it is not murder, it is capital punishment. The apostle Paul taught that the magistrate who beareth the sword, “is the minister of God” (Romans 13: 1-6).

The principle also applies to animals which cause the death of men (v5). It is to be put to death. This principle is still practiced in most societies today. If a dog, or a farm animal even threatens human life it is “put down.”

“It is clear, of course, that the authority for capital punishment implies also the authority to establish laws governing those human activities and personal relationships which if unregulated could soon lead to murder (e.g., robbery, adultery, usurpation of property boundaries). Thus, this simple instruction to Noah is the fundamental basis for all human legal and governmental institutions.” Henry Morris Pg 225 *The Genesis Record*

5. Man’s unique creation in the image of God is the reason that his blood is to be avenged.

God’s argument for revenging the murder of man is based on the fact that His own image is stamped upon man, “for in the image of God made he man” (v6b). The issue rests on much more than vengeance by sorrowing mankind. It rests upon justice. It is God who demands the death of the murderer. This is because an attack upon man is an attack upon God, for man bears God’s image. To hate your brother is not only a crime against a human figure; it is against the character of God. Man may be made of clay, but his breath [Nephesh/soul] comes from God. His value is in the eternal nature of his soul. His destiny in eternity, whether it be heaven or hell may be determined by the man-slayer’s hand, for when he takes a life he has little consideration for that person’s soul.

Application: – How this applies to me.

While this world continues, worship by the blood of Christ is required by God. Liberalism leads worshippers away from the doctrine of Christ’s blood atonement; orthodoxy leads worshippers to embrace the substitutionary sacrificial work of Christ more and more.

The second part of the royal law sets forth our duty to love our neighbour as ourselves. This includes his or her physical and spiritual good. Our evangelism should be based on the fact that men are made in God’s image and it is our duty to warn them of sin’s destruction aiming to bring them to safety in Christ.

To do: Read the larger catechism Q. & A’s 135 & 136 on the duties required and the sins forbidden in the sixth commandment.