

Scripture Reading: Genesis 9:12-29

“12 And God said: "This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: 13 I set My rainbow in the cloud, & it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. 14 It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; 15 and I will remember My covenant which is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on 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." 18 Now the sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And Ham was the father of Canaan. 19 These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated. 20 And Noah began to be a farmer, and he planted a vineyard. 21 Then he drank of the wine and was drunk, and became uncovered in his tent. 22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. 23 But Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness. 24 So Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done to him. 25 Then he said: "Cursed be Canaan; A servant of servants He shall be to his brethren." 26 And he said: "Blessed be Jehovah, The God of Shem, And may Canaan be his servant. 27 May God enlarge Japheth, and may he dwell in the tents of Shem; And may Canaan be his servant." 28 And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. 29 So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died.”

"Noah Plants a Vineyard"

Lord willing this will be our final message on the life of Noah and the Great Flood that God used to destroy all those living on the earth because of the sin of man. As we continue on in the book of beginnings we will see the children of Noah producing the nations of the earth and those nations once again in rebellion against God at the tower of Babel... And then we will turn to the life of Abraham.

There are many lessons we can learn from this final portion of chapter nine, but since this is now our twelfth sermon on the life of Noah I will try to sum things up so we can move on!

- **Once again we will see in our text the sinfulness of man and the promises & faithfulness of God...**

Noah and his sons are tasked with carrying on the dominion mandate to fill the earth AND Noah and his sons continue to display the sin nature they have inherited from Adam.

- **In all of this we see God's faithfulness to the Great Covenant of Salvation that we considered in the last two messages from an earthly and heavenly perspective.**

In verse 7 of this chapter we were told that God said, “And as for you, be fruitful & multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth And multiply in it.”

The command given to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden is there repeated and now confirmed in verse 18 of our text this morning

“Now the sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And Ham was the father of Canaan. 19 These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated.”

- **Here in the final moments of this account of Noah and the Great flood those who doubt the true history of these early chapters of Genesis are once again challenged by the actual text of the Scriptures as God revealed them!**

As we have discussed at length there are many who try to explain away the plain meaning of these first eleven chapters of the Book of Beginnings in an effort to appease our modern thinkers... But these are modern rebels who will not be satisfied with any amount of appeasement short of God's work on their hearts of stone, but many attempts have been made just the same.

Some say the early creation account is just a poetic representation of what happened Others have turned to the new 'framework' theology trying to combine the Biblical account with the so-called science of evolution and many explain away the Great Flood as another myth or at best a major local flood: The secular world refuses to consider any evidence of a world wide flood that destroyed everything because then judgment might be real!

- Well God leaves no doubt in the text about this Great Flood being a true historical event.

Not only does He provide us with the specific date of the flood [something we do not have for the creation itself, the fall of Adam or even the birth of Abraham]...

But now God reveals where ALL the populations of the earth came from: The three sons of Noah!

- Brothers and sisters we need to understand that there simply is NO theistic evolutionary model that can incorporate this truth, so we should stand with the truth of the Scriptures and wait for science to catch up!

Next, as part of the command to take dominion, we see in verse twenty, "And Noah began to be a farmer, and he planted a vineyard."

Here we should remember our discussions about the potential technologies and advancements that man would likely have seen before the Great Flood. Noah is not inventing new things as he returns to taking dominion and here does so by developing a vineyard.

- The text presents Noah as the new master of the Earth... A New Adam!

We are not given the exact timeframe for this planting or the events that follow, but we should remember that a good deal of time may have elapsed.

The first focus would have been on provided food for their growing families and even when Noah turned to planting a vineyard it would be several years before good wine could be produced. The text also seems to assume that Canaan had already been born to Ham since he is addressed by Noah specifically. So we don't know the exact date, but it would have been at least a few years after they left the Ark.

- Then we come to an event in the life of Noah that has caused no end of discussions down through the centuries!

I will argue this morning that things will be much clearer if we are honest about what Noah did and see the BIG picture in how he blesses and curses his heirs following the sin of Ham.

- First and foremost we see in Noah and his son Ham the fact that sin is still with mankind!

In verse 21 we read, "Then [Noah] drank of the wine and was drunk, and became uncovered in his tent."

As we shall see in a moment Noah has put himself in a very shameful position and it was simply because he became drunk! Many have made excuses for Noah arguing that he did not understand what alcohol could do! However, I don't think the text wants us to be excusing his behavior: The simple fact is that Noah fell into sin!

Of course, others have driven into the other ditch arguing that if even righteous Noah could be taken in by the devil's brew then we must all avoid alcohol at all costs.

Here at Church of the King we see wine as God's good gift to men, but in doing so we must take very seriously the warnings that the Bible gives us regarding drunkenness...

I think the comments from John Calvin on this text are very appropriate for our congregation...

- An abstaining Baptist church might need his words on Christian liberty but these are for us!

Calvin: “When men, by shameful abuse, profane this noble and most precious gift of God, He himself becomes the Avenger. And let us know, that Noah, by the judgment of God, has been set forth as a spectacle to be a warning to others, that they should not become intoxicated by excessive drinking. Some excuse might certainly be made for the holy man, who, having completed his labor and being exhilarated with wine, imagines that he is but taking his just reward. But God brands him with an eternal mark of disgrace. What then do we suppose, will happen to those idle-bellies and insatiable gluttons, whose sole object of contention is who shall consume the greatest quantity of wine?”

It is important for us to always remember that some of the greatest gifts from God in this life come with such warnings... Here we see that the very wine that we use to celebrate the Lord’s Supper can bring someone like Noah to a position of great shame if abused.

- Those who chose to drink must do so responsibly!

We also saw in the text that these three sons of Noah would populate the entire earth as their wives bore children! Naturally an important part of that process would be healthy physical relations in those marriages and God truly does make it pleasurable! Such relations are celebrated in the Scriptures in Books like the Song of Solomon and the Pauline epistles but just as with the gift of wine, they also come with severe warning about abuse.

In marriage, the Church is pictured as a Bride for Jesus but sex outside of marriage is presented as an affront of adultery against God Himself. It is not just the sin of sodomy that we stand against, but rather ANY sexual activities outside of marriage.

- Just as wine is a central part of the celebration of the Church at this Table, so sexual relations are glorious in the marriage bed!

And just as the abuse of wine leads to the shame of drunkenness, so the misuse of our bodies leads to the sexual abuse & shame that is so rampant today. We can see the same principle at work with other gifts like food or riches. God has given us tasty things to eat and commands us to have feasts and to be hospitably one to another... But the same Scriptures that rejoice in such celebrations also warn us against gluttony where food can be abused either by overeating or by making your eating habits some sort of idol. As food for thought [pun intended] consider how many books on healthy eating or diets you will find in the average bookstore as compared to how many they stock on proper feasting & celebrations!

- Again our goal as faithful Christians is to enjoy and use God’s gifts while avoiding their abuse.

And of course this is very important with our money and earthly possessions as well. God desires to bless His people and showers us with abundant provisions, but also gives severe warnings about their abuse through greed or envy and especially the danger of forgetting God! [Tell the Russian missionary story]

So just as we see with so many of the Saints in the Scriptures, God reveals to us that even righteous Noah is a fallen child of Adam who can and does fall into sin... We should not make excuses for Noah and also remember that there but for the Grace of God it could be us...

IN the verses that follow we see the results of Noah’s sin which includes the grievous sin of his son Ham: And they affect not just these two men BUT all of history, just as the sin of Adam did.

22 “And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside.
23 But Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness.”

- Here again you can imagine the various speculations that have been made regarding what Noah and Ham have done here.

The best way to see this is the simplest in my opinion: Noah got drunk and left himself in an embarrassing situation just as people who black out after too much drinking often do. His son Ham, rather than respecting his father who has fallen into sin, instead multiplies the offense by making fun of his father taking the tale to his brothers.

- Shem and Japheth as faithful sons do not make excuses for Dad but do what they can to cover his sin.

Then we see the consequences of their actions which are manifested down through history: This judgment is not because these are the worst sins ever committed but rather should be seen as occasions to tell of the future, much like the sin of King Hezekiah when he showed the Babylonian envoys the Temple treasures... Israel was not exiled because of that sin, but God used that occasion to explain what was going to happen.

- Here the sins of Noah & Ham are used to foretell the history of man and God's gracious salvation.

24 "So Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done to him. 25 Then he said: "Cursed be Canaan; A servant of servants He shall be to his brethren." 26 And he said: "Blessed be Jehovah, The God of Shem, And may Canaan be his servant. 27 May God enlarge Japheth, and may he dwell in the tents of Shem; And may Canaan be his servant."

The curse that is to follow these sins is given to Canaan not because he somehow participated in his father's sin [though I would argue he had been born at this point since Noah makes reference to him by name].

The curses and blessings are going to follow these families just as the curse of Adam and the blessings of the Gospel promise in Genesis 3:15 follow all of mankind.

As we move on in God's story of salvation we see the sons of Canaan become the objects of God's wrath at Sodom and Gomorrah and later as God's people bring His judgment on the Canaanites and put them into servitude as Noah predicted. [*Not man for man, because we see Rehab as an exception*]

We will look at this in a bit more detail when we see how the genealogies of chapter ten bring forth the nations of the earth: But for this morning we should remember that Abraham comes from the children of Seth & the later Empires that God would use to protect God's people & further subjugate the children of Canaan were the decedents of Japheth.

Our account of Noah ends simply and very directly with verse 28 & 29:

"And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died."

We are brought back to the genealogies of chapter five where we saw person after person live for a number of years, have sons & daughters & then he died!

With a return to that genealogy again in our next message on chapter ten we can in some ways see the entire account of the life of Noah and the Great Flood as a large parenthetical section but in the end righteous Noah faces the same end as all the others: 'and he died.'

- The Bible tells us clearly that death is the final enemy to be destroyed by Jesus and thus it is with us to this day.
- We continue to end the stories of our lives with 'and he or she died.'

As most of you know our latest grandchild was only with us for a few weeks and yesterday the Pettyjohn family laid to rest the body of little Abel Augustus who was with them only a few months and never saw the sunrise.

Yesterday as I worked on this message word came that Judah Soles was taken home suddenly after just two decades... and a few weeks ago we mourned with the Baker family as David's father died after not enough decades. Most of us here, Lord willing, are going to live for a number of decades before we die and even men like Noah or Methuselah or Adam who lived over nine hundred years in the end died because of the fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden.

BUT, we have the confidence that all of these Saints are now with Jesus for all eternity and that one day we will be together with them again **IN THE FLESH!** We know this because of the faithfulness of God and the work of His beloved Son Jesus: We know this because just as the world was destroyed at that time because of sin, Jesus came in history, paid the price for our sin, taking on Himself the full wrath of God due our sin and was raised from the tomb in great power going forth as the first fruits of the resurrection in which we all hope!

And so these are the lessons we should take with us from this account of the life of Noah and the Great Flood that span four chapters and we have considered in these twelve messages:

- We saw how the unrestrained sinfulness of sin in just ten generations brought the world to severe judgment.
- We saw the wrath of God poured out on man as He destroyed all things living save those with Noah on the Ark!
- We saw God remembering His great covenant of salvation where the promised line to the seed of the woman is preserved as God remembers righteous Noah.
- In the rainbow God leaves us with a very visible sign of His promise to now restrain sin and never again destroy the world with those flood waters.

And with the blessings and curses we considered from our text this morning we see where His faithfulness will take all of humanity down through history!

- And thus we end where we began with seeing this as the story of how Jesus came to save His people from their sins!

God is keeping His covenant of salvation: Here He brings forth from the Ark a single family that will go on to populate the world. In Abraham we will see God call forth a nation that will bring salvation to the world through Jesus... And finally in Jesus we will see the Gospel go to all the nations of the world where not a single one of those whom Jesus came to save will be lost, where the results of the fall will be pushed back until His return. And as Pastor Denna reminded the Pettyjohn family at the gravesite where they laid little Abel to rest yesterday morning it will bring a great victory over the last enemy, death... In doing so Mike shared these comforting words from the Apostle Paul: I Corinthians 15:20

“But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. 21 For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. 24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule & all authority & power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.”

And thus we cry with the Apostle John at the end of Revelation, ‘Come Lord Jesus’ as we long to see Him come in glory to defeat that final enemy, DEATH so that we will never again have to hear those dreaded words, ‘and he died.’

Communion Meditation: Hebrews 11:6-7

“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.”