

The Book of Genesis

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The Covenant of God

- I. The Persistence of Life (Genesis 8:20-22)
- A. Upon leaving the ark, Noah built an altar and offered sacrifice to God.
 - B. God was pleased and made a promise concerning the continuance of life upon Earth.
 - C. He would not again curse the ground because of man.
 - 1. This indicates that He would not destroy the world again with a Flood.
 - 2. God demonstrated His justice and judgment in the Flood; now, He will show His abundant mercy and grace.
 - D. He would not again strike down “every living thing” upon the Earth.
 - 1. When Jesus returns at the end of time, it is not to destroy all life.
 - 2. The Earth will be destroyed, but life will continue.
 - 3. In fact, He is come to resurrect the dead – to bring life!
 - E. So, until the end of time, life will continue upon the Earth.
 - F. Note that this promise is connected to Noah’s offering of sacrifice to God.
 - 1. Gratitude
 - 2. Desire for fellowship
 - 3. Need for forgiveness
 - 4. Hope of a Savior
- II. The Primacy of Blood (Genesis 9:1-7)
- A. God blessed Noah and his family in many ways!
 - B. God charged them to re-establish human life on the Earth – in harmony with His will (cf. 1:28).
 - C. God again granted dominion to man over the animal kingdom.
 - 1. In Genesis 1:26-28, God gave man dominion over the animals.
 - 2. Here, He more forcibly stated that animals would fear and dread man.
 - D. Now, man was granted the right to eat meat – the flesh of animals.
 - E. However, blood was not to be consumed by man.
 - 1. God declared that the “life of the flesh is in the blood” (Lev. 17:10-14).
 - 2. It seems that there was a relationship of this command to the principle of blood sacrifice for forgiveness of sins (cf. Lev. 17:11; Hebrews 9:22).
 - F. Also, God defined the distinction between human life and animal life.
 - 1. The taking of a human life was serious and demanded a reckoning.
 - 2. An animal that killed a man was to be put to death (cf. Exo. 21:28-32).
 - 3. A man who killed another person was to be executed.
 - a. This seems to be the ordaining of human government by God (cf. Rom. 13:1-5).
 - b. Capital punishment was a solemn duty of such government (cf. Exo. 21:12; Rom. 13:4; Acts 25:11).
 - c. Since God would not destroy the world with a Flood again, He placed matters of justice in the hands of men – under the guidance of His Word.
 - d. The goal was man’s freedom to carry out the will of God.
 - e. It is vital to understand how the Tower of Babel violated this rule.

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- III. The Promise of Protection (Genesis 9:8-11)
- A. God established a covenant with Noah and his sons that affected all humanity and all life on Earth.
 - B. This covenant was a one-sided, unconditional covenant made by God.
 - 1. Not all of God's covenants were one-sided nor unconditional.
 - 2. The Mosaic covenant demanded the obedience of Israel (Lev. 26:3; etc.).
 - 3. The Christian covenant demands obedience (Heb. 5:8-9; etc.).
 - C. Note that God initiated the covenant – as He did with all His covenants.
 - D. God promised that there would never be a flood of waters to destroy the earth or all life again.
 - 1. Man did not have to continue to dwell near the ark in fear of punishment.
 - 2. He could spread abroad and fill the earth with life, sure of the protection of God.
 - 3. Compare this also to the Tower of Babel.
 - E. God's promise was sure and stands to this day.
- IV. The Proof of Providence (Genesis 9:12-17)
- A. This covenant was made for “perpetual generation.”
 - 1. When God makes a covenant, it is perpetual for as long as He ordains that it will last.
 - 2. This covenant will stand as long as the Earth continues.
 - 3. It is “everlasting” in relation to God's defined limits.
 - 4. It does not preclude Him from destroying the world at the end of time (2 Pet. 3:10-13).
 - 5. Likewise, the Mosaic covenant is perpetual and everlasting (Exo. 29:9; etc.).
 - 6. For as long as God ordained it, it would last.
 - 7. However, this did not keep Him from ending that covenant at the cross.
 - B. The token (sign or distinguishing mark) of this covenant was the rainbow.
 - C. Whenever God sees a rainbow, He remembers His covenant with all life on Earth.
 - D. When man sees a rainbow, he also remembers God's promise.