

Introduction

We have just witnessed the great storm subside and the floodwaters recede. In chapter eight, we stood beside Noah as he stepped out of the Ark onto dry ground, built an altar of consecration, and dedicated his life anew to the Lord. After the severe judgment that swept over the earth, God's mercy shone bright, signaling a fresh start for humanity.

Now, as we step into Genesis chapter nine, we see what this brand-new beginning looks like in practice. Noah and his family emerge into a transformed world, and God immediately meets them with a renewed commission, a solemn covenant, and clear instructions for how life is to be honored and lived under His grace.

As we open the Scriptures together today, we are going to look closely at three major themes that unfold from this chapter:

First, we will examine The New Commission and the Sanctity of Life, looking at how God reaffirmed the mandate to fill the earth, expanded man's diet while placing a sacred boundary on the blood, and established human government to protect the precious image of God in every human being.

Second, we will behold The Covenant of the Rainbow and the Security of God's Promise, considering how the rainbow in the clouds stands as a perpetual sign of God's unmerited favor and faithfulness, pointing us forward to the ultimate grace we enjoy in the New Covenant through Jesus Christ.

Finally, we will address The Failure of the Flesh and the Truth of God's Word, observing how even a hero of faith like Noah fell into sin, confronting historical misinterpretations of Noah's curse on Canaan, and being reminded that our true standing before God is never found in human tradition or our own merit, but solely in the finished work of Christ.

No matter how great the trial behind you or how uncertain the world ahead, God's Word remains our unchanging anchor, and His grace is always sufficient for a fresh start.

Bible Study

Look with me at Genesis chapter nine, starting in verse one...

As we look at this text, we see a world starting over. The storm has passed, the ark has rested, and Noah steps out into a brand-new beginning. It's a picture of God's grace—that even after judgment, He provides a way for a fresh start.

A New Commission and a Respect for Life

Genesis 9:1-7 The Lord begins by blessing Noah and his sons. He gives them the same mandate He gave Adam: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth" (Genesis 9:1, NKJV). But things are different now. Because of sin, a dread of man is placed upon the animals.

God also expands the menu! Prior to the flood, man was a vegetarian, but now God says, "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you" (Genesis 9:3, NKJV). However, there's a vital restriction: they were not to eat the flesh with the life—that is, the blood—still in it.

Why the focus on blood? Because the life of the flesh is in the blood. This wasn't just a dietary or sanitary law; it was a spiritual signpost. It pointed forward to the ultimate sacrifice—the shedding of the precious blood of Jesus Christ on the cross. It is His blood that washes away our sins, and His resurrection that declares Him to be God, Savior, and Lord.

In this same section, God institutes human government by establishing capital punishment. He says, "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God He made man" (Genesis 9:6, NKJV). This is about the sanctity of life. Because every human being is made in the image of God, life is precious. It's a tragic inconsistency when we see people today fighting against capital punishment for the guilty while simultaneously advocating for the destruction of the innocent in the womb through abortion. We need to be consistent: life is a gift from God.

The Covenant of the Bow

Genesis 9:8-17 Next, we see God establishing a covenant. Now, a covenant is simply the basis for how man relates to God.

- The Old Covenants: Often depended on man's faithfulness—and man always failed.
- The New Covenant: This is the beauty of the Gospel! Our relationship with God today isn't based on our ability to keep a checklist of rules; it's based on the faithfulness of Jesus Christ.

God gives a "token" or a sign of this covenant: the rainbow. Every time you see that bow in the clouds, it's a reminder that God keeps His Word. He promised never to destroy the earth with a flood again. While Peter tells us the earth will one day be dissolved by fervent heat, we have God's promise that the waters will never again prevail over the whole earth.

When we look at the throne of God in the Book of Revelation, there is a rainbow around it. It's a constant reminder of God's mercy and His finished work.

The Failure of the Flesh and a Tragic Misinterpretation

Genesis 9:18-29 Even after such a great deliverance, we see the frailty of man. Noah, the hero of the flood, plants a vineyard, gets drunk, and lies uncovered in his tent. It's a reminder that no matter how "godly" a person is, the flesh is still the flesh.

Ham sees his father's nakedness and goes out to mock him to his brothers. But Shem and Japheth show honor; they walk in backward to cover their father without looking. When Noah awakes, he utters a prophecy—a curse upon Canaan, Ham's son.

I want to be very clear here, because there has been some horrible, unscriptural teaching in church history. Some have tried to claim that this curse turned Canaan's skin black and justified the enslavement of African races. That is a lie from the pit of hell. The Curse was on Canaan, the father of the nations that occupied the land of Israel (the Canaanites, Jebusites, etc.).

- In Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free.
- The color of a man's skin has nothing to do with the condition of his heart.

I am not a defender of "church history" or "tradition" when it contradicts the Word. Many times, the "historic church" was an abomination in its practices. I'm glad we can come to the Bible fresh. We

don't need the baggage of man's traditions; we just need the simple, pure teaching of the Word of God.

Practical Application

1. **Respect Life:** Do we view others as being made in the image of God? Whether it's the unborn, the elderly, or those who look different than us, every life has infinite value.
2. **Stay Flexible:** Don't get "hardened" in your traditions. Noah's sons had to adapt to a new world. We must stay open to the moving of the Holy Spirit, always anchored in the Word but never stuck in "the way we've always done it."
3. **Trust the Covenant:** When you fail—and like Noah, you will—don't run from God. Run to the New Covenant. Your standing with God is based on what Jesus did, not what you do.

A Challenge for the Believer

Are you living in the liberty of the New Covenant, or are you trying to earn God's favor through your own works? Stop trying and start trusting. Let the grace of God that saved you be the same grace that sustains you today.

An Invitation to the Unbeliever

Maybe you've been looking at the "historic church" and it's turned you off. Maybe you've seen the hypocrisy and the weird interpretations that exist in the traditional church today. I want to invite you to look past the "religion" and look at Jesus.

He shed His blood on that cross to pay the debt for your sins. He didn't stay in the grave; He rose again, proving He is the Lord of life. He wants to give you a fresh start today—a brand-new beginning. If you will just turn from your way and put your trust in Him, He will forgive you, fill you with His Spirit, and give you a hope that never fades.