

The Gospel in the Rainbow  
Genesis 8-9

Introduction

1. In Genesis 1-2 we saw how the Gospel was reflected in the fact that even before the foundations of the world, God chose to save us; His ultimate plan wasn't the Garden but that we would become partakers of His divine nature and live with Him eternally
2. In Genesis 3 we saw the Gospel reflected not just in the protoevangelium (3:15), but in how God made the first symbolic atonement for sin when He sacrificed an animal and covered Adam and Eve, and when He protected them from taking from the Tree of Life after they sinned
3. In Genesis 4 we saw how the Gospel addresses not just the broken vertical relationship between man and God, but the horizontal relationship between man and man
4. In Genesis 6:1-12 we saw how the Gospel was reflected in the sorrow and grief God felt over man's total depravity and total corruption of His creation, His patience as He delayed His judgment for 120 to provide time for repentance, and His choosing of Noah to have not just himself and his family, but the animals
5. In the rest of chapter 6 and 7 we saw an amazing picture of the Gospel through Noah and the Ark
6. Today, we come to chapters 8-9 and our last session in this series which is how the Gospel is reflected in the Rainbow, the sign of the new covenant after the Flood

A. God remembered Noah and all the inhabitants of the Ark (READ 8:1-19)

1. When the Bible speaks of God remembering someone or something, it doesn't mean that He's forgetful; in fact, God is omniscient which means he knows all things; it's impossible for Him to forget something in a cognitive sense
2. Rather, when the Bible speaks of God remembering, it has more to do with His actions than His cognitive abilities:
  - a. Sometimes it involves God rescuing someone from some situation or personal plight:
    - 1) God rescued Lot from Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:27-29)
    - 2) God rescued Rachel from a barren womb (Genesis 30:22-24)
    - 3) God rescued the sons of Israel when they were captive in Egypt (Exodus 2:23-25)
  - b. This is why it was often used as a plea for God to remember:
    - 1) Samson (Judges 16:28)
    - 2) Hannah (1 Samuel 1:11); jump down to v. 19 where God "remembered" her
    - 3) Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:3)
    - 4) Psalm 25:7: **"Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; according to Your lovingkindness remember me, for Your goodness' sake, O LORD."**
      - a) This last one is an interesting one because we see that asking God not to remember sin means to not hold one accountable for it; it's a plea for mercy and forgiveness
      - b) We see something similar in Isaiah 43:25: **"I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will not remember your sins."**
      - c) This is the opposite of what we find in Jeremiah 14:10: **"Thus says the LORD to this people, 'Even so they have loved to wander; they have not kept their feet in**

**check. Therefore the LORD does not accept them; now He will remember their iniquity and call their sins to account.’”**

3. At the heart and soul of this phrase, “**God remembered**” is God’s faithfulness and that’s exactly what we see here:
  - a. He had put Noah, his family, and all the animals on the Ark to save them from the Flood
  - b. He finishes that work here by sending a wind to dry up the land (8:1)
  - c. He closed the fountains of the deep and the floodgates of the sky (8:2a)
  - d. He restrained the rain (8:2b)
  - e. He caused the Ark to settle on the mountains of Ararat (8:3-4)
  - f. And when the land was finally dry, He instructed Noah to leave the Ark and release the animals (8:13-19)
4. From a grammatical standpoint, “**God remembered**” introduces not just the events we just discussed, but also what comes next

<b>B. After the Flood, God entered into a new covenant with all the inhabitants of the Earth (8:22-9:17)</b>
--

1. Without getting into too much detail, a Biblical covenant is all about a binding relationship between two parties:
  - a. A covenant is more than a contract because contracts focus on services while covenants are all about the relationship
  - b. There were generally three parts to a Biblical covenant and we see all of these here with God’s new covenant after the flood—referred to as the NOAHIC COVENANT:
    - 1) A sacrifice and/or meal
    - 2) Promises and expectations
    - 3) And a sign
2. The first part of a Biblical covenant was the sacrifice and we see this with the Noahic Covenant (READ 8:20-22):
  - a. Noah and his family have been on the Ark for a year and notice that the first thing he does when his feet hit dry land is make an offering to Yahweh:
    - 1) This would have been a sizeable offering because it involved at least one (possibly more) from every kind of clean animal and bird (this would have amounted to about 15 different kinds of animals and 18 different kind of birds per the OT Law)
    - 2) God Himself provided the animals for the offering—remember that it was God who instructed Noah to bring two of every unclean but seven of every clean type of animal and bird on the Ark; the reason for the seven was two-fold: food and sacrifice
    - 3) The type of offering that Noah offered is also important because it was a whole burnt offering which involves everything but the carcass:
      - a) Its primary purpose was to make atonement for sin and restore the relationship between God and man
      - b) In many respects, that makes Noah a type of priest, making sacrifice on behalf of all mankind
  - b. The Lord was pleased and satisfied by Noah’s offering:
    - 1) This phrase “**soothing aroma**” is used 43 times in the OT, always in relationship to burnt offerings to the LORD:

- a) Some translations include a note here suggesting an alternate translation, “resting aroma” and that’s because the word for soothing here refers to a quieting, soothing, or even tranquilizing effect
  - b) It’s very similar to Noah’s name which refers to rest
  - c) Martin Luther rendered this phrase “**odor of rest**” suggesting that at the time of the sacrifices, God rested from His wrath
  - d) That’s fitting here in that God had just brought an end to the Flood
- 2) When God smelled the aroma of Noah’s sacrifice, He declared that He would never again destroy the earth and wipe out all living things:
- a) While God will repeat this promise to Noah later (9:11), here He speaks these words “**to Himself**” revealing His inner thoughts
  - b) We also learn in 9:11 that God was referring to never again judging the earth in a cataclysmic event like the flood prior to the His final act of judgment in the Day of the Lord in the end times
  - c) The reason He won’t do this is because “**the intent of man’s heart is evil from his youth**”:
    - This reveals a bit of a paradox when it comes to God
    - Back in 6:5, we learned that this is precisely why God brought about the Flood and destroyed the earth
    - However, here it is the reason given why God will never do that again and it serves as an incredible example of the depths of God’s mercy and grace
    - In Acts and Romans, Paul describes this as God temporarily overlooking and passing over sins as an exercise of His divine forbearance (READ Acts 17:30 and Romans 3:25)
- 3) God’s patience and mercy is evidenced by a return to normalcy and predictability when it comes to His creation (READ 8:22)—these are all examples of God’s common grace to mankind!
3. The second part of Biblical covenants is the promises and expectations, and we see this with the Noahic Covenant (9:1-11):
- a. Let’s start with what God expected of Noah and his descendants (READ 9:1-7):
    - 1) God repeated the command to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth from Genesis 1 (and repeats it again in v. 7), but instead of simply repeating the final two commands—subdue and rule over—here God states that “**the fear of you and terror of you will be on every beast of the earth and on every bird of the sky, with everything that creeps on the ground, and all the fish of the sea, into your hand they are given.**”
    - 2) The reason for this is that God has now given mankind not only every green plant for food (again, a reference back to Genesis 1), but “**every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you**” (e.g. they can now eat animals)
    - 3) This is where we see what God expected of mankind and it comes in the form of prohibitions:
      - a) One prohibition related to the eating of animals; they could not eat the flesh with the blood still in it since the blood represents life
      - b) A second prohibition was against the taking of human life—not just by mankind but animals; this really wasn’t a new prohibition, but repeated here for emphasis and with new a new penalty

- b. We now move to what God promised (READ 9:8-11):
  - 1) God promised to never again destroy the earth and all living things with a flood
  - 2) This covenant does not eliminate the possibility of future judgment, but rather indicates that the Flood was a one-time unique event that God will not repeat; Rather, he will exercise divine forbearance until the final destruction at the end of time when He pours out His wrath upon the earth for a final time
- 4. The third and final part of Biblical covenants is the sign and we see this with the Noahic Covenant (READ 9:12-17)

C. Just as we've seen in the previous 10 chapters of Genesis, we see glimpses and foreshadowing of the Gospel here in the Noahic Covenant

**\*\*Look at the similarities between the Noahic Covenant and the New Covenant**

- 1. Right off the bat we see similarities because they are both Biblical covenants:
  - a. They were both initiated by God
  - b. They were both inaugurated with a sacrifice: the Noahic Covenant with Noah's sacrificial offering and the New Covenant with Jesus' sacrifice of Himself
  - c. They both contain expectations and promises such as God's promise not to destroy the world again with a flood and His promise of eternal salvation for those who trust Christ for salvation
  - d. Finally, they were both sealed with a sign (the Noahic Covenant with the rainbow and the New Covenant with the Holy Spirit)
- 2. Another obvious similarity between the two covenants is that Noah and the Ark serve as types (examples) of Jesus and the Cross:
  - a. God used one man Noah, and a wooden Ark, to rescue Noah, his family, and the animals from His judgment and wrath
  - b. Likewise, He used one God-man, Jesus, and a wooden cross, to save not only mankind but even Creation from eternal judgment and wrath
- 3. A third similarity is that both covenants confirm that God is a God who not only desires to save but provides the means to do so:
  - a. With the Noahic Covenant, we saw God's desire to save mankind physically from His judgment and wrath
  - b. With the New Covenant, we see His desire to save mankind spiritually from His eternal judgment and wrath
- 4. A final similarity is that both covenants reveal that God's resolve to save is based upon the nature of mankind:
  - a. Back in Genesis 8:21 we learned that God's resolve to never destroy mankind again with a flood was because of his compassion over the fact that we are sinful to the core; instead, He exercises divine forbearance because **"the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth"**
  - b. The Gospel and New Covenant is based on a similar resolve—God's recognition that we are sinners in need of salvation (READ Romans 5:8): **"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."**