Last week we left the Genesis account of history with Noah, his wife, his sons, and his sons wives stepping off the ark and out into a completely new world.

Hopefully, you have taken the time to consider the flood and all that it means both literally and figuratively.

Hopefully, you see the flood not only as factual, but as a teaching tool to help you understand how God views sin, and how God saved you.

We are now at the point where Noah and his family enter a new world, a new life.

You, too, live in a new world of God’s making, and he’s given you new life.

Later today, we will have the privilege of witnessing several young people proclaim this new life, as well as their death to the old life, through the symbolic act of baptism.

For now, my question to you as we begin today is,

“How are you responding to this newness of life that God has so graciously given you?”

Do you understand it?

Do you take it for granted?

Or are you thankful?

Are you walking in this newness of life, or are you making that daily or minute-by-minute choice to return to death, to an old, dead way of life?

These are good diagnostic questions for each of us.

SLIDE 1

Please open your Bibles to Genesis chapter 8.

Today we will examine Genesis 8:20 through 9:7.

What we will see here is Noah’s response to God’s salvation and kindness,

God’s loving response to Noah,

and God’s instruction to his children as they face life in a new world.

You see, this is story of relationship above all else.

We have a very personal relationship with God, whether we recognize that or not.

For some of us this relationship is fractured or filled with distrust on our part.

Maybe we are bitter toward God, or indifferent.

For others, this relationship with the God of the universe is life’s greatest source of joy.

For some, everything revolves around it.

When it is framed this way, the relationship between God and the individual is a great source of pleasure for God, He wants to be our Father.

This is what we will see in our passage today.

Let’s read.

**20Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. 21And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his heart, “I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. 22While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.” 9 And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. 2The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. 3Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. 4But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. 5And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man. From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man 6“Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image. 7And you, be fruitful and multiply, increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it.”**

As soon as the ark is emptied, certainly as soon as all duties and responsibilities are completed with regard to disembarking, what does Noah do?

He does not sit down to rest. He does not take off exploring the new world.

SLIDE 2

He takes of each of the clean animals, which most likely means those that are domesticated and that Noah has the most need of.

He then builds an altar and sacrifices these clean animals to God.

This explains, by the way, why there were seven of each of these on the ark, and not just two. The extra animals were to be sacrificial, and to ensure a food supply for the future.

Think of the faith and dedication to God that it must have taken for Noah to give up these animals.

In the same situation, would we be willing to let these precious resources go, or would we be unwilling to give them up?

How are we now?

The more valuable something is, the less likely we are to give it up, even to or especially to God! So Noah offered these animals up to God, without a doubt offering up a prayer of fervent thanksgiving and of appeal to God to continue saving them.

I mean, how afraid would you be in this situation?

Nothing was the same,

The flood had to have been unbelievably harrowing.

Would it happen again?

Was God pleased with what they had done?

Noah at this point had to feel remarkably humble.

Can you even imagine being one of eight people left on the entire earth?

Every single person Noah and his family had ever known were now DEAD.

Think of it.

Put yourself in their place.

What now, Lord?

Noah proved his devotion to God with his actions.

He immediately made a sincere sacrifice to God.

How do we know it was sincere?

SLIDE 3

Notice God’s response to what Noah did.

The aroma of the sacrifice was “sweet” to the Lord.

And the Lord said, In His heart,

“I’m not ever again going to issue another curse because of man.

His heart is evil from his youth.

I’m not going to kill everything, like I just did.”

What God is saying to Himself here is that even though these kids are bad, I’m not going to destroy all of them again.

They need saving.

Also, I’m not going to once again destroy every living thing on account of them.

This is incredible.

Despite God’s knowing the evil intentions of our hearts, He will offer salvation.

Notice this response is exactly that, a response to Noah’s gratitude and humility.

Once God makes this promise in His heart, He speaks.

It is amazing to think that God speaks to his people!

That collection of books in your lap is his side of a very personal conversation with you.

In verse 8:22, there is an amazing promise.

It is a direct response to the fears Noah and his family undoubtedly harbored.

Remember, they had just been through the most frightening and unnerving experiences one could ever imagine.

And now, everything they had known and become familiar with was gone.

Nothing even looked the same!

There were no animals!

There were no other people!

Would the water come again?

Would judgment come again?

God recognizes the fears and concerns of his children and tells them,

**“While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.”**

This is a promise not only for Noah and his family, but for all of us who have come after.

Have you ever walked out your door on a frosty late October morning, or noted with pleasure that these April days are getting longer?

Or maybe you’re a weirdo and you revel in the 75 mph winds that rip the tin foil off that apple pie you’re carrying into Grandma’s house on Thanksgiving!

Ah, Lord, how cool!

The wind is back, just like clockwork!

How about the cicadas starting up in the third week of July, letting us know we are in mid- summer?

The precise regularity of the comings and goings of the seasons, of the length of days, is not accidental.

It is not a product of uniformity, the concept that nothing ever changes.

It is proof that God keeps His word.

There is a very interesting caveat to this promise, however, and it’s given at the beginning. SLIDE 4

The phrase “While the earth remains...” is ominous, especially for the unbeliever.

The seasons will be predictable.

Night and day will be predictable.

As long as the earth remains, that is.

The day is coming, however, when the earth will not remain.

Keep your place in Genesis and turn with me to 2 Peter 3.

Beginning in verse 2, let’s read.

**“...remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, 3knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. 4They will say, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.” 5For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, 6and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. 7But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.**

**8But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. 10But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.**

**11Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, 12waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! 13But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.**

Wow.

So we can know some things from reading Genesis 8 and 2 Peter 3.

The seasons will come and go predictably, like clockwork, and the sun will never fail to rise. God is the one who ordains this.

He promised it would be so.

There’s a lyric that I love from Fernando Ortega.

He sings, “This good day, it is a gift from you.

The world is turning in its place because you made it to.”

Our God is a God of order.

Things will go on in uniformity and precision...until they don’t.

Judgment is coming.

This earth and the whole universe will pass away.

Actually, they will burn.

But until that day, all people saved and unsaved live under the same promise.

God will not destroy the earth with all who live on it until we have undergone judgment.

Back to SLIDE 3

Chapter 9 opens with another incredible example of how God personally cares about us.

I’ll pause here and ask you to examine your view of God as a communicator.

Do you view God as an indifferent or mostly silent presence?

Is He just sort of “there?”

Does He care about you and your life?

Is He absent from your life?

To all of you Dads out there, I want to remind you that studies have shown that your kid’s concept of God will very likely come from YOU!

In other words, your child or children’s view of God will come from the example you have given them of what a Father is like.

For me, this makes a lot of sense.

I didn’t grow up with a Father, and the one I did have, my biological father, knew about me and wanted nothing to do with me.

I never saw him. Interestingly, I’ve always had great difficulty in connecting with the concept of God as my loving, caring Father in heaven.

I have felt unworthy and inconsequential to Him.

How about you?

Understand God’s care and concern for his children in this passage, and then connect with it. God loves you and cares for you.

He is your Father in heaven.

Have you ever really thought and meditated on what this means?

SLIDE 5

In verse 1 of Chapter 9, God answers the question,

“What do we do now, Father?”

Go ahead and apply this to yourself and your life.

Be fruitful and multiply.

This means be productive.

Be diligent.

Have dominion.

Be responsible before God.

So again, God blessed Noah and his sons, telling them again to be fruitful and multiply and to spread out over the earth.

Here God the Father is telling them first what to do in a very fatherly way, and then He explicitly tells them what their role on earth is to be.

In verse 2 He gives everything on the earth to men to take care of.

In verse 3 he makes it clear that all resources are to be subject to man.

There is an implicit charge here to be good stewards of what God has given us.

SLIDE 6

In verse 4, notice that God removes a restriction here, and gives man permission to eat meat, so long as blood is not eaten.

Why is this?

There are huge truths contained in these verses that we too often have skipped over or disregarded.

God says here that “Life is in the Blood.”

Why did He set it up that way?

I don’t know, but He did.

Let’s take a moment to explore this idea of “Life” being “in the blood.”

Later, when God is giving His law to the people, He gives further insight to this concept.

Turn if you will to Leviticus 17:11-13.

**“...the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life. 12Therefore I have said to the people of Israel, No person among you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger who sojourns among you eat blood. 13“Any one also of the people of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn among them, who takes in hunting any beast or bird that may be eaten shall pour out its blood and cover it with earth. 14For the life of every creature is its blood: its blood is its life. Therefore, I have said to the people of Israel, You shall not eat the blood of any creature, for the life of every creature is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off.”**

In this passage, the words “life” and “soul” are the same Hebrew word, *Nephesh.*

Blood carries life and is somehow deeply intertwined with our souls.

There is a consciousness that anything containing blood has, that plant life does not have.

Think about the actual physiological importance of blood.

It carries all the essential chemicals from the air and all the nutrients we ingest to the body.

It is the conveyer of life.

It maintains the consciousness in our brains.

Thus, the life of an animal spilled on a sacrificial altar was accepted by God in substitutionary death for a guilty sinner.

Refer back to Genesis 9:5.

Blood will be required as a reckoning.

This literally means “Blood will be required for blood.”

Life for Life.

Hebrews 9:22 instructs us that

**“...Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins.”**

This is because life is in the blood, and blood carries life.

It is literal and symbolic.

Blood is required to satisfy injustice.

This is what God is saying in Verse 5.

Notice the legal tone of verses 5 and 6.

There must be justice, because God is a just God.

That is why He had to destroy the earth and all its inhabitants.

He had to set things right.

Depending on your translation, you may be seeing words like “require” “demand” “penalty”

“reckoning” or “accounting.”

God is loving and personal.

I hope that point has been made clearly today.

At the same time, God is Holy, Righteous, and Just.

I hope that is equally clear.

These attributes must be satisfied.

As much as He loves us, our Holy and Just God cannot tolerate the presence of sin, which is a debt.

Atonement, or a covering of our sin debt must be paid. Blood is the vehicle or the means of payment.

We know now that Jesus has paid this debt that we all owe God once and for all.

Faith in Jesus and trust in the fact that He paid our debt with His blood is the ONLY condition for salvation.

The last verse in our passage, verse 6, expands on the idea of a reckoning, and establishes the fact that when one person murders another, their life will be required of them.

This of course, sets up the concept of not only capital punishment, but the responsibility of man to carry out this justice.

In other words, it is the basis for human government.

This responsibility extends to punishing any behavior that could lead to murder.

The idea is to avoid the unchecked evil that preceded the need for world-wide destruction. Again, remember the context.

God is giving fatherly instruction as Noah and his family are set to embark on a new life.

V. 7 concludes our passage with God’s general instruction once again to be fruitful and multiply. Have you ever wondered why God says this so often?

What have you who now have grown children always told your kids?

Hopefully you’ve instructed them to Get out there and do well!

Launch!

Go!

Be productive and prosperous!

This is God’s earthly desire for us.

Within this process, He has much to teach us spiritually.

We are to be productive caretakers of all He has given us.

So what do I want you to take away this morning?

As we all get up every morning and step off the ark once again, realize that every single day we are stepping into something new.

God cares about us and wants us to do well.

He is personal.

He speaks to us in a Fatherly way.

There are things He wants us to do, and things He forbids us to do, and when we mess up, He has made a way to set things right between Himself and us, His children.

God cares for you, and He desires above all to have a good relationship with you.

Remember, God is perfectly balanced.

There is perfect symmetry and balance between His love and His righteousness.

We should be equally balanced between being confident and secure in His awesome love for us, and being respectful, even fearful, of His perfect righteousness.

SLIDE 7

Application:

**1. Remain Thankful (Genesis 8:20)**

**2. Receive God’s Kindness (Genesis 8:21-22)**

**3. Respect God’s Righteousness (9:4-6)**

**4. Respond to God’s Instruction (Genesis 9:1-2)**