

# Noah & the Flood: The Aftermath (Genesis 9:1-17)

## Expository Lessons from the Book of Genesis

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### I. Recap from the Previous Lesson

- a. Noah was a faithful and righteous man: he did everything just as God told him. In that, he is a great example for us to follow.
- b. Noah's faith is held up as an example for Christians (Heb. 11). Saving faith includes not only believing, but also obeying God by building an ark.
- c. The destruction of the flood foreshadowed of the final day of judgment: it came suddenly, with most spiritually unprepared.
- d. Noah's family in the ark foreshadowed those who will be saved in the end: only a righteous few were saved.

### II. Immediately After the Flood

- a. Review from end of **chapter 8**:
  - i. After being on the ark for about a full year, the ground dries up and God tells Noah to bring his family and the animals out of the ark (**Genesis 8:15-19**).
  - ii. Noah builds an altar, offers up clean animal sacrifices to God. God states he will not curse the earth and destroy the earth like that again (**Genesis 8:20-22**).
- b. The story continues, in **chapter 9** (Read **Genesis 9:1-7**).
  - i. Noah and his sons (mankind) told to be fruitful and multiply; they are given dominion and authority over all of the creatures of the earth, land and sea (**Genesis 9:1-2, 9:7**). This is essentially the same charge God gave Adam and Eve in **Genesis 1:28**.
  - ii. All living things (animals) now given to man for food; "every moving thing that lives shall be food for you" (**Genesis 9:3**).
    1. Note that originally, Adam and Eve had been given plants to eat (**Genesis 1:29-30**). However, Abel was a shepherd.
    2. No distinction here (yet) between clean and unclean. Apparently OK to eat pigs, snakes, shellfish, etc. at this time.
    3. Only later, when Moses is given the Law at Mt. Sinai, would the restrictions come in regarding not eating certain unclean animals and fish (**Leviticus 11**)

- c. HOWEVER, God specifies, “you shall not eat flesh with its blood in it” (**Genesis 9:4**). Question: Why was (is?) it such a big deal to God about eating blood after an animal has been killed?
- i. Moses repeats the prohibition against consuming blood in **Leviticus 7:26** where it says, “Moreover, you shall not eat any blood in any of your dwellings, whether of birds or cattle. Any soul who eats blood, that soul shall be utterly destroyed from among his people.”
  - ii. Further instruction provided in **Leviticus 17**.
    1. (Read **Leviticus 17:10-14**) “(God tells Moses to say to the people) ‘And, whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the resident aliens dwelling among you, eats any blood, I will set my face against that soul who eats blood, and will utterly destroy him from among his people. For the life of all flesh is in its blood, and I give it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for its blood makes atonement for the soul’
    2. “Therefore I said to the children of Israel, ‘No one among you shall eat blood, nor shall any resident alien who dwells among you eat blood.’ Whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the resident aliens dwelling among you, hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dirt; for the life of all flesh is in its blood. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, ‘You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is in its blood. Whoever eats it shall be utterly destroyed.’”
  - iii. From Leviticus, reasons why blood is special:
    1. The blood is to make atonement for souls.
    2. “The *life* (same word used in the LXX, **psyche**, the Greek word used in the LXX is also translated ‘*soul*’) of all flesh is in the blood.”
- d. But aren’t all foods considered ‘clean’ now? Consider:
- i. Jesus made all food ‘clean’ (**Mark 7:5-22**).
  - ii. Peter was told in a vision to kill and eat unclean animals (**Acts 10:9-16**), that God had made them clean. This direction was confirmed by all the apostles shortly later in **Acts 15**, at the Jerusalem Council.
  - iii. Paul explains that all food is now clean in **1 Corinthians 10:23-31**, where he quotes **Psalms 24:1**, “The earth is the Lord’s and all its fullness”.

- iv. Paul explains in **Colossians 2:14-17** that the old law has been taken away, nailed to the cross. Therefore, no one can “judge you in food or drink”.
- e. Question: After Christ was crucified and the Law of Moses was done away with, were Christians allowed to eat or drink the blood of animals?
  - i. At the Jerusalem Council, decision was made as recorded in **Acts 15:20**, that Gentiles be instructed “to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood”.
- f. Question: Was that prohibition as stated in **Acts 15** just temporary, perhaps to not offend the Jews at that time? Does it still apply to us today? Let’s see how this was addressed by Christian writers over the next 300 years. The following quotations come from an article on Blood in the *Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs*, edited by David Bercot.
  - i. Clement of Alexandria (c. 195 AD), commenting on what Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians 10**, said, “The apostle says, ‘All other things buy out of the meat market, asking no questions,’ with the exception of the things mentioned in the catholic (general/universal) epistle of all the apostles ‘with the consent of the Holy Spirit’. This is written in the Acts of the Apostles, and it was conveyed to the faithful by the hands of Paul himself. For they indicated ‘that they must of necessity abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication’. (ANF v.2, p.427)
  - ii. Tertullian (c. 197 AD) wrote, “Blush for your vile ways before Christians, who do not have even the blood of animals at their meals of simple and natural food. We abstain from things strangled and from things that die a natural death...To clench the matter with a single example, you tempt Christians with sausages of blood, just because you are perfectly aware that the thing by which you thus try to get them to transgress what they hold unlawful.” (ANF v.3, p.25)
  - iii. Mark Minucius Felix (c. 200 AD) wrote, “So much do we shrink from human blood that we do not use the blood even of edible animals in our food.” (ANF v.4, p.192)
  - iv. Other early Christian writers who wrote about the prohibition of eating or drinking blood include: Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Origen and Lactantius. It is also discussed in the Apostolic Constitutions (compiled c. 390 AD). Reasons given include:
    1. **Acts 15** prohibitions still apply to us.
    2. Life or soul is connected to the blood.

3. Eating and drinking blood a demonic practice, tied to the occult (still is, today!).
- g. Bottom line: Christians today are allowed to eat meat and can even eat things like pork and shellfish that were prohibited under the Jewish dietary laws handed down through Moses at Mount Sinai. HOWEVER, we are still to avoid eating or drinking animal blood, a prohibition that had been given much earlier, to Noah, but confirmed in **Acts 15**.
  - i. It seems to me that would include avoiding things like 'blood pudding' and 'blood sausage'.

### III. God Makes a Covenant with Noah (Read Genesis 9:8-17)

- a. God will never again destroy the earth *by water*.
  - i. "Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood..." (**Genesis 9:11**)
  - ii. Peter warns us that just as the ancient world was "flooded with water", the heavens and the earth are now "reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men". (**2 Peter 3:6-7**)
- b. Rainbow in the sky (seen after rain storms) is given as a reminder of that promise and covenant.
- c. When you see a rainbow, think of the great flood, of Noah and God's first covenant with man.

### IV. The Flood Foreshadowed One More Thing: Christian Baptism

- a. General approach we are taking in this series of lessons: when reading the OT stories, we always look at the points that Jesus and the apostles are making out of those stories. Examples from this **Genesis** series:
  - i. Jesus used **Genesis 2** (creation of the first man and woman) as the basis for his teaching permanence of marriage, in **Matthew 19:1-12**.
  - ii. Paul used **Genesis 2 and 3** (creation of woman, and the first sin) for his teaching in **1 Corinthians 11**, **1 Corinthians 14** and **1 Timothy 2** regarding head covering and role of women in the church.
  - iii. The apostles confirmed that prohibition against eating or drinking blood given to Noah in **Genesis 9** is still in effect, as noted in **Acts 15**.
  - iv. Now we will take the same approach to looking at something important that Peter taught in connection with the flood story.
  - v. Jesus and the apostles make three connections that show how the great flood of Noah foreshadows the final judgment:

1. **First aspect:** It will happen for the whole world on one day; will catch most by surprise (covered in the previous lesson).
  2. **Second aspect:** Most will face destruction; only a righteous few will be saved (covered in the previous lesson).
  3. **Third aspect:** (We will cover that right now!)
- b. In **1 Peter**, the apostle Peter's explains why all Christians need to be submissive to authorities (citizens to kings and governors, slaves to masters, wives to husbands; and Christians generally to one another). We must be willing to suffer for righteousness sake, just as Jesus did, to achieve a greater glory in the end. In the midst of this, Peter makes a very interesting side point, where he connects the flood of Noah to Christian baptism.
- i. (Read **1 Peter 3:18-22**) "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.
  - ii. "There is also *an antitype which now saves us – baptism* (not the removal of filth from the flesh but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him."
    1. What is Peter saying here? What is he trying to teach us here from the story of the great flood? First, a look at the term, 'antitype' (used in NKJV here).
    2. 'Antitype' is a very accurate and specific (if uncommonly used) term. It is essentially transliterated from the Greek '**antitupos**' here. The word combines two Greek terms:
      - a. 'anti' = instead of; and
      - b. 'type' = pattern.
    3. Very important concept in understanding 'Eastern' (allegorical) style prophecies.
    4. This has to do with patterns and foreshadowings. The type comes first, indicating the pattern for the antitype which is to follow.
    5. Similar to how 'type' on an old printing press or typewriter would establish a specific pattern that would be impressed

upon paper with ink. The 'antitype' would then be revealed in the image on the printed document.

6. Other classic examples of type/antitype pairs from Scripture:
  - a. Passover lamb/ Christ (as John the Baptist explains in **John 1:29**):
    - i. Lamb in **Exodus 12** = type
    - ii. Jesus being sacrificed = antitype
  - b. Jonah in the whale / Christ in Hades 3 days (as Jesus explains in **Matthew 12:39-41**):
    - i. Jonah and the whale = types
    - ii. Christ and Hades = antitypes
  - c. Melchizedek / Jesus (explained in **Hebrews 5-7**):
    - i. Melchizedek = type
    - ii. Jesus = antitype
  - d. Tabernacle of Moses / Heavenly things and Christ's high priesthood (explained in **Hebrews 8:1-6**):
    - i. Tabernacle and high priest = types
    - ii. Heavenly things and Jesus = antitypes
- iii. Now let us re-read from **1 Peter 3:20-21**. "...once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us – baptism..."
  1. Few being saved through water in flood = type
  2. Christian baptism = antitype (which now saves us)
- iv. Peter is saying that just as a righteous few were saved through water in the flood (which was a type, or foreshadowing pattern), a righteous few will be saved now, through baptism! Peter actually says that *baptism now saves us*.
- v. Some people hearing this may find this disturbing and may want to object. For example some who hear this may be wondering:

1. But isn't baptism a work, since it is something you do? Aren't we saved "by grace through faith", and *not by works*, as Paul says in **Ephesians 2:8-9**?
  2. But I thought I was 'saved' when I first 'accepted Christ as my personal Lord and Savior', or 'said the sinner's prayer'! I wasn't baptized until later, long after I was 'saved'.
- c. Let's take another look at what the Scriptures teach regarding baptism.
- i. As always, it's best to start with what Jesus said.
    1. Speaking to Nicodemus, in **John 3:5**, "Jesus answered, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'"
    - a. The early Christian writers all understood what Jesus said here regarding "being born of water and the spirit" as pertaining to water baptism.
    - b. In one of the earliest Christian apologies we have (written to explain to Roman unbelievers what Christians actually believe and practice, and why it is true and reasonable) was Justin Martyr's *First Apology* (c. 160 AD). There, Justin explains to the unbelievers how someone actually becomes a Christian:
      - i. "As many as are persuaded and believe that what we teach and say is true, and undertake to be able to live accordingly...are brought by us to where there is water, and are regenerated in the same manner in which we ourselves were regenerated. For, in the name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing with water. For Christ also said, 'except you be born again, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven' (**John 3:3-5**)..."
      - ii. "...We have learned from the apostles the reason. Since at our birth, we were born without our knowledge or choice, by our parents coming together...In order that we may not remain the children of necessity and of ignorance, but may become the children of choice and knowledge, and *may obtain in water the remission of sins* formerly committed, there is announced over

him who chooses to be born again, and has repented of his sins,

- iii. “the name of God the Father and Lord of the universe...the man who leads the candidate to the place of washing refers to God only by that designation...This washing is called illumination because those who learn these things are illuminated in their understanding.
- iv. “And in the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
- v. “and in the name of the Holy Spirit, who through the prophets foretold all things about Jesus, he who is illuminated is washed.”
- vi. Source for the preceding quotations on baptism from Justin Martyr: See ANF v.1, p.183. See also chapter 5 of *We Don't Just Speak Great Things, We Live Them*, by Scroll Publishing. It offers an excellent first-hand look into the early faith, featuring modern translations of two early apologies, Justin's *First Apology*
- vii. Points to be taken from Justin's comments include:
  1. Being 'born again' is equated with baptism in water. Other early Christian writers such as Clement of Alexandria, Cyprian and Irenaeus had the same understanding of **John 3:3-5**.
  2. Notice that the reason we have to be born again is because we need to make our own decision. Justin indicates that personal faith, free decision and repentance are required. (Seems to me that this would seem to rule out infant baptism.)
  3. The baptism is done in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, just as Jesus instructed in **Matthew 28:18-20**.

4. Justin says this is the standard manner in which all Christians, including Justin himself, obtained the remission of sins.
- c. In **Mark 16:15-16** Jesus tells the apostles to go throughout the world preaching the gospel, adding “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”
- i. Note that the **Mark 16** ‘long ending’ while disputed by some, is contained in almost all ancient manuscripts. It is in the Majority Text, and included in the KJV and NKJV.
  - ii. While not included in two early texts from the mid 300’s, Tatian quotes from this passage even earlier (c. 160 AD, ANF v.9, p.128), as does Irenaeus (c. 180 AD, ANF v.1, p.426).
  - iii. Note that Jesus says “he who believes and is baptized will be saved”. He does NOT say “he who believes and is saved *will be baptized*”! For Jesus, belief and baptism are both necessary for salvation.
  - iv. If I said “If you go to my bank and cash this check you will receive \$100,000, but if you don’t go to the bank you won’t receive any of it”, what would you think? Is it also necessary to cash the check to get the money? (Parallel example to **Mark 16:16**)
- d. At the end of gospel of Luke, in **Luke 24:46-49**, Jesus instructs the disciples to go to Jerusalem, telling them that “repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” What was the message regarding remission of sins that was first preached in Jerusalem? Peter preaches to the crowd in Jerusalem on Pentecost, concluding in **Acts 2:37-41**:
- i. “Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?’
  - ii. “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall

receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call.

- iii. “And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation.’ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.”
  1. Faith and repentance are necessary, as well as baptism.
  2. Baptism is for the remission of sins.
  3. We receive the Holy Spirit; water + spirit connection.
  4. This was the message regarding remission of sins that would go out to the whole world, which all people everywhere should heed. That is what Jesus and Peter both said.
- ii. What did Paul say about baptism? He is the one who said we are saved by grace through faith (**Ephesians 2:8-9**).
  1. There are three accounts of Paul’s conversion in the book of **Acts** (in **Acts 9:1-18**; also recounted in **chapters 22 & 26**). After Paul had a personal encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus, he spent three days in prayer and fasting, Ananias then comes to him and says, “And now, why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord. (**Acts 22:16**)”
    - a. Question: If the apostle Paul still needed to be baptized to have his sins washed away after three days of praying and fasting, *who are we to think we can pray away our sins* without being baptized?
  2. Study out other things that Paul wrote regarding baptism, in his letters. For example:
    - a. In **Romans 6:3-6** Paul wrote, “we were buried with him through baptism into His death...if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, we also shall be united in the likeness of his resurrection”.

- i. God's plan is to save both our bodies and our soul at the last day, when both our body and soul will be raised.
- b. In **Ephesians 4:4-5** Paul speaks of the unity of all Christians: "one Lord, one faith, *one baptism*".
  - i. Baptism is core, essential and something that is the basis for the unity of all Christians, everywhere.
  - ii. I find it quite disturbing that some groups have held such a sectarian view of baptism that they use it as a wedge to increase division within the body of Christ! In some circles, a correct theological understanding of baptism has become the central, defining litmus test for determining who is a Christian.
  - iii. Regarding unity and baptism, I appreciate the perspective of early Restoration Movement leaders such as Campbell, Stone, Harding and Lipscomb. They held that if you do what Jesus told you to do (have faith, repent and be baptized), then he will do what he promised (forgiveness of sins and indwelling gift of Spirit), regardless of whether you have your theology on baptism down perfect at the time. (For further reading on this, especially for those from Restoration Movement backgrounds, I highly recommend a short book, *Rebaptism*, by Jimmy Allen)
- iii. How early Christians understood these teachings
  - 1. Justin Martyr (c. 160 AD)
    - a. Background for Justin's comments:
      - i. In **Isaiah chapter 1** the prophet Isaiah preaches the Word of the Lord to the wayward Jewish nation. He calls them 'Sodom and Gomorrah' and says that God will reject their sacrifices and religious observances. Isaiah warns the Jews that the Lord will not listen to their prayers because of the blood on their hands.

- ii. Then the Lord admonishes them in **Isaiah 1:16-18**, "Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean. Put away the evils from your souls before My eyes. Cease from your evils. Learn to do good...'Come now, and let us reason together', says the Lord, 'although your sins are like crimson, I shall make them white like snow, and although they are scarlet, I shall make them white like wool.'"
  - b. Justin in his *First Apology* refers to the **Isaiah 1:16-18** passage which says, "wash yourselves and make yourselves clean...although your sins be as scarlet I shall make them white as..." as being fulfilled in Christ, and specifically through baptism (ANF v.1, pp.177, 183)
  - c. Justin also points to the Isaiah prophecy in his *Dialogue with Trypho*, stating "By reason therefore of this laver of repentance and knowledge of God, which has been ordained on account of the transgression of God's people, as Isaiah cries, we have believed, and testify that that very baptism which he announced is alone able to purify those who have repented; and this is the water of life." (ANF v.1, p.201)

## 2. Irenaeus (c. 180 AD)

- a. Irenaeus cites the story of Naaman's cleansing in **2 Kings 5:1-14**, where he dipped himself seven times in the Jordan to be healed, as foreshadowing Christian baptism. Irenaeus wrote, "It was for nothing that Naaman of old, when suffering from leprosy, was purified upon his being baptized, but it served as an indication to us. For as we are lepers in sin, we are made clean, by means of the sacred water and the invocation of the Lord, from our old transgressions; being spiritually regenerated as new-born babes, even as the Lord has declared, 'Except a man be born again through water and the Spirit, he shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.'" (ANF v. 1, p.574)
- b. Irenaeus, in book 1, chapter 21 of *Against Heresies*, commented that the heretical sects of his day often had different schemes of redemption. Examples Irenaeus provided included: initiation ceremonies, special knowledge or beliefs, 'spiritual baptisms' that did not involve being immersed in water, special words

invoked. Irenaeus commented, “this class of men have been instigated by Satan to a denial of that baptism which is regeneration to God, and thus to a renunciation of the whole (Christian) faith.” (ANF v. 1, p.345-6)

3. Additional resources regarding how baptism was understood and practiced in the early church:
  - a. Article on Baptism in the *Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs*, edited by David Bercot. This provides dozens of quotes from approximately 20 different early Christian writers, along with primary source references.
  - b. *What the Early Christians Believed about Baptism*, audio lesson by David Bercot, available in audio CD format or online through Scroll Publishing.
- iv. Note that many of the early Anabaptists closely connected water baptism with the spiritual new birth, as well. In that regard, many of the early Anabaptists had an understanding of baptism that was closer to the early church than that of their spiritual descendants today.
  1. Menno Simons wrote, “We find but one baptism in water that is pleasing to God. This is baptism on confession of faith, commanded by Jesus Christ and practiced by the apostles, a baptism administered and received for the forgiveness and remission of sins...”
  2. For the above and similar quotes from early Anabaptists regarding the significance of baptism, along with primary source references, see chapter 11 of Peter Hoover’s book, *The Secret of the Strength – What Would the Anabaptists Tell This Generation*.

## V. Conclusions from this Lesson

- a. Noah was told he could eat any kind of animal, but not the blood in it. Based on **Acts 15**, that still applies to us. Do not eat or drink blood!
- b. God makes a covenant to never again destroy the world *by water*. The rainbow is given as a sign of that covenant.
- c. Peter says in **1 Peter 3** that the water of the flood, through which a few were saved, foreshadowed baptism. The flood was the ‘type’ and baptism, which now saves us, is the ‘antitype’.
- d. The teachings of Jesus, Peter and Paul all point to baptism as essential for salvation. The early Christians understood this also. This is where our sins are forgiven, and the new birth takes place. If this is a new teaching to you, take the time to study it out!