



Message Transcript

After the Flood

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Lord, we gather here today because we want to hear you speak from your living and active Word to our hearts. Lord, show us more of who you are and how we are called to relate to you, and Lord, do a work inside of our hearts by faith today that no one can snatch away from us. Lord, we give you all the glory, and now, for all of us gathered who desire to hear from you, believe what you say and by faith, put into practice what you show us, would you agree with me very loudly this morning by saying the word, "Amen." [crosstalk 00:00:30] Amen.

Amen.

When there's a time or a season where you go through difficulty or challenge, do you ever find yourself saying these words? "Let's just get back to normal. I can't wait till we just get back to normal." I think in this year, 2020, I've said that several different times in several different ways where I've thought to myself, "I just want to get back to normal. I just want to get back to the way it was. Let's get back to normal."

I think these were words that were being mouthed by Noah and his sons because in Genesis chapter nine, what we see is the reestablishment of God's relationship with humanity on the earth post flood. And what we took a look at last week, in chapter seven and eight, were God's total and complete judgment of the planet based upon the sin condition of man, where God saved Noah and his wife, his three sons and their wives, the ark with the animals that were on it and everything else perished. They spent 377 days on an ark, came out, Noah took his sons, worship by sacrificing animals and giving glory to God. And then we get to read about what's it going to be

like in this new world?

And if you had been on a boat for the 377 days, there would probably be part of you that would be saying, "Let's just get back to normal. Let's get back to the way that it was." What's it going to be like? And what we have to ask ourselves is, "What is God going to be like in relation to His creation after He has severely punished everybody? How is God going to reestablish His covenant relationship with human beings on planet earth?" And to do that, we're going to be in Genesis chapter nine today. So I invite you to open up your copy of the scriptures to Genesis chapter nine. And what we're going to do is we're going to take a look at four ways that God is going to restore the earth post flood. So this is all taking place after the flood. God has just finished telling them that even though for a year, there's been no seasons, there's been just water covering the whole earth, that He's going to restore the seasons.

There's going to be seed time. There's going to be harvest. And when we get into chapter nine, here's what we read. "And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.'" Sound familiar? It's really interesting that after the totality of God's judgment, He says something that is so familiar to them. First of all, I want you to notice this, that God blessed Noah and his sons, God had favor for Noah and his sons. God always has favor for the crown of His creation. And this is no different. He puts favor and blessing back on Noah. Why? Because human beings are the crown of His creation. And we're going to talk more about this when we get in verse seven about the whole idea of being fruitful and multiply. But I want you right now to flip back to Genesis chapter one, because in Genesis chapter one, as we

spent several hours, I guess, looking through this text, taking a look at what God had to say about His creation of the earth.

You remember that on day six, when God had finished the creation of the animals, then He says in Genesis 1:26, "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.' God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him, male and female, He created them. God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky. And over every living thing that moves along the earth.'" What do you notice? God is re-establishing what He to do in His original creation.

God is showing that human beings are still the crown of God's creation. You were created in the image of God. If you are born female, you're a woman. If you're born male, you're a man. You are the image bearers of God and human beings are the crown of God's creation, that's why God favors and blesses human beings. And regardless of God's totality of judgment for everything that He's done with those who have survived the flood, what does He want them to know? "You're favored and you're highly blessed because you're image bearers of me." And the reason He's going to tell you to be fruitful and multiply is God wants more image bearers on the planet. Make no mistake about it, you are different than the animals. God created everything. We took a look at all that got created and all the wonderful things that God created and

how He created the planet and how He created the stars and the sun and the moon and everything that He created, and it was all good.

And how He created the animals and it was all good. But when He created you, you're different. You're the crown of His creation. And you watch this because Hollywood has a way of trying to elevate animals and put down humans and elevate trees and put down humans, and it's never that way according to God. You are the crown of God's creation. If you went to the most breathtaking part of the world and looked at the scenery and was like, "Wow," that's how God looks at human beings because you're an image bearer of God. Don't ever forget that. The reason you're blessed is because you were created in the image of God. It's the way that He made you. So after the flood... You need to see that, because that really sets up the entire chapter of chapter nine, but there's really four ways that God re-establishes the earth.

And the first is this. He positions human beings with dominion over animals. He positions human beings with dominion over animals. Now we read in Genesis one that He already did that. That is the way that He set up creation, that human beings were to have dominion over the animals, to subdue the animals, to rule over the animals. And we're going to see a change in how human beings relate to the animals now. They've just spent 377 days on the ark, they're coming off the ark. God is going to re-establish the relationship between man and animals. Notice what He says in chapter nine and verse two, "The fear of you and the terror of you will be on every beast of the earth and on every bird of the sky and on everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea into your hand, they are given." What does He say?

Says, "Animals are now going to be scared of you." We're going to get to verse three and you're going to find out why, but animals are now going to be scared of you. In general, this is what you see in animals, right? In general, this is what you see in animals, right? Unless you're the deer in my neighborhood that think that they own the place, most animals, when they see you kind of coil, they kind of have fear in them. They realize innately that human beings have dominion over them.

And verse three is going to tell us why. Notice what God says. "Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you. I give all to you as I gave the green plant." Prior to this time, everyone was a vegetarian, that's how God set it up. In Genesis chapter one, verse 29, God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of the earth and every tree, which has fruit yielding seed. It shall be food for you." Everybody's a vegetarian, fruits and veggies, that's what you get. That's what God provided. Guess what you get in verse three.

Steakhouses are now open for business. Barbecue is available, right? Why? Because God said that it is. "Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you. I give it all to you as I gave the green plant." Every hunter in here just said, "Amen." Right? Now, I'm not a hunter, I'm not against hunting, but why would you get up at two in the morning to go hunt something that you could just pick up at Safeway or King Soopers in whatever size? But here's what God says. "Everything that moves is now food for you." So He lets the animals know, "Relationship is different now." He puts a fear in animals to protect them a little bit so that they understand they are now on the

market. They can be eaten. If you're a vegetarian, that's fine, there's nothing wrong with that. If you're not a vegetarian, God says there's nothing wrong with that either.

You can eat meat. That's what the Bible says because God is now providing food. Now, our relationship with animals is once again, going to change, we don't totally understand what our relationship was like with animals in the beginning. There's a lot of people that speculate that it was much closer or that they could talk. We don't know, but we do know in the future millennium that we will have a different relationship with the animals. I mean, listen to this, in Isaiah chapter 11, starting in verse six, think about what this is going to be like someday. It says, "And the wolf will dwell with the lamb and the leopard will lie down with the young goat. And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together. And a little boy will lead them. Also, the cow and the bear will graze.

Their young will lie down together and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The nursing child..." Picture this, "The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra. And the weaned child will put his hand in the viper's den. They will not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." You see in the millennial reign of Christ, how it's going to be different? "Where's Joey?" "Oh, he's out playing with snakes. No biggie. They're just playing with the bear. They're petting the lions." I mean, it's going to be different, but right now, there's a fear of animals from humans. Why? Because they're food, right? They're food, right? And so God has re-established, and He's putting the position of human beings as having dominion. Why? Because we're image bearers of God, animals are

not image bearers of God.

And He's rightly putting human beings back in that scenario. Now, He's going to give us one more verse in verse four, to tell us how we're to eat these animals. It says, "Only you shall not eat flesh with its life. That is the blood." Now we're going to see this all throughout the Old and New Testament. "Don't eat the blood. Don't strangle the meat. Don't do it." What does that have to do? Well, we understand that life is in the blood and Christ shed his blood so that we could have Christ's life. So when you eat animals, drain the animals, cook the animals, don't eat the blood of the animals. That was the idea behind this. But what we see here, as God is re-establishing the earth, we see very similar things to the pattern that He originally had, that human beings are the crown of His creation, that human beings are to rule over the earth.

That human beings are to subdue the animals. It's the exact same thing He had in the beginning, except now, animals can be food, whereas before, we were vegetarians, that's the change. But God is still, as they come out of the ark, showing that human beings are the crown of His creation. After the flood, He not only positions human beings with dominion over animals, but notice what He does. He prioritizes the importance of one's fellow man. He prioritizes the importance of one's fellow man. Notice verse five of chapter nine. "Surely I will require your life blood, from every beast, I will require it. And from every man and from every man's brother, I will require the life of man." Notice this, chapter nine, verse six, "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man, his blood shall be shed for in the image of God, he has made man."

What do you see here in Genesis chapter nine, verse six? You see an argument

for capital punishment. God is saying that human beings are image bearers of God. If a life is taken from a man, then a man shall also take his life. Why? Because human beings are image bearers of God and every single life matters to God.

Amen.

Amen.

Amen.

That's what he's teaching. Now, a lot of people have a hard time with capital punishment when we talk about it in church, because they say, "Shouldn't we just believe in grace? Can't people do whatever they want, be forgiven?" God makes it clear that life and the life that He creates is so important that we do not have the right to take life that God creates. That's what He's establishing. Now, why is God making such a big deal of this? Because we're not very good at this.

We're not good at it at all, Adam and Eve, they have their first two kids, Cain and Abel, what happens? Cain kills Abel, what happens as we go down the line of Cain? We get to Lamech, seven generations later. What's he say, "I killed a man for striking me. If Cain was avenged seven times, I'm going to be avenged 77 times. I mean, I'm the man." I mean, we're not good at taking care of the lives that God creates. Now, think about this because for some of you that are listening to me, you think to yourself, "Well, I've never murdered anybody. I'm pretty good at it." But the law was established to teach us how to relate to God and how to relate to our fellow man. And when Jesus came on the scene as fully God and fully man, he began to explain the law.

And in Matthew chapter five, I'll just read a few of the verses in Matthew, chapter five, starting in verse 21, he says this, "You have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not commit murder. And whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court and everyone who says to his brother, 'You good for nothing,' shall be guilty before the Supreme Court. And whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell." What was Jesus saying? He's like, "You've heard it said, 'Don't murder,' but I'm telling you about your heart. And what you don't understand about your heart is your heart is filled with murderous thoughts. And even if you don't act on the murderous thoughts that your heart has, they're still there and everything comes out of the heart.

And every single one of you are guilty for wanting to murder somebody else with your heart or wish ill will on somebody else or hope that they get theirs." Why? Because we're still not good at treating our fellow man right. What does Jesus go on to talk about? He goes on to talk about adultery. In Matthew chapter 5:27, he said, "You've heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery,' but I tell you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

[inaudible 00:15:25].

What does he say? He says, "In relationship, in the context of marriage, that's good." And some of you would say, "Yeah, but I've never committed adultery. I've

never had a relationship with someone other than my spouse." But Jesus said, "Look at your heart. If your heart is ever lusted against someone that's not your spouse, you've committed adultery in your heart and your heart's wicked. And every one of you is guilty of that because you don't treat your fellow man the way I want you to treat your fellow man."

And then he goes on to say... I mean, there's so many different parts we could go to. He's like, "You've heard it said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for tooth.' But I say to you do not resist an evil person, but whoever slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. Give to the one who ask of you and don't turn him away who wants to borrow from you. You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

Do you feel your heart in that? We're still not good at this. We're still not good at murdering each other. We're still not good at loving each other. We're still not good at building up the image bearing of who God created. What do we like to do? We take a political stance, we take a opinion stance. And then people that disagree with us out of our hearts come all sorts of murderous things that are intended to hurt the image bearers of God.

Come on.

I know I'm guilty of this. The older I get, the more opinionated I become. How

about you? I do. I have opinions, I have strong opinions, I have convictions, I have strong convictions about a lot of different things, and I know that you do too. And it's okay to have strong convictions about things. It is not okay for you to have murderous, evil thoughts in your heart toward the people that disagree with you.

There you go.

You are called to love them. You are called to pray for them specifically for the ones who persecute you.

Ouch, ouch.

That's what Jesus says. And so why is God re-establishing His covenant? Why is God reestablishing His love for humanity? Why is God teaching us to love our fellow man? Because we're not good at it and there's been no generation since that time that has.

We don't recognize and we don't sit down and think long enough that every single person that's created is an image bearer of the Almighty God. And even when they disagree with us and even when they're wrong to us, we are still called to love them even though we have different opinions and convictions than what they have. This goes to our heart. And so as God is re-establishing the world and He positions human beings with dominions over animals, He prioritizes the importance of one's fellow man. He's saying, "Relationships are important." I mean, didn't Jesus say the exact same thing in John chapter 13:34 and following? "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this,

all men will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another." Love doesn't mean I agree with everything you agree with.

Love means there's a tangible expression of value that God created you, even though I disagree with you, can we all improve on this? I mean, this is what God was trying to re-establish on the earth. I mean, He had been through all of this. He was watching wickedness in the heart of every single human being and nothing had changed. And so as God is positioning man as the image bearer, He's like, "If you're image bearers and that resonates with your heart because you are, every other human being on the planet is also an image bearer. So treat them the way that I would treat them. I'm the one who created them. I'm the one that loves them. I'm the one who died for them. So show my love to them." That's what the scriptures teach. Amen.

[inaudible 00:19:23].

That's why God takes murder so seriously. That's why capital punishment for the Lord is okay. Whoever sheds man's blood by his blood, by man, his blood shall be shed for in the image of God, he made man. Now I know not all of you believe in capital punishment, that's okay. Think God's okay with it. But a lot of people that don't believe in capital punishment, believe that abortion's okay.

There you go.

Ouch, ouch.

I'm just being honest.

Yep.

Come on.

If every single life matters, then every single life matters.

[inaudible 00:20:06].

And we are called to treat all people with love and respect the same way that Jesus did. Did he have enemies? Did he have people that hated him? You ever study how he loved them? He looked at people and loved them. He disagreed with several people. He was strong in his conviction with several people, but he never, ever stopped loving people. Never, never, but he had conviction. And now we get down to verse seven, which is very similar to what we saw in chapter nine and verse one. He says in nine verse one, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth." He says the same thing here. "As for you, be fruitful and multiply, populate the earth abundantly and multiply in it." What's His command? All the way back in Genesis one, we see the same thing.

"Be fruitful and multiply." What does God want? God wants more image bearers. Why? Because human beings are the crown of all God's creation. So what is not just the suggestion or the exhortation, but the command? "Be fruitful and multiply. I want more people on the planet. I want the planet filled with my glory, and my glory is when my image bearers, who bear my image, show the world that I'm God." That's His command. Now, this is not a scripture that prohibits birth control. But before we get there, can I just say something? God's command is for more kids, not less kids. And I say this to a generation of people... Because if you're parents and you have more than two kids, you probably had somebody say to you at some point in time, "Hey, do you

know how this is happening? You can stop this. You don't need more than do two blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah."

Why? Because we don't live in a generation that values kids, we don't live in a generation that values God's work. We live in a generation that values our retirement. We live in a generation that values our pocketbook. We live in a generation that values convenience, [crosstalk 00:22:20] rather than what God values. What does God value? Kids, your kids. When we planted this church, I got this question all the time, "Why are you planting another church? Why another church? Aren't there enough churches?" And my answer was, "There's not enough good churches."

Amen.

We need more churches that preach the Word. We need more churches that love Jesus. We need more churches that share the gospel. I will always believe that. Somebody like, "Why we need more kids? We have enough kids."

No, you need more kids. You need kids that you raise and the knowledge and the admonition of the Lord that can change the next generation [crosstalk 00:23:00]. Right? See, we tend to think, "Oh, we'll get by politically. We'll vote for the right person. We'll change the courts. We'll set up a new educational [inaudible 00:23:09]. We get all that..." That's not how the world changes. The world changes by parents that have kids that raise them godly and send them out in the world, that know how to live for Jesus. And God's commanding it here. Now, I don't mean to be painful because I know there's some people here that have not been able to have kids or conceive of

anything. "I mean, I would love to have a kid. I can't have kid." Here's what I would encourage you, just pray, God may have a different plan for the way in which he wants you to raise a child.

He may have a different plan. Don't give up hope. Don't give up hope on having your own kids, continue to pray, but seek the Lord because I know this, God wants godly parents raising godly kids.

Well.

That's what he wants. It's His command from the beginning and He hasn't changed His command. Now, let me show you a scripture here that's really important for you to get in the context of convenience and kids being a hindrance and all these different things. Psalm 127, starting in verse three, says this, listen to the Word of the Lord. "Behold, children are a gift of the Lord." What are kids? They're a gift. Now, they may not always feel like a gift, they are a gift, it's God's gift.

"The fruit of the womb is a reward like arrows in the hands of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them, they will not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gates." Have as many kids as you want and raise them in the knowledge of the Lord, and you're doing a good thing. Kids are a blessing, kids are a gift. Kids are not an inconvenience, according to the Word of God, why does God want us to be fruitful and multiply? Because He wants more image bearers that love Him, that's what He wants. Wants more image bearers that love Him. And then He says, "Populate the earth, fill it." How good are they going

to do? We're going to get to chapter 10 next week and guess what's going to happen?
"Eh, don't really want to fill the earth. Let's just hunker down here and babble. We'll just build a big tower. We'll just stay. We don't need to fill the earth. We'll just do our own thing."

That's what we tend to do instead of listening to the Lord. If you're hearing the Lord and you're moved by this, it's God speaking to you in your heart because God believes that children are a blessing and that we need more godly kids being raised by godly parents. Amen.

Amen.

God prioritizes the importance of one's fellow man and that's how He does it. But He goes on to do this, because as we're thinking about this holy, perfect God, "What's this going to be like? We've screwed up already, God. What if we screw up again?" I love this third point that God promises peace to Noah and his descendants through a covenant. God promises peace to Noah and his descendants through a covenant. Notice what He says in verse eight of chapter nine, "Then God spoke to Noah and to his son saying, 'Now, behold...'" It means, "Pay close attention to what I'm about ready to tell you."

"I, myself..." Who's talking? God. Who's He talking about? Himself. "I, myself, do establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, all that comes out of the ark. Even every beast of the earth, I establish my

covenant with you and all flesh, shall never again be cut off by the water of the flood. Neither shall there again, be a flood to destroy the earth." Do you hear the language here? What's God saying? "I am making a covenant with you." Because how would you feel if you were one of the eight survivors coming off the ark and you just saw the totality of God's judgment? That for 40 days and 40 nights, I mean, the earth ripped open from underneath, it's pouring water from above, 40 days and 40 nights, pouring water.

150 days, the water's on the earth. Another 150 days for the water to recede. 377 days, you've been in the boat. Every single person you've ever met in your entire life is dead. Every animal that wasn't on the boat is dead. And now you're coming off the ark. Would there not be a little fear and trepidation in your heart thinking, "What if we screw this up? Is He going to do it again? What if I'm under the boat next time? I mean, what's going to happen?" I mean, the question is this. How in the world is a holy, perfect God going to relate to a bunch of sinful human beings? Here's the answer, His covenant.

It's His Word, it's His promise. And what's He going to promise? I love the promise. Not only to Noah and his sons and their wives and their kids, but, "To every single animal and every generation that ever lives, I establish my covenant or my promise with you and all flesh shall never again be cut off by the water of a flood. Neither shall there again, be a flood to destroy the earth." What's God's promise? "I will never flood the globe again. I will never flood the globe again. I will never do what I did through a flood again." Has God been faithful to His promise?

Yes.

Yes, because God is always faithful to His Word. Have there been floods? Yeah. There have been floods that have hurt people. There have been floods that have killed people. Has there ever been another global flood? No. Will there ever be? No. Even if Hollywood dreams up some great movie where the glaciers all melting everybody's... It'll never happen. God promises it's never going to happen. There will never be another global flood ever. Why? Because God has spoken.

That's a great promise, because if I'm Noah or one of his son, I'm thinking, "Hope I don't screw this up." Never going to happen. God is being true to His Word. He's making a promise and not only He's going to make a promise, He's going to give a sign to His promise. Notice what He says in verse 12, God said, "This is the sign of the covenant, which I am making between me and you and every living creature that is with you for all successive generations." In other words, He's saying, "I'm going to give a sign that not only will you see and your family will see, but every successive generation, for every generation, as long as there's life, will see this." What does He say? "I set my bow in the cloud and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between me and the earth. It shall come about when I bring a cloud over the earth that the bow will be seen in the cloud.

And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh and never again, shall the water become flood to destroy all flesh." When the bow is in the cloud, then I will look upon it to remember the everlasting

covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth. What's He say? "I'm going to give you a sign." What's His sign? A rainbow. You ever seen this sign? Every generation's always seen this sign. Every time it mists or it rains and the sun hits it right, you see it. And the word in Hebrew for bow or rainbow is the same thing, rainbow or a bow, like a bow and arrow. It's as if God who punished the entire earth is now hanging His trophy up in the sky saying, "I'm not going to use that to punish ever again.

Now it's just for you to see beauty. Every time that it's hanging in the sky, you're going to see it. But guess what? I'm going to look at it. And I'm going to remember that I made a promise to you that I'm never going to destroy the world in a global flood again. And guess what? I will never destroy the world in a global flood again." Now, this is an awesome promise. It's an awesome promise. As my kids were growing up, we'd see a rainbow in the sky, we'd talk about the promise that God made to Noah, that He would never ever destroy the world again, this is an unconditional promise. This has nothing to do with us, this has everything to do with God. Even if we don't live the way God wants, He'll never destroy the world again in a flood. That's His promise, we see it.

But I can't tell you that I wake up every morning and by 10:30, I think, "Man, God's promises, the world's not getting destroyed by a flood. Woo." I mean, it's not like a biblical promise that I hang on to. I know it, I believe it, but I can't say I'm moved by it all the time, but here's what I want you to see. God made a covenant. God speaks in covenants. We see in the Garden of Eden, we see a [Edenic 00:31:58]

Covenant. That was a conditional covenant. Covenant went something like this. "Don't eat off the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, it's all good. Eat off the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the day you eat off it, dying, you will die, bad, but it's conditional based upon what you do." They ate off it, dying, they begin to die.

We see the Mosaic Covenant where God gives the 10 commandments. It's a conditional covenant. Tells Israel, "You do what I tell you to do, you'll be blessed. You don't do what I tell you to do, you'll be cursed." But we see other covenants too. We see a Palestinian Covenant in Deuteronomy 30, which talks about the occupation of the land of Israel that will ultimately go to them. We see the Davidic Covenant in second Samuel chapter seven, that someone from David's genealogy or lineage will always sit on the throne, who we discover is Jesus. We see the new covenant in Jeremiah 31, "For God promises that one day, you won't need to be taught the law because the Holy Spirit will be resident in you and he will teach you all about who God is." And the night that Jesus was betrayed, he took bread and wine.

He said, "This is the new covenant in my blood that we get to share a part of." I mean, God always speaks by promises because when God speaks, it's always truth. And He doesn't waiver about His Word. So here's the question. What promise are you hanging on to right now? I mean, it's one thing to talk about the promises of God. And it's good to leave here knowing that God will never, ever flood the world again, because He promised that He never would. But what promise are you hanging on to? I mean, there's God's little promise books you have and you can read and all that sounds good, and that sounds good.

What are you personally holding on to right now? I just jotted down a few that came to my mind this week, was thinking about the Great Commission, Matthew chapter 28, where Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me, therefore, go make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey all I've commanded you." And then he says this, "And I will be with you." How long?

Always.

Always to the very end of the age.

Always.

I needed that this week, I needed it this week. You ever had those seasons like, "God, where are you? And how long until... And how long are we going to drag on?" "Jeff, I will be with you always. I'm not going anywhere." Hebrews 13:5 says, "Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you." You know what that's called? A promise. I hang on to those promises because God promises those things. Or how about those times where you want to do what God wants you to do, but you don't do what God wants you to do. You ever had one of those seasons in your life [crosstalk 00:34:39]? Like today. Jeremiah 31 says, "I have loved you with an everlasting love."

You know what that means? "I'll never stop loving you. No matter what you do, I can't love you any more. No matter what you do, I can't love you any less because I love you with an everlasting love." For those of you who have trusted Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, God will never, ever stop loving you. Billions of years

from now, God will always love you. Why? Because it's a promise. It's in His Word. I love Joshua one, lots of promises, "But the Lord will be with you wherever you go." This is one I have pseudo memorized, but it's one of my favorites. Deuteronomy 31:8, "The Lord is the one who goes ahead of you. He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear, do not be dismayed." Anybody here besides me living in a time of uncertainty?

[inaudible 00:35:39].

I mean, it's nice to know, in a time of uncertainty, the Lord says, "Don't worry, I'm already way out ahead of you. And by the way, I'm already with you. And oh, by the way, I will not forsake you and I will not leave you and I will be with you wherever you go. Therefore, Jeff, do not fear. Do not be dismayed. Do not be discouraged." How can I live that way? Because God promises me, He's ahead of me, He's with me, He's behind me and He'll never leave me. He'll never fail me, He'll never forsake me. Those are biblical promises. See, when we're talking about covenant, we're not just looking back to the Noahic Covenant and saying, "It's great. God's never going to flood the world again. Isn't that great? Great news. Great news."

That is great news, but what's great news is when God makes a promise He always keeps. That all the promises in God are always yes and amen. The question becomes what promise or promises are you holding on to? Here, He's promising to make peace with Noah and his descendants through a covenant. He's telling them, "No matter what, and no matter how bad you screw up, no matter what you do wrong, I

will never judge the world with a flood ever again. That was a one time thing."

And God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant, which I have established between me and all the flesh on the earth." Every time you look up in the clouds, not only are you seeing a bow, not only are you seeing that God's never going to flood the world again, you're seeing a promise of God that's always true, that should remind you that God is always true to His Word. Isn't that awesome? Our God is a loving God. As He's re-establishing the earth, He's telling them, "You're the crown of my creation, so treat each other right. I'll never, ever flood you again. Let's move on with this." And then we see one final promise of God. And one thing that He does as we continue on in this, that God not only does all these things, but God provides grace for sinful behavior. God provides grace for sinful behavior.

This is my favorite point of the message. Because when you read this next section of scripture, it's not what you'd expect to see. And if it was redacted or edited, you would think you would tell Moses, "You probably don't want to include this part here. This is probably one you just take out. You really don't need it. We can move on." Because when you read this, it's not going to be what you expect. If you've never read Genesis chapter nine, it's not what you would think because here's what you would think, you would think, "Noah's awesome. Preacher of righteousness, obedient to the Lord, faithful servant, built the ark, brought his family in. Obedient to all that God commanded, did everything God wanted. 377 days on the ark, comes out, what's the first thing he does? He worships. He sacrifices animals. He gives the praise of his lips to God.

Noah, Noah, Noah. He's such an awesome guy. He's going to live happily ever after, he's going to worship God, they're going to establish a new community and everybody's going to love the Lord." Keep reading. Verse 18, "Now the sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth. And Ham was the father of Canaan. These were the sons of Noah. And from these, the whole earth was populated." Now just pause for a moment. The whole earth was populated from who? Noah's three sons. You get the picture that Noah at 600 plus years old is like, "I'm done. I'm good with grandkids. I'm done. Kids are a blessing. Grandkids are even a greater blessing. You three boys and your wives get busy, be fruitful and multiply, populate the earth." And the Bible says from these three couples, everybody on the planet is here. Now you want to do a fun study?

I did it this week. I'm not a mathematician, I'm a preacher. So I'll be short. But if you study human growth population by a factor, I think average is 1.7%. But you just take a 0.5% factor, you would have 7 billion people in the world right now. I mean, all the math that I've read this week would demonstrate that from these three guys, in 2348 BC, that the world's population we have right now, would be the size that it is right now [crosstalk 00:40:11]. Evolutionists have zero answer for this. Where do you even get a male and a female that have evolved and then get them together? And I mean, they come up with such an astronomically small number just to make things fit and they can't do it.

Yep.

Just study the science and the math. If that's something that you're interested in, you will see, it's not only probable, it's true, because I'm a preacher, I believe everything in the Word of God. So I believe that all of us came from those three guys, but even the math and the science will back that. I digress, now, verse 20, "Then Noah began farming and planted a vineyard." So Noah's coming off the ark, everything's dry right now. He's going to till the land. He says, "Why not? I'm 600 years old. I'm going to plant a vineyard too." Now these next verses are a little bit interesting, not what you'd expect. "He drank of the wine and became drunk and uncovered himself in his tent."

Why do we need that in there? I mean, when I read down to the end of the chapter in verse 28, it says, "Noah lived 350 years after the flood. So all the days of Noah were 950 years and he died." Why not just keep going there? Why do we have to know he got drunk and uncovered himself in his tent? Why put that in there, Moses?

Right.

Because Noah is just like me and you, Noah has a sinful nature, just like me and you. Noah has sin in his life, just like me and you. And God wants us to understand, Noah's not the hero of the story. God is.

Yeah.

Do you see that?

Yeah.

See, sometimes for us as Christians, we understand Jesus is the hero of the story. He's the one that came and rescued us. He's the one that saved us. He's the

one that fills us. He's the one that delivers us. He's the one that builds us. And yet, sometimes as we mature in the Lord, we begin to think that we're the hero of our own story. "Look at how far I've come. Look at where I'm at now. I used to be there, now I'm here." You're not the hero of your story either, because if you're really true to the depths and recesses of your heart and your life, even in spite of all the wonderful things that God's done, there's sin in your life you don't want anybody to know about either.

Ouch [inaudible 00:42:33].

Everyone has that. Everyone has it. That's why God puts it in His Word because He provides grace for sinful behavior. He has to because He's got no other choice. He's holy and perfect, you're not, He's holy and perfect, I'm not. The story goes that Noah farmed and planted a vineyard, not a big deal, not a big deal that Noah drank wine. There's nothing in the Bible that would forbid the drinking of wine. Here's his problem with drinking wine, he drank too much. He drank of the wine and became drunk. He drank to excess and uncovered himself in his tent.

Why is that verse there? To keep you from celebrating Noah and to think, "Noah's awesome. Preacher of righteousness, great guy." There's no human being worth worshipping other than the Lord, Jesus Christ. That's why that's in the text. No one. So what happens? Well, you got the youngest son, Ham, that's going to do something. Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers. But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their

shoulders and walked backwards and covered the nakedness of their father and their faces were turned away so that they did not see their father's nakedness. Now, I've read commentaries all week on this stuff, which is crazy stuff where rabbis and different people have said, "Here's what really really happened." I mean, I've read stuff that said, "Ham went in there and castrated his father, Noah."

I've read that he slept with his mother. I've read that it was a homosexual attempt with his father. I've read nutty stuff. But here's what I believe. I believe what the Bible says to be true and the Bible says nothing about any of that, so let's not believe it. What does the Bible say? The Bible says, "He saw the nakedness of his father and told his brothers outside." It was shameful to see the nakedness of your father. It was shameful to see the nakedness of your sister. It was shameful to see the nakedness of your mom. Ham not only saw the nakedness of his father, what does he go do? He goes and makes fun of his dad to his brothers. He's trying to shame his dad, that's what he's doing. He saw his father's nakedness and he mocked his dad's sin. He's mocking his dad.

He's taking advantage of the fact that his dad did something wrong and he's going to one up his dad. God hates that. When Shem and Japheth hear about it, what do they do? They put a blanket on themselves, they kind of back into the tent, kind of lay it down so they don't have to see their dad. They cover it up, they cover him up. Now what the scripture's not teaching is, "Hey, in your family, when there's sin, cover it up, don't let anybody see it." That's not what it's teaching. What it's teaching is when there's somebody in your family in sin, don't make a mockery of them.

Don't one up yourself. Here's Ham, he's mocking his dad. He's making fun of his dad. He's trying to put himself better than his dad. He's, "Look at dad. Look at dad. What a joke, dad, dad, dad, look at dad's sin." Don't make a mockery of other people's sin. So guess what happens? Noah's going to wake up from this drunk stupor, in verse 24, "When Noah awoke from his wine, he knew what his youngest son had done to him. So he said to him, 'Cursed be Canaan.'" Canaan was Ham's son. Why wouldn't he just curse Ham? Here's why, because he understands in Ham's heart and the wickedness in Ham's heart's going to play through the whole next generation. And from this moment on, what do we see? We see God's going to have a problem with the Canaanites all throughout biblical history.

"Curse be Canaan, a servant of servants he shall be to his brothers." He also said, "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem and let Canaan be his servant. May God enlarge Japheth and let him dwell in the tents of Shem and let Canaan be a servant." What does he do? He blesses Shem and Japheth but he curses Ham's son, Canaan, and their descendants. What was he saying? He's saying, "What you did was wrong. What you did was wrong. You mocked my sin." The longer I've read this passage all week and the longer I've thought about this passage all week, the more I'm so glad that God put it in there because if the Bible was just written by human authors and wasn't written by God, we'd take that out because we always want human beings to look good. We want to look good. We want to put our best foot forward. We want everybody to think that we're okay.

There is not one of us who is not in sin. There's not one of us whose heart is not

evil. There's not one of us whose heart is not wicked. There's not one of us who could stand here and say, "Nothing in my life. I'm just a great guy. I'm just a great guy." There's not one of us. So when we read that, we're not reading in shock and awe, we're reading as if to say, "I've done some real dumb, sinful things too." And praise God for His grace that's greater than my sinful behavior, because why? Because there's only one hero in this book and it's the Lord, Jesus Christ. He's the hero. And he's the one that provides grace for our sinful behavior. And isn't it good to know that as we fast forward through the Old Testament, into the New, what do we see?

We see a picture of this God continually coming after us, continually trying to provide grace and ultimately what? God becomes a man. He becomes the incarnate, Jesus Christ, who fulfills the law, who dies on a cross, who sheds his blood, who gives this life, who's buried in a grave, who's raised to new life, who then begins to offer life to all who are in need of God's grace. Do you realize that you're in need of God's grace? See, being a Christian isn't just, "Yeah, I go to church. It's the right thing to do. I'm a good person." No, being a Christian is somebody who recognizes, "I'm not good. And there's only one who is, it's the Lord, Jesus Christ. And he died on a cross for my sin. And he rose from the grave for my sin. And he's offering me life to not only just cover all my sin, but to forgive it all and to remove it all so that I can have life and have life in his name."

And friends at BRAVE Church, let me just tell you this, God wants to have an everlasting covenant relationship with you through His Son, Jesus Christ. Not because

of the good person you are, but because of the wonderful God that He is. Amen. And Genesis nine is trying to tell us that, that nothing has changed in the heart of man. That even our best efforts, like Noah, don't make us righteous, only God makes us righteous. And that's why today when I close, I want to give you an opportunity to respond to the Lord, Jesus Christ. Because this story is about God being the hero of the story. Is God, the hero of your story? He's the hero of my story. I know there's nothing good that lives in me other than the Lord and he wants to have a relationship with you. He wants to be your God and he wants you to be his people.

Would you stand with me as we pray? Lord, Jesus, we come before you're thrown right now, and Lord, we ask that you would do a work inside each one of our hearts. Lord, there are some of us here today who recognize that we don't have a relationship with you. And that when we truly look in the mirror or we think about our own hearts, we recognize that we are sinful and that we are separated from you. But Lord, we learn today that you're the God who loves us. You're the God who comes after us. You're the God who calls us your image bearers. And even though our image bearing has been marred by I sin, you want to redeem us and make us right. So Lord, do a work in our heart today. If you're here today and you want to trust Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior, here's how you can pray.

"Lord, Jesus, I know I'm a sinner. I know I'm separated from you, but Lord, I confess my sin and I want to give you all my sin in exchange for all of your life and all of your righteousness. Come into my heart and be my Lord and Savior. Take over my life, I need you, Jesus." And Lord, for those of us who already have you in our hearts,

Lord, remind us today that we need you afresh again today, that you are the way, the truth and the life and that you don't love us because of the good we've done, you love us because of the good that you are. And Lord, we just praise you and thank you for your grace, that you are holy and yet you love us with an unconditional love and we give you all the glory.

We give you all the honor. We give you all the praise because you and you alone are the name that is above every name. That at the name of Jesus, every knee will bow and every tongue confess that you are Lord, to the glory of God, the Father, amen, and amen. Can we give God praise this morning?