

**Genesis in Biblical Perspective:
The Gospel of Christ from Genesis –
The Covenant of Grace, Installment II**

Genesis 8:20–9:17

By [Dr. Harry Reeder III](#)

This is the word of God. Genesis 8:20–9:17.

20 Then 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. 21 And 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. 22 While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease." 9:1 And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. 2 The 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. 3 Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. 4 But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. 5 And 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. 7 And you, be fruitful and multiply, teem on the earth and multiply in it." 8 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, 9 "Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, 10 and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. 11 I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." 12 And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: 13 I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. 14 When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, 15 I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16

When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." 17 God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth." The grass withers. The flower fades. This is the Word of God. It abides forever and by His grace and mercy may it be preached for you.

If you would, go back with me to the 1970s. Some of you were not born, some of you were born, and some of you were even old men. Do you remember 1970s? My wife and I were going through school and didn't have a lot of money, but we bought a television with \$20 or \$25. You know those kinds that were black and white with rabbit ears. Anybody remember that? Well, you should have seen this one. We got it for \$25 because the rabbit ears were gone. So that meant we had to use a coat hanger! Remember those days? You stick the coat hanger down there, fully expected to get electrocuted at any moment in time. We had just the right room, we stuck the coat hanger in, and you couldn't just stick it in, you have to hold the coat hanger and raise your left foot and if you did that, you might get a picture. So we watched Neil Armstrong. He landed on the moon. You remember what he said when he got off? "One small step for man, one giant step, or giant leap for mankind." As an individual man, this is a small step, but he represented all of mankind so it represents is a large leap, a large step.

Let's back up, however to many thousands of years now where the ark comes to rest on Mount Ararat. God called Noah to build the ark. It took 120 years. Then in seven days, He warned him, "The flood of judgment is coming." He gathers in all of the animals, and He adds to it some clean and unclean animals for the purpose of food and worship. Then He puts Noah into the ark, and God seals it. God designed the ark. God called Noah and enabled him to occupy it. God brought the animals and the creatures into it. God then shut the door Himself. God secured them for one year and 11 days as the fountains rose up and these whirlpools are changing the landscape of the earth, blotting out every living, breathing thing. The heavens have opened up, the canopy of the waters has deluged upon the earth, and now God brings this judgment. Then the waters began to recede and God settles the ark on Mount Ararat. Noah's anxious to get out because he sends birds out, but he doesn't move until God sends him. God calls him to disembark and Noah leaves the ark.

One small step for Noah, but an unbelievable step for humanity is unfolding in the next verses. A leap in humanity, right here, is explained of why God does not bring judgment right now. Right here is explained, the magnanimous nature of God's grace and love toward us. It's explained through what's called the Covenant with Noah. We call it the Noahic Covenant. It is actually Step 2 of God unfolding His Covenant of Grace until it comes to fulfillment and fruition in Jesus Christ in the New Testament.

God is unfolding His covenant. First of all was with Adam. Remember when Adam and Eve sinned? God did not bring judgment. God brought the judgment of sin upon humanity and that everyone is born with a sin nature, but Adam and Eve did not die. Animals died, and they were clothed with skins, and God gave the promise that, "I will send through the woman a seed that will win the victory over sin, over the serpent, over Satan. I will accomplish that for the glory of My Name, I will save my people." There, God's grace begins to unfold with picture and promise and prophecy.

Now we fast-forward all the way to the days of Noah. Now comes Installment 2 in the Covenant of Grace. By the way, it's not going to stop here. Installment 3 will be with Abraham. Installment 4 will be with Moses. Installment 5 will be with David. Installment 6 will be with the prophets as they return from their captivity in Babylon. Until finally, you get to the fulfillment of God's Covenant of Grace in the New Covenant with Jesus Christ – a Mediator who is sinless and can redeem His people, not like these other mediators, who need their own mediator, their own redeemer. But here God is progressively unfolding for us the Covenant of Grace, and now we come to a significant moment, a significant step in this Covenant with Noah. Noah takes that small step out of the ark. God makes it a large leap for all of humanity. Notice in the text for this study that the first thing that Noah does is he builds.

It's interesting to note that Noah's name comes from a Hebrew word that means, "rest." He is the most working restful guy I've ever seen in my life. For 120 years, he built an ark. Now he steps out of the ark, what does he do? He builds an altar. He built an ark, now he builds an altar. When he builds the altar, he builds an altar to the Lord and he gathers his family in family worship. The family begins to worship the Lord, and to give praise to the Lord. God responds. God responds with soothing sure words of encouragement. "Noah, the next time you see the clouds, don't fear. Don't fear. When the storm clouds gather in the skies, don't fear. I will never again judge the earth with water. I will never again blot out all of humanity with a flood and water. Noah, as long as the earth endures, there will be seedtime and harvest. There will be summer and there will be winter. There will be day, there will be night. There will be heat, and there will be cold. I now establish this and I give you that promise of stability."

Now notice what it says next. It is not that man deserves this. This is a promise of God's grace. Genesis 8:21 says, "*And 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.'*" In other words the Lord is saying, "Man deserves my judgment, but I will temporarily restrain my universal judgment, and I will not use the flood of waters again. I will temporarily restrain, even though man is totally depraved." Remember Genesis 6? Genesis 6:5 says, "*The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*" "Even

though man deserves it, I will withhold it. And in place of My judgment will come stability, will come regularity, will come the seasons, will come harvest, after the planting, a day and a night, heat and cold. I so declare that. I now establish this everlastingly, as long as the earth endures.” Genesis 9:1-17 says,

1 And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. 2 The 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. 3 Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. 4 But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. 5 And 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. 7 And you, be fruitful and multiply, teem on the earth and multiply in it.” 8 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, 9 “Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, 10 and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. 11 I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” 12 And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: 13 I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. 14 When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, 15 I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.” 17 God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”

God establishes His covenant. He gives this promise of stability, this promise of security until the end of time, in which there is a reckoning, a judgment. Now we know from other passages of Scripture that while God says, “Temporarily I restrain universal judgment by water, there will one day be a judgment by fire that’ll be universal, for there is appointed unto men the fact: Once to die, and then the judgment.” In that judgment, it will be universal, everlasting and by fire. But until then, I tell you, I will not blot out humanity again. I will not bring a universal flood, and I will not bring it to bear upon all the earth. That is a promise I now make in covenant with you.

Besides that, Noah, I now enlarge your diet, your food supply. Up until this point, it's been the fruit of the gardens of the ground. But no longer, now I give you the animals for your dietary sustenance. We don't know why this was done. I mean, it could have been anything, from the change in the climates because of this flood, to whatever reason, but God does it at this point in time and He makes it very clear. This is not without direction. This direction being in terms of, "You shall not eat the animal with its blood." In other words, the live animal shall not be eaten, but the animal shall be slain to be eaten.

Then in the midst of that, while I allow man to slay animals, I do not allow man to slay man. Man is made in the image of God. Therefore, I now build into My creation a governmental ordinance, that if any man with premeditation, as we go on to find the Scripture, if any man takes the life of another man, then that man is liable, and it shall be an appropriate punishment, his life for the life that he took. That life shall be taken, not necessarily, whether it's deterrence or not where if you'll do this, then other people won't kill, in fact on the contrary, God fully expects a culture of death and murder. Otherwise, He would not have made this provision.

What happened before the flood will happen after the flood. The Lamechs of the pre-flood will arise again after the flood. Their names will be Nimrod, their names will be Obote, their names will be Idi Amin, their names will be Stalin, their names will be Mao Tse-tung. He fully expects some to rise up in a culture of violence. He warns us in Genesis 6:5, "Man is only evil always, continually." Yet, in spite of that, I withhold My hand of judgment. Yet, I build in a protection for the order of society, and that protection is when a man takes a life, that man loses his life. Now whether that deters others or not by example is beside the fact. It will deter that man. He will take no other lives. His life will be forfeited. So He builds that in.

Then He then looks at Noah and remember the enmity between the man and the animals? Now He says, "I now protect you by putting the dread of humanity in the animals." Then He gives a sign. Isn't God gracious to give us signs? In the Old Testament, there are four very formal signs. They are the rainbow, the Sabbath, circumcision, and the Passover. Those are physical expressions that God gives to remind us of His faithfulness and His promises to us. He says, "Now when you see those clouds gather again, and you see the bow, you remember. That bow, what do you use it for? War. I set my bow in the clouds and when you see my bow in the clouds, then I will remember and you will remember what I have promised. That is, I will never bring judgment again by the deluge. I will never again bring judgment by water, and I will never again bring it universally. I will never do that again." He declares it and He says, "Look at the bow when I set it in the clouds."

From this intriguing text, I want to give you three observations. The first observation has to do with this covenant with Noah. This is the first time in the Bible He uses the word "covenant." Now the covenant is clearly displayed in Genesis 1, 2 and 3, but this is the first time it's used. Here, God says, "My dealings with you will be by a covenant." Praise God, it is by a Covenant of Grace. Notice, there is no language in this covenant that I've read. God says what? "I will never again judge by water. I will never again blot out all of humanity, but with the judgment of waters, I..." and He makes promise after promise. Notice there is never the language, "If you, then I will." That would be a covenant of merit, a covenant of works. This is a Covenant of Grace. It is unilateral, it is unconditional, because God says only "I will, I will, I will." This rests not upon man's faithfulness in response to God, but upon God's faithfulness to Himself and His Word. "I will."

Let me show another thing to you about this Covenant of Grace in this first observation. Notice also, it is not just with saved people. It is with all of humanity. All of humanity will benefit from this and that's why we call this the "Revelation of God's Common Grace." The rain falls on the just and the unjust. When God reveals His grace now, this isn't redeeming grace by which people are saved, it points to redeeming grace, but it is a promise of Common Grace. Notice the bow. Not only does God take the picture of a weapon of war and set it as a statement of peace between Him and humanity, but God takes the bow which goes from horizon to horizon. This is a promise that covers all of humanity. The rain will fall gently, not in judgment, upon the just and the unjust. God will show His patience and kindness. In other words, there is not one person who has ever lived that has not been sustained by God's grace. God could at any time, because man is evil from his youth, bring judgment. But God unilaterally declares, in response to Noah's act of worship, and reveals His gracious commitment to all of humanity, not to bring judgment throughout the earth.

Notice this covenant is not only with the saved and lost. It's with all the creatures. Notice it's not only with the saved and the lost and all the creatures, it is with all of creation. Notice it's not only with the saved and the lost and all of the creatures and all of creation, it is called a Covenant with the Earth itself. Have you ever wondered why man in his sinfulness does not bring this earth into absolute destruction? It is because of God's restraining Hand upon and through humanity. Have you ever wondered why, if we think evil, only, always, continually, man who is totally depraved, does not act with absolute depravity? It's not because there's some built-in restraint within us. It's because God restrains. God keeps us from being as evil as we would be, and could be. God's act of common grace throughout all of humanity, as He restrains the animals by putting the dread of them upon humanity, as He restrains humanity in that He builds in a governmental structure that has a statement of judgment and justice. Whenever you go into the culture of violence and murder, God says, "I now build in a response to maintain some order in this society, which you would bring to

disorder in your sinfulness.” This is the act of God’s grace with all of the earth, all of creation. It is universal. It is unilateral. It is unconditional because God Himself will meet the conditions to accomplish this. It is extraordinary. Look at what He says, “I will never, I will never, I will never!”

Do you all remember a guy by the name of Peter? You remember him? He used that word. Jesus says, “You’ll all leave me and forsake me.” Do you remember what Peter said? Peter said, “I will never leave you.” Well, let’s don’t pick on Peter. Let’s start with me. I have a better idea. Let’s start with you. I tell you what, let’s get both of us. Have you ever told Jesus, “I’ll never” and then lo and behold, the good that I would do, I don’t do. (Romans 7:15-19) I find myself practicing the very evil within me and yet God is patient. God restrains. God is kind.

Here is this Covenant of Grace that is extending throughout all of humanity, showing itself graciously, gloriously, and with qualifications though. I want to make sure you understand this. I want us to see this. He says, “As long as the earth endures.” In other words, God has a day appointed, in which He is going to bring all of humanity to a reckoning. Did you notice the language? There is a reckoning. There is an accountability. There is a judgment. There is an end of this earth and this heavens, and there will be a new heavens and a new earth. Now until that time, there will not be a universal judgment by water. Now would God’s hand of discipline and judgment fall in localized situations? Certainly. In fact, God says, “Judgment begins with the household of God.” God brings the judgment of discipline out of love, many, many times. In the book of 1 Corinthians 11, where they were misusing the Lord’s Supper, He said, “For this reason, many among you are weak and sick and a number of you sleep, so that you are being judged by the Lord so that you will not be one day judged along with the world.” So this isn’t an unqualified where God is going to send good vibrations throughout the world until He comes again. It is a promise. You can bank on this. There’ll never be a universal flood, and there’ll never be a universal judgment of all humanity until there’s a final judgment, before the bar of God’s justice, until that day. God has now promised until that day to restrain.

In the meantime, He says, “I’m going to be gracious to you. Now you can have pork chops. Now you can eat steak and no longer just garden salads. I now open it up for you.” By the way, not only can you eat meat, but He makes no distinctions at this point in time between clean and unclean. So not only can you eat steak, you can eat pork chops too. He said, “But it must be properly prepared. It must be properly developed and I allow men this.” Then God in His graciousness puts this sign of the covenant. Don’t slip by that, when God gives us a sign out of His graciousness. Can’t you see? I mean, can you kind of just try to transport yourself back? I’d love to be able to do and say, “Scottie, beam us back!” Exactly, one-half of you don’t have the slightest idea of what I’m talking about! There’s this thing called Star Trek. I’m talking about the real one that was

made in one room. That's what I'm talking about, the real one! Without all this technology!

Lord, is there some way I could get back there to feel what Noah must've felt like, tossed and turned in that ark, a year and 11 days! The floods coming! Then finally, stepping out and getting upon the earth and as he steps out upon the earth, he looks around, and he sees everything that's there. Noah is a sinner – he's scarred. He's secure, but he's scarred. He's got to be scared! But God says, "Here, I'll give you a sign. Here's where you'll know, when you see this, you know I will remember what I promised to do." Here God's gracious covenant begins to not only expand the diet, give us the sign that is there, it is a restraint of the universal judgment by the waters until the day that Jesus Christ comes again.

In the midst of all of that, let me give you a second observation: God's reminding you of the authority and reliability of His Word. How many of you are going to go to bed tonight and expect the sun to be up tomorrow? I mean, do you set your alarm clock? Okay. How many of you expect, when you put the flower seeds in, or that garden in, you actually expected you were going to pick something this fall? You did, didn't you? Why? Well, the scientist would say, "Well, my rational explanation is that for as long as we can remember whenever you've done that, out comes a plant. Whenever you've done that, this happens. By the way, we have gauged that in this cycle, in this universe, in the way that the solar system works and all of this that here's when the sun and you'll see the sun. Here's where the sun sets visually, and here's how the earth is rotating, and here's how the seasons occur." In other words, the scientist says, "By observation, in all likelihood, this is what is going to happen." But they can never say for sure. There may be some place, somewhere in the universe, that two plus two doesn't equal four.

The psychologist says, "We hope that it will happen that way, so everybody will feel good." The philosopher opines and says, "You know, it seems to me that in the normal course of human events, the way things occur is seedtime and harvest." In other words, the philosopher opines. The scientists observe. I stand here today to tell you, the day that the sun doesn't come up is the last day. The day that the nighttime is not here is the last day. The day that seedtime and harvest is not found on this earth is the last day. The day that the seasons disappear is the last day. As long as the earth endures, upheld by the hand of God, then God has made a promise in His Word.

Now that's the determination you make. Am I going to work from the reasons of observation from scientists? Am I going to work from the opinions of philosophers as they examine the issues of life and determine what may or may not be true? Am I going to work with the psychologist, who would want to try to modify my behavior to get along with the vicissitudes of life or am I going to go to God's Word? God's Word is true! Let every man be a liar! God's Word is true, infallible

and reliable. I can tell you this fact: this world will never again be judged by water! I can tell you this fact: God will never universally judge humanity with a deluge! I can tell you this fact: until Jesus Christ comes and rolls up this earth and this heavens, we will have seedtime and harvest, day and night, heat and cold. I can bank on it, not by observations! I can bank on it because God's Word has said it, and every promise of God is yes and Amen, in Jesus Christ!

Now I want you to go beyond seedtime and harvest. If you believe what I just shared with you, it'll change the way you're a husband. It'll change the way you're a wife. It'll change the way you see financial resources in your life. It'll change the way you see your home. In Christianity we don't reason to the Christian life, we begin with the truth of God's Word and reason from that because there's a lot in the Christian life that is beyond our reason. God says, "Listen, you want me to tell you the key to being a good leader? Serve people." Now find the scientist, find a philosopher, find the leadership consultant that will not work control techniques into leadership. God says, "No, no, you want to be greatest? Become least. You want to be the leader? Become the servant." God says, "You see that 100% you now have in your hands from your paycheck? Let me tell you something, when you do the tithe, the 90% is more than a 100%."

God says to husbands to love the wife of your youth and that's where there's joy, even when she's no longer the wife of your youth, and your youth is gone, and hers is gone. God says to a wife, "The great joy that a nursing mother has, the great joy that a nurturing woman has, the great joy that a woman has who comes along side of her husband, and doesn't compete with him." We are glad to hear the truth. God says there's a judgment coming. God said it, I believe it! But God said this in His Word, "Here is how you shall live." Do you believe His Word? Will you live based on His Word? Will you unashamedly be transformed by truth? Or conformed to this world?

The third observation is this: God affirms the sanctity of life. He affirms the sanctity of life by this: if anyone takes the life of another, their life needs to be forfeited because of the dignity of life. He says, "I'm putting this into hands of men, that in men, there is a governmental responsibility to protect and preserve life. If there is a demagogue of the age, if there is a tyrant of the age, then man must put that man aside, that he may not take life." Would it be a deterrent? May or may not be. Is it appropriate? May or may not be? That's not the issue. The issue is this: Man is made in the image of God. The animal kingdom is not. Here is the distinction. This is why we have a culture of approved violence today. It is because our evolutionary view of man is that man is just a continued progress of the animals. God says, "No! I made the animals, they have a purpose. I made man. Man is made in My image. When you put your hands on him, you put your hands on Me! You will not take his life, whether it's in a firm bed or in the womb. You will not take his life. If you do, I now give man the responsibility to take your life." Then He says, "But know this! Man may falter, but I will not. I will require not

only from every man who takes another man's life an accounting and a reckoning. I make a reckoning for any beast that takes a man's life. Any beast or man that takes a man's life, there will be a reckoning for it." Here God affirms the reality of a judgment, even as He brings the sanctity of life before us.

There are a couple of takeaways that I'd like to give us here. The first takeaway is when God's grace takes hold of a man or a woman, how do you know that? Here's how I believe this text is telling us this. Can you imagine Noah having been in an ark designed by God, having gone into the ark directed by God, having been sealed in the ark as God shut the door, having stayed in the ark until God opened the door and told him to come out, having God steer it to the mountains of Ararat, and then he steps out? It is no accident. There is something blaring at us here! As soon as he lights, he worships. He worships the God who delivered him. He worshipped the God who designed the delivering instrument for him. He worshipped the God who put him in it. He worshipped the God who shut the door and sealed him in it. He worshipped the God who steered him. He worshipped the God who called him out and when he came out, that small step of Noah, the first step was to worship the Lord and he worshipped, not worship. He worshipped the Lord.

Genesis 8:20 says, "Then Noah built an altar to the LORD..." He didn't build an altar to the ark. He didn't worship the ark. Can you imagine what it must have been like, a year and 11 days on that ship, tossed to and fro, with those geysers coming up underneath, the deluge coming back, and the prevailing waters? Yet the ark is kept up on top with all of the motion, all of the movements, and finally, a year and 11 days later, he stepped out on dry ground! But he didn't worship the earth. Can you imagine what it must have been, shut up in that, with the darkness of the clouds that were there until finally some rays began to peak through abating, but he didn't worship the sun. He didn't worship himself.

He built an altar to the Lord. We gather for worship today. We even sang a song, "For all that You've done, I will thank You." As I contemplated the fact that we were going to be singing that today, here's what I realized; I will never worship until I realize that all that I am, and all that I have, actually came from it. The reason he stepped out to worship is the Lord had delivered him. The evidence of being delivered by the grace of God through the ark of redemption is someone who will worship. They won't let stones take their place in worship. They will worship the Lord. By the way, they, even though worship is deeply desired, they will not fall into the trap of worshipping worship! I believe our worship ought to be done with excellence and we ought to work worship what God prescribes.

Notice when Noah worshipped, an altar, he didn't offer just any animals, clean, unclean, do you see the distinctions? He worshipped according to God's directives. We don't have the record of how God directed him, but he must have, because he knew to worship, he knew how to worship, and he knew what to do

in worship. What drives the heart of a believer is not what's in the worship for me, but God and we're going to put into worship what You say pleases You. When we sing the psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, You've said You take pleasure in it. When we sing up to You, then You come down to us. When we gather around the confession that You've called for, the Word that You've said to be read, the Word that You've said to be preached, Lord, I get lost in worship, not because of the accoutrements, not because of the instruments, not because of the individuals, I am lost in worship because You by grace have delivered me from the judgment! There is no condemnation for me! I will build an altar of praise to You! We have not an ark to remember, we have a Risen Redeemer. Every first day of the week, He is risen and He has redeemed us. That's what fills Godly worship. It is a sense of the divine grace of God at work in our life. When that happens, God's people will worship. In other words, when lives become worship, then we assemble to worship.

When we see that we're trophies of grace and brands plucked from the fire, we give glory to the Redeemer and Rescuer of our soul. We will do so with reverence and abandonment. We will do so with order and ardor. We will do so not waiting on some person to manipulate me into it. It's God's grace that's filled me, and it must come out! I will give in to it, through the very things that God says pleases Him. Then wonder of wonders, God does what He did with Noah. God comes down. I know you're in Christ and Christ is in you. I know where I am positionally. He'll never me nor forsake me, but I also know this. In worship, time and time again, in the Scripture, when God's people worship Him, because of who He is and what He has done, day after day after day in their life, then God comes down to them. Draw near to God. He says, "I will draw near to you."

May I be very practical? Lord, I refuse during the moment of meditation and confession, to be distracted from anything else, but doing what delights You. I confess my sins. I meditate on You. God, I'm not going to let the person next to me sing the psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. I'm going to sing them from my heart to You, and

I'm going to speak to my brother and sister next to me. This is speaking to one another. God, I want to hear Your Word to my soul. I, with eagerness, am ready to receive it. God, while there may be one leading me in prayer, I will ascend to the throne of heaven to bring my petitions and praise to You, from a heart changed by grace. But as long as there's self-righteousness in the heart, there will not be worship in the life. It's our religion, our resolutions and what we will never do that guides us, then we will never worship. But when it's God's grace that fulfills, "I will never again judge you. I poured out my judgment upon my Son, I will never abandon you. I will secure you." I am what I am by the grace of God. When self-righteousness disappears, and religion of self-glory disappears, it is at that part in time that God's people love to glory in Him.

The second takeaway is the Word is true. God's Word is true as to who Jesus is, what He's done and how to live for Him and whether you eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God but it's not a magic book that you go buy at the bookstore, put it down on the coffee table, and somehow good vibrations are going to come into our life. You have to open it! Study it! Meditate on it! Hear it preached! Get into it! Memorize it and God's Truth will transform. But first of all, you have to be convinced it's true. You have to be convinced it's reliable. You have to be convinced it's God's Word. When you are, you'll lay hold of it. You'll lay hold of it even more than you do those computer books. You'll lay hold of it more than you will the newspaper. Instead of jumping up and saying, "I've gotta get the newspaper!" No! You have to get God's Word. I'm not saying don't read the newspaper, but get God's Word! When you get God's Word, God's Word gets you and you'll never leave it but changed.

Thirdly, and finally, I want to praise God that He didn't stop with Noah. Oh, He uses Noah. He says, "Now listen, just as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be in the days of the Son of Man. They're eating and marrying and giving in marriage, and then destruction came. I'm warning you! There's another day coming!" He used Noah. I want to thank the Lord that He used Noah to give us an ark that points to my Savior, Jesus Christ. I want to thank the Lord, as Noah steps out of that ark, his small step becomes a giant leap, not because Noah will make the leap, but because of Jesus. Noah leads his family into worship. He brings not just a thank offering, he brings an atonement offering. God, in response, gives this temporary relief in His divine plan of a covenant of grace for all of humanity and the creation.

But praise God, there was Jesus. He took the step to the cross and no temporary restraint but an eternal deliverance as the result. Because when Jesus built the altar, He was the altar. When Jesus put the sacrifice on the altar, it wasn't a clean animal it was the Lamb of God. Jesus built an altar, Jesus brought the sacrifice, and Jesus is the sacrifice. The blessing that is temporary and gracious to Noah and his seed, is now eternal and forever through Jesus Christ to His seed. One greater than Noah has built an altar. It is Mount Calvary. One greater than Noah put the sacrifice on the altar, it was Him Himself. And because of what He has done, I not only am free from any fear of a judgment of the flood of waters, I have been given the righteousness of Christ and all the asbestos that is connected to it to walk me through the judgment of fire. For the Lord has taken my judgment at Mount Calvary.

It was June 26, 1788. I just happened to read this. This is culture. This is about as close as I get. Wolfgang Mozart on June 26, 1788, got his pen out, I guess his quill out, and that morning wrote the greatest symphony he ever produced. It was Symphony 39, for those of you who want to know, written in E flat and he did it in one day. And I was reading it, this guy just marveled at that. And I obviously marveled at that. But that's nothing. Let me tell you a day. There's a day that my

Savior ascended to Mount Calvary, and there stretched out His hands on a cruel tree. All of my sins and the sins of all of His people were placed upon Him. He became what He despised. The Father delivered Him up and poured out His wrath upon Him. On that day, Jesus wrote a Symphony of Salvation. Now that's a day. That's a Composer and that's your Lord. Oh the world is tasting His common grace. Come and drink of the fountain of redeeming grace. Then wonder of wonders, you may go and bring others to that fountain, and the water will never come to an end, but spring up forever. Let's pray.

Prayer:

Father, thank You for the moments we could be together in Your Word, and this extraordinary privilege to be in this passage of Scripture and worship together. Would You please speak to our hearts? I ask You, oh God, that You would give us a confidence in Your Word, You would give us a heart that moves to worship that is not centered on anything, not us, not anything else, not even worship itself, but God that drives through with the blood of Christ to give praise and that Father, it would arise and smell sweetly in Your nostrils. God, your Word, may we drink it, may it become a balm of Gilead to the troubled one, may it be the hammer that breaks the hard heart and may it be the honey from the comb that drips the message of eternal salvation upon our very soul. Oh God, our God, thank You for Your grace and mercy. There is not one who has lived that has not benefited from this covenant with Noah. Thank You for Jesus, that we might be redeemed by grace, for Your praise and glory in all eternity. I do pray this in Jesus' Name, Amen.

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