

**Text: Gen 9.1-17**

This morning, we talked about covenants, and this afternoon I am going to tell the story of the first covenant, Noah's covenant.

One of the words we talked about in Hebrews 8 was the word "enacted." The word means "to put a law in place," or "to legislate."

When God enacts a covenant, he doesn't call a parliament in heaven, with angels or men as representatives and propose a debate among them before the Law comes out.

God speaks, and it is so. God enacts his own legislation.

At the end of the flood, Noah and his family came out of the ark and worshipped God.

Somehow, God spoke once again to Noah after these events and in this speech, God made a covenant with all mankind. Our story this afternoon is the story of that covenant.

Read Gen 9.1-17

**Proposition:** God desires good for man, even in the midst of judgement and justice.

**I. God is not finished with man (1-7)****A. Repeated from Gen 1-2**

1. Be fruitful and multiply
2. Fill the earth

By implication, everything that God said before remains in place: fruitfulness and dominion.

**B. Expanded beyond Gen 1-2**

1. Animal dread of man (2)
2. Diet specifically expanded to "moving things" [perhaps for the first time] (3)
3. Eating blood prohibited (4)
4. Capital punishment authorized (5-6)

### C. Mandate repeated (7)

When man sinned, death and the curse came, but God did not abandon men. The Creation mandate remains, the presence of sin hinders it, but God gives man responsibility in his creation.

## II. God is finished with floods (8-11)

### A. The subjects of the covenant

1. Noah
2. Noah's descendants
3. Every living creature coming out of the ark

This is a *universal* covenant.

Other covenants were enacted for a specific subset of men; this covenant is for all men, and all time.

### B. The content of the covenant

1. The Lord will never destroy all living things by a flood
2. The Lord will never again destroy the earth with a flood

The covenant does not mean there will never be localized disasters, but the whole earth will never again be judged this way.

BTW: The language of the covenant argues against a local flood.

## III. God gives mankind a sign (12-17)

### A. Notice the structure of God's promise

This is the sign (12)

I will set my bow in the cloud (13)

When a cloud appears, my bow will be visible (14)

I will remember my covenant (15)

I will see my bow (16)

This is the sign (17)

Not a perfect chiasm, but definitely chiastic

Most emphatic: I will remember, second emphasis: this is the sign

## B. God enacts covenants for man's benefit

1. Both God and man see the covenant: a memorial
2. Covenant intended to remind mankind that God promised
3. Irony of fallen man:
  - a. The memory of the covenant faded
  - b. The bow reduced to mythmaking and paganism ("pot of gold")
  - c. The bow appropriated to represent human perversion
4. Nevertheless, God will keep his part of this covenant, for the good of mankind

But remember, the covenant is not "no judgement" but "not this judgement."

### Conclusion:

**Proposition:** God desires good for man, even in the midst of judgement and justice.

The flood was a devastating event. No doubt Noah and his sons never forgot the experience, looked back on lost friends and family, even as they carried on with the families God gave them.

Despite God's amazing signs, man quickly fell into sin, almost in the next breath of the chapter — fallen man needed no serpent to deceive, he is quite capable of self-deception.

But back to our theme: God does intend good for man, and his good will work out in the end, when the Lord establishes his kingdom on the earth.