

PART TWENTY-TWO:  
THE WORLD AFTER THE FLOOD  
(Gen. 8:1-22, 9:1-29)

1. *The Subsidence of the Flood* (8:1-14).

"And God remembered Noah, and all the beasts, and all the cattle that were with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged; 2 the fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained; 3 and the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of a hundred and fifty days, the waters decreased. 4 And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat. 5 And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen. 6 And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made: 7 and he sent forth a raven, and it went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth. 8 And he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground; 9 but the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him to the ark: for the waters were on the face of the whole earth: and he put forth his hand, and took her, and brought her in unto him into the ark. 10 And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; 11 and the dove came in to him at eventide; and, lo, in her mouth an olive-leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. 12 And he stayed yet other seven days, and sent forth the dove; and she returned not again unto him any more. 13 And it came to pass in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried up from off

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*the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the Ark, and looked, and, behold the face of the ground was dried. 14 And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dry."*

### 2. *The Chronology of the Flood.*

(1) Noah entered the Ark on the 17th day of the second month of the 600th year of his life (7:11). The earth was found to be dry on the 27th day of the second month of the 601st year of his life (8:14). On the basis of a thirty-day month, this means that the duration of the Flood was 371 days. (This total is computed as follows: Of the 600th year of Noah's life, the 14 remaining days of the second month must be added to the 300 days of the next ten months; that is, 314 days in all. [Note that Noah removed the covering of the Ark on the first day of the first month of the next (601st) year of Noah's life (8:13), hence it follows that 314 days elapsed between the entrance into the Ark, and the removal of the covering of the Ark.] Now, of the 601st year of Noah's life, to the first month of 30 days must be added the 27 days of the second month, that is, 57 days in all. The two figures, 314 days and 57 days, give us a total of 371 days of Noah's life that were spent in the Ark. These figures serve as a framework for determining the details that we get, on breaking down the various phases of the duration of the Flood.)

(2) These 371 days break down into two general parts: the period of "prevailing" (7:24) and the period of "assuaging" or abating (8:1).

(3) The period of "prevailing" began with torrential rains extending over a period of 40 days (7:12); then followed an additional rise of the waters for 110 days (as a consequence of the awesome terrestrial, oceanic, seismic, and stratospheric forces that were unleashed); that is, 150 days in all (7:24).

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(4) The period of abating (8:1) included a phase of decrease which extended from the 17th day of the seventh month to the 1st day of the tenth month (8:4-5), that is, 13 plus 30 plus 30 plus 1, or 74 days in all; an additional forty days until Noah sent forth the raven (8:6-7); then seven days (by implication of the phrase, v. 10, "other seven days") until he sent forth the dove the first time (8:8), another seven days until he sent forth the dove a second time (8:10-11), and still another seven days until he sent forth the dove the third and last time (8:12). It will thus be seen that we have now accounted for 150 plus 74 plus 40 plus 21 days, or 285 in all. But the chronology of Noah's life, as given above, in which we find that 314 days elapsed between the entering into the Ark and the removal of the covering of the Ark (8:13) indicates a period of 29 days between these two events (314 minus 285 days: cf. again 7:11 and 8:13). And it was 57 days after this that the whole earth was found to be dry enough for the disembarkation (8:14). (It should be noted that only "the face of the ground" was found to be dry when the covering of the Ark was removed, 8:13). Adding all these figures, 40 plus 110 plus 74 plus 40 plus 21 plus 29 plus 57, we have a total of 371 days between the occupancy of the Ark and the withdrawal therefrom. (See E. F. Kevan, NBD, 427).

(5) There certainly is a noticeable lack of any discrepancy in these various figures. For example: (a) After the waters had "prevailed upon the earth" 150 days, they began to "assuage" (8:1). (b) On the same day the Ark rested on the mountains of Ararat (Urartu of Assyrian inscriptions) between the lakes of Van and Urmia. That is, the 17th day of the seventh month, the day on which the Ark came to rest (8:4) was exactly 150 days after the Flood began on the 17th day of the second month (7:11). (Note well: The circumstances that, from the beginning of rainfall to the grounding of the Ark on

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seems not to be an insoluble problem. Evidently they returned to the sources whence they came, that is, all that were not congealed in polar icecaps and glacial beds, or buried in newly formed subterranean seas. But—*Is there enough water on our planet to cover the entire earth?* Eminent authorities tell us: (a) that the proportion of land area to water area on the earth is about three-tenths to seven-tenths (that is, there is more than twice as much water as land); (b) that the average depth of the ocean is twelve times the average height of the land surface (hence, if deeper parts of the ocean and the highest elevations of land were brought to an average level, a world-wide ocean that would cover the entire earth to the depth of one and one-half miles would be produced); (c) that, moreover, if the water now stored in the form of ice at the polar icecaps and glacial beds were released, the volume of the ocean would be raised by one hundred and fifty feet; (d) that if in addition to all these changes, there were others of a cataclysmic nature, such as the rise of sea beds and the sinking of continents, there is no difficulty whatever to find enough water for a flood that would cover the whole earth. And it must be remembered that even though God apparently unleashed natural forces in bringing on the Flood, the fact still remains that the phenomenon as a whole was essentially supernatural in character. We do not propose here to set limits to the power of God nor to enter into a controversy with the Lord Jesus Christ. We see no reason for assuming, however, that the Genesis Flood was in any respect a violation of the natural fact that “the water cycle on our planet operates in a closed system.”

(9) *God remembered Noah and all the creatures with him in the Ark.* (8:1). Lange (CDHCG, 309): “God has always remembered Noah—but *now* he remembers him in a special sense—that he may accomplish his deliverance. There comes a turn in the flood, and the ground

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of it lay in the government of God. To the rule of judgment upon the human world, succeeds the rule of compassion for the deliverance of Noah and humanity, as also of the animal-world. It is his *compassion*, not simply his *grace*. For God also remembered the beasts." God remembers the survivors in mercy (cf. Gen. 19:29, 30:22). God remembers man's sins when He punishes them (cf. Ps. 25:7), and the needs of His people when He supplies them (Neh. 5:19). One wonders if Noah, throughout all those dark days in the Ark, did not become depressed by a feeling that God must have forgotten him. (Cf. the words of Moses, Num. 11:11-15; those of Habakkuk the prophet [1:2-4]; those of the Psalmist, 44:24; and especially the cry of Jesus from the Cross, Matt. 27:46). But "even when we seem lost to everything else we are not lost to God." In Whittier's words:

"I only know I cannot drift  
Beyond His love and care."

*And God also remembered the animals with Noah in the Ark*, "a touching indication of the tenderness of God toward His creatures." Skinner (ICCG, 165): "The inclusion of the animals in the kindly thought of the Almighty is a touch of nature which should not be overlooked." (Cf. Deut. 25:4; Psa. 36:6, 145:9, 15, 16; Jonah 4:11). The passage is anthropomorphic, of course, essentially anthropopathic: it has been said rightly that "the most God could do for man was to supply him with an anthropomorphic image of Himself."

(10) *The Raven and the Dove*. The raven, an unclean bird, a bird of prey capable of sustaining itself by feeding on carrion, was a creature especially fitted for the mission imposed upon it. This bird was evidently so named because of its black color (cf. Prov. 30:17, Song of Sol. 5:11): note the Latin equivalent *corvus*. There are numerous references to the *dove* in Scripture (e.g., Lev.

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5:7, 12:6 [its use for sacrificial purposes]; Psa. 68:13 [its beautiful plumage]; Psa. 55:6 [its power of flight]; Isa. 38:14, 59:11 [its plaintive cry]; Matt. 10:16 [its gentleness]). The dove is also an emblem of the purity and gentleness of the Holy Spirit: cf. Matt. 3:16-17, Luke 3:21-22, John 1:32-34, Acts 10:38. Owen (DHS, 46): "At the beginning of the old creation, the Spirit of God moved on the waters, cherishing and communicating a prolific, vivifying quality to the whole, as a dove gently moves upon its eggs, communicating vital heat; so at the new creation, He comes as a dove upon Him who was the immediate author of it." Skinner (ICCG, 156): "The description of the return and admission of the dove is unsurpassed . . . for tenderness and beauty of imagination." Note also the account of the *freshly plucked olive-leaf* (8:11). The olive tree did not grow at great altitudes, and is said to have flourished even under water. The olive branch is frequently mentioned in ancient literature as an emblem of peace. Brownville (SHS, 23): "As John describes the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, he distinctly says that the Spirit is to remain as an abiding presence in Him [Christ: cf. John 1:29-34]. Referring back to the experience of Noah, we remember that when the window of the ark was opened for the third time and the dove sent forth, it did not return but went to its abiding-place on the cleansed earth. Thus the Holy Spirit did not go back into heaven, but abode in Jesus in all His fullness. This fullness of the Spirit was His not only at all times in the Incarnation, but eternally; we cannot divide the Trinity of the Godhead. But here it is manifest, that we might believe and understand." Marsh (EHS, 9-18): "Noah's dove came forth from the ark. God's Dove came from heaven. There are two thoughts suggested by this. As the dove came forth from the ark, the ark being a type of Christ, so the Holy Spirit, because of what Christ is, and has done, comes forth to

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the earth of man's iniquity; and to tell him of the only ark of salvation wherein he can find safety and peace. The lighting of the Holy Spirit on Christ as the Dove proclaims two things; first, He could come as the Dove on the Lamb of God, for there was a correspondence between the spotlessness of God's Lamb and the gentleness of God's Dove. Second, He came upon Christ as the Dove, to qualify Him for his ministry, and to act through Him in blessing to others." Again: "What were the results from the sending forth of the dove from the ark, and the coming of the Spirit upon Christ? There were three sendings forth of the dove from the ark. The first time it found no rest for the sole of its feet, and returned to the ark. Josephus says that 'the dove came back to Noah with her wings and feet all muddy.' May we not take this as illustrative of the fact that in all the missions of the Spirit, from the Fall to the coming of Christ, He always had to bear testimony to man's sin and iniquity? . . . The second time the dove came back to the ark with an olive-leaf in its mouth, which is significantly said to be 'plucked off.' The word means, to be freshly torn from the tree. The Hebrew word *Taraph* comes from a root which means to tear in pieces, and is generally used to describe the action of wild beasts in rending their prey to pieces. It is rendered 'rent in pieces' in Gen. 37:33; where Jacob takes it for granted that Joseph had been killed by a wild beast when he sees blood-stained garments of Joseph. The same root is given as 'ravening' in Psalms 22:13, where Christ speaks of the wicked who were surrounding Him like a lot of wild beasts. Rotherham translates this verse, 'They have opened wide their mouth, a lion *rending* and roaring.' Putting these Scriptures together, do they not suggest to us the thought, that as the olive-leaf was torn off, and the dove bore in its mouth this emblem of peace, so the Holy Spirit bears testimony to the death of Christ, Who was 'cut off' out of the land

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of the living for our transgressions, and now proclaims that Christ has made peace by the blood of His cross? The third time the dove came forth from the ark it did not return. It had found a resting-place. So with the Holy Spirit. He had gone to and fro from the presence of the Lord, in Old Testament times, finding no resting-place, but when He beheld the One in Whom God delighted, then He rested upon Him. The first three gospels mention that the Spirit descended or lighted upon Christ; but John adds, the Spirit 'abode' upon Him. The Greek word *meno* means to dwell, and is so rendered again and again. God rested after His creative work; Christ in figure having accomplished His redemptive work, rests in the sanctification of God (Heb. 4:10); and now the Spirit rests upon Christ, henceforth to find His permanent abode in Him. All His mission emanates from Christ, all His blessings are found in Him, all His instructions are from Him, all His ministry is toward Him, all His unfoldings are about Him, all His aim is to enhance His glory, and all His working in the believer is to reproduce Him. . . . Why is the Holy Spirit given to believers? For the same reason that the dove came to Noah, and the Spirit came upon Christ. First, to assure us that for us the judgment of sin is past, for the storm has burst upon Christ and has exhausted itself upon Him. Second, to take up His abode in the mystical body of Christ through our union with the Head, and to impart His nature and infuse His grace in every part. . . . We can only rise to the dove-like character as we have the fullness of the Dove-like Indweller." This author goes on to name the chief characteristics of the dove as *purity* (Song of S. 2:14, 6:8-9; cf. Eph. 5:22-23, John 3:29; Rev. 21:2, 22:17, 2 Cor. 11:2; Col. 3:12; 1 Pet. 2:5; Gal. 5:22-25); as *cleanness*, hence suitable for sacrifice; as *gentleness* of manner (cf. Matt. 5:3, 5, 9; 10:16; Rom. 8:9); and as

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*constancy* (cf. Rom. 12:1; 1 Cor. 15:58; Rev. 2:7, 11, 17; 3:3, 12, 21). (Doves, we are told, are strictly monogamous). "The very fact that the dove could be offered in sacrifice is proof that it was a clean bird. Two of the characteristics of a clean bird were that it could fly and that it did not feed upon flesh. All grain-feeding birds that did not feed upon flesh were clean. The difference between a raven and the dove is plainly to be seen in the two which were sent out of the ark. The raven did not come back into the ark; it undoubtedly found carrion outside upon which to feed; but the dove was forced by the necessity of hunger to come back to Noah. The Holy Spirit is very particular about the food upon which He feeds. His one aim and ministry is associated with the Word of God. He finds His satisfaction in making known the message God has given Him to reveal. He is the Inditer of the Word, and He is also the Explainer of it" (Marsh, EHS, 18). Biederwolf (HSHS, 178): "Think of the many beautiful characteristics of a dove. How lovely was the character of Jesus because of these dove-like traits, sweet-tempered and gentle, yet just like Him may we be. There is gentleness, tenderness, loveliness, innocence, mildness, peace, purity, patience—all this and more for him in whose heart is made a place for the dove-like Spirit to nestle." J. W. McGarvey (FG, 86): "The dove suggests purity, gentleness, peace, etc. In fact the nature of the bird makes it a fit emblem of the Spirit, for it comports well with the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). The nations of the earth emblazon eagles upon their banners and lions upon their shields, but He who shall gather all nations into His kingdom appears as a Lamb, and his Spirit appeared under the symbol of a dove. Verily His kingdom is not of this world. It is a kingdom of peace and love, not of bloodshed and ambition. Noah's dove bore the olive branch, the symbol of peace, and the Holy

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Spirit manifested Jesus, God's olive branch of peace sent into this world (Psa. 72:7, Luke 2:14, John 14:27, Eph. 2:11-18)."

(11) *The Covering of the Ark* (8:13). Since the word used here, *mikseh*, is used elsewhere only to designate the third and fourth covering of the ark of the testimony (Exo. 26:14, etc.) and of the holy vessels when the procession was on the march (Num. 4:8, 12), a covering made of leather and skins, it has been supposed that this was the kind of covering which Noah removed from the Ark, or, rather, it would seem from the *door* of the Ark. Lange thinks this does not necessarily follow, in view of the fact that "the deck of an ark on which the rain-storms spent their force, must surely be of as great stability as the ark itself" (CDHCG, 311). The *Jerusalem Bible* (p. 23) renders this: "Noah lifted back the hatch of the ark and looked out. The surface of the ground was dry." The hatch is defined, in nautical terms, as the covering of an opening in the deck: it would seem that in Noah's ark the opening must have been the *door*. *Was this covering designed to point forward to the Covering (Atonement) for man's burden of sin which was provided by our Lord up the Cross (John 1:29)?*

### 3. *The Disembarkation* (8:15-19).

"15 And God spake unto Noah, saying, 16 Go forth from the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. 17 Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee of all flesh, both birds, and cattle, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth. 18 And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him: 19 every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, whatsoever moveth upon the earth, after their families, went forth out of the ark."

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(1) *Note that Noah obeyed God in every detail.* M. Henry (CWB, 21): "Noah did not stir until God bade him. Those only go under God's protection that follow God's direction and submit to his government." God had said to Noah, "Come thou and all thy house into the Ark" (7:1); once the occupants were all inside the Ark, God closed the door (7:16); and now that the Flood had abated and the earth was again ready for re-population, God spake unto Noah and his house, "Go forth from the ark" (8:16). Always it was God who directed, and *always* Noah obeyed. Again, Henry (CWB, 21): "Note, God consults our benefit rather than our desires. We would go out of the ark before the ground is dried: and perhaps, if the door be shut, are ready to remove the covering. God's time of showing mercy is certainly the best time, when the mercy is ripe for us and we are ready for it."

(2) *Note some interesting facts about Noah's family:*

(1) The name of Noah's wife is not given, nor are the names of the wives of Noah's sons. Though no mention is made of the fact specifically, it seems obvious that their loyalty to their husbands and to God was evidenced by their obedience. By way of contrast, the names of the women in the Line of Cain are given, and they are names which indicate sheer worldliness and irreligiousness (cf. 4:16-24).

(2) The sons of Noah were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The etymology of these names is not certain but they seem to have the following import: Shem ("name," "renown"), Ham ("dark-colored"), and Japheth ("wide spreading," "he enlarges"). Traditionally Shem has been regarded the oldest of the three; however, there are authorities who take the position that Japheth was the eldest and Ham the youngest of the three (cf. 10:21). (See under Part XIX *supra*).

(3) The language of Gen. 9:18-19 apparently forbids our assumption that Noah sired other

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sons after the withdrawal from the ark; nor is there any statement made in earlier chapters (especially ch. 5) that Noah begat *sons and daughters*, as is made of each of the patriarchs who preceded him, before the Flood. (4) Finally, it is most significant—is it not?—that there is no indication that either Noah or any of his sons was a *polygamist*. This again is evidence of the general piety which seems to have characterized the Line of Seth. It seems evident that the men in the Ark respected the Divine origin and sanctity of the marriage relation.

(3) *The withdrawal from the Ark* took place on the 27th day of the second month of the 601st year of Noah's life. On that day Noah and his house, and all creatures that were with him in the Ark, came forth on dry land. They had gone into the Ark from a world filled with debauchery and violence; they came forth from the Ark into an earth purged by Divine judgment, new and clean, and bright with opportunity. "The Ark became the second cradle of the race: from it Noah and his family went forth to a new probation."

### 4. Noah's Altar (8:20-22).

20 *And Noah builded an altar unto Jehovah, and took of every clean beast, and of every clean bird, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar. And Jehovah smelled the sweet savor; and Jehovah said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake, for that the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth, neither will I again smite any more every living thing, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."*

(1) These few verses are further evidence that Sacrifice had been a long-established Divine institution, dating indeed as the Bible dates it, from the very fountainhead of the race and the beginning of true religion (Gen. 4:1-8).

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(2) Note that Noah's first act on coming forth from the Ark was *to worship God*, and to do so in the manner and by the means which God had long before ordained. The means were three, as noted heretofore: the altar, the sacrifice, and the priesthood. From the beginning these have been the divinely established elements of true religion. The altar was a raised structure or mound of natural earth and stones: not hewn stones, because by Divine ordination to lift up a tool on it was to pollute it (Exo. 20:24-26). In this case, as throughout the Patriarchal Dispensation, Noah acted as priest (mediator) for his entire household; for his sacrifice "he took of every clean beast, and of every clean bird, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar." It is important to note, in this connection, that Noah worshiped God. Had he been a superstitious person, he would have prostrated himself before the Ark which was visible; instead he built his altar "unto Jehovah" the invisible but living and true God. Noah walked by faith: and faith knows that the things which are seen are temporal, that only the things which are not seen are eternal (Heb. 11:2, 2 Cor. 4:18). Note that these were *burnt-offerings*, that is, *things that ascend*, in allusion to the ascent of the smoke of such offerings to heaven (cf. Judg. 20:40, Jer. 48:15, Amos 4:10).

(3) *Note the Divine Soliloquy.* (a) The circumstances of Noah's offering were of Divine appointment, as evidenced by the fact that his service was accepted. "All religious services which are not perfumed with the odor of faith are of an ill savor before God" (Calvin). "Jehovah smelled the sweet savor." Whitelaw (PCG, 132): "The meaning is that the sacrifice of the patriarch was as acceptable to God as refreshing odors are to the senses of a man; and that which rendered it acceptable was (1) the feeling from which it sprang, whether gratitude or obedience; (2) the truths which it expressed—it was tanta-

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mount to an acknowledgment of personal guilt, a devout recognition of the Divine mercy, an explicit declaration that he had been saved or could only be saved through the offering up of the life of another, and a cheerful consecration of his redeemed life to God; and (3) the great sacrifice of which it was a type." This Great Sacrifice was, of course, the Sacrifice of the Lamb of God for the sin of the world (John 1:29, Eph. 5:2). (b) The Divine soliloquy which follows (vv. 21-22) is rich in overtones. Bowie (IBG, 547-548): "Few sentences in Genesis reflect thought as naive as this. God is pleased with the smoke of sacrifice, and he begins to feel more warmly disposed. Like 'de Lawd' in *The Green Pastures*, he resigns himself to recognize that the heart of man is just about hopeless. It has been evil *from his youth*. So the only thing to do was to accept the situation and not put any dependence upon the possibility of correcting matters by another flood. There is something to the credit of humanity in the person of Noah, and that perhaps is all God can expect. As theology, that is childlike; yet there is a strange instinctive wisdom in it, just as there is sometimes in the pictures that children draw. There is the recognition that human sin is incredibly stubborn, that only a patient God could put up with it, that in spite of everything he will not visit upon us our deserts. The vision of what God's infinite compassion actually went out to do in Christ is a long way off, but even so the window of instinctive trust is open in that direction." Again, the sentiment is strongly anthropopathic, expressive, it would seem, of the Divine regret at so calamitous a judgment on man as the Deluge was, yet one that had to be, in the interest of absolute Justice.

5. *The Beginning of the Beginning Again* (9:1-7): *The New World-Order*. (This last felicitous phrase is borrowed from Skinner, ICCG, 169).

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*"And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. 2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every bird of the heavens; with all wherewith the ground teemeth, and all the fishes of the sea, into your hand are they delivered. 3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you; as the green herb have I given you all. 4 But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. 5 And surely your blood, the blood of your lives, will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it: and at the hand of man, even at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man. 6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man. 7 And you, be fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein."*

(1) The *Divine blessing* bestowed on Noah and his sons is an almost verbal repetition of the primeval blessing bestowed upon mankind (Gen. 1:28). It is conferred on Noah and his sons (and not upon their wives directly) as the new heads of the race. It is significant also that here (in contrast to 1:22) animals are not included in the Divine benediction. Man's dominion over the animals is reaffirmed, but now in the form of *fear and dread* on their part; "into your hand are they delivered," that is, the power of life and death over the subhuman orders is reestablished in man as lord tenant of the earth. (JB, 25, n.): "The laws of nature are stabilized again. Aware of man's continuing malice God nevertheless preserves what he himself has made and, in spite of man, will lead it to the goal that he has determined. In the beginning man was blessed and was consecrated lord of creation; he is now blessed and consecrated anew, but his rule is tranquil

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no longer. In this new age man will be at war with the beasts and with his fellows. The peace of Paradise will not return until 'the latter days,' Isa. 11:6."

(2) The *central injunction* here is the authorization of the eating of animal flesh for food: "every moving thing that liveth shall be food for you" (thus excluding such as had died of themselves or been slain by other beasts: cf. Exo. 22:31, Lev. 22:8). We see no reason for assuming, as some commentators do, that man had been permitted only a vegetarian diet prior to the Flood: Skinner, for instance, speaks of the "central injunction" here as the "removal of the prohibition of animal food." Where is any such prohibition to be found in previous chapters of Genesis? Certainly 1:29-30, while expressly authorizing vegetarian food, does not in itself exclude the eating of meat. (But what about the expression, 9:3, "as the green herb I have given you all"? The JB renders it: "Every living and crawling thing shall provide food for you, no less than the foliage of plants." This makes sense). The view that animal food was permitted prior to the Flood is supported by the following matters. (a) the distinction between clean and unclean animals (this certainly implies some correlation between the more hygienic kinds of animal flesh and the use of it for food); (b) the language of 1:29 does not explicitly forbid the use of animal flesh for food; (c) shortly after the Fall, animals by Divine direction were slain for sacrifice, and hence probably for food also (by no means an unwarrantable inference from Gen. 4:4); (d) the sufficient reason for emphasis on the authorization of animal food in 9:3 is that it is subjoined with the restrictions which follows (9:4); however, it affords no ground for assuming the existence of previous limitations; (e) if the eating of animal flesh was supposed to heighten human sensuality ("carnality"), certainly vegetarianism thought to have

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been practised exclusively before the Flood, was no less productive of the same effect, as evident from the licentiousness and violence of the Line of Cain. We find no reason, therefore, for assuming that the human race was by Divine ordination or by any other authority restricted to a vegetarian diet before the Flood or after that event.

(3) *The Law Prohibiting the Eating of Blood* (9:4), that is, the eating of flesh from which the blood has not been properly drained. This prohibition, supposed to have been enjoined on all peoples through Noah who preceded Abraham by some ten generations (hence as universal in scope as the Rainbow Covenant), was later incorporated in the Mosaic legislation (Lev. 3:17, 7:26-27, 17:10-14, 19:26; Deut. 12:16, 23, 24; Deut. 15:23), and subsequently was imposed upon Gentile converts to Christianity by the authority of the Holy Spirit and the Apostles (Acts 15:21, 28-29). Among the reasons for the original promulgation of this law undoubtedly were the following: (a) the desire to guard against cruelty to animals; (b) the design to protect human life by demonstrating the inviolability which attaches in God's sight even to the lives of lower animals; (c) the intention to emphasize the sanctity of all life as God's most precious gift; (d) the design to point up the intimate connection between the blood and the life which subsists even in the animal world (cf. Lev. 17:10-13); (e) the design to emphasize especially its symbolic use in relation to atonement for sin (Heb. 9:22). Is not this law intended to enforce the truth in a special way that all life is sacred and must be restored to God before the flesh can be eaten? (W. Robertson Smith (RSFI, 338) suggests that this law originally may have been directed, at least in part, against the superstition that by eating the blood in which is the life of the totem animal, the worshiper appropriated the life and shared the attributes of the god thus worshiped.)

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(4) *The Law against Murder* (9:5-7). (Murder is rightly defined as the taking of another man's life on one's own authority and with malice aforethought). (a) *Whoso sheddeth*, i.e., wilfully and unwarrantedly, and not simply *accidentally* (manslaughter, Num. 35:11), or *judicially*, for that is ordained here by the wording of the law itself. (*Man's blood*, literally the *blood of man*). *By man shall his blood be shed*: Whitelaw (PCG, 141): "Not openly and directly by God, but by man himself, acting of course as God's instrument and agent—an instruction which involved the setting up of the magisterial office by whom the sword might be borne." (The law here certainly harks back to the principle of *blood revenge* which had existed from the beginning [as implicit in the words of Cain, Gen. 4:14-15] and has continued to be practised for many centuries among primitive peoples, although in the verse before us the manner of execution is not specified. According to this procedure, when a murder was committed, the victim's relatives, usually by direction of the elders of the tribe, were bound to retaliate by taking the life of the murderer. This was earliest man's only means of preventing wholesale murder. He who took from his victim God's greatest gift and man's greatest possession, life itself, must needs forfeit his own life as the only penalty sufficient to restore the balance of justice.) (JB, 25n.): "The blood of every creature belongs to God, cf. Lev. 1:5f., but man's in particular because man was made to God's likeness. God will avenge human blood, cf. 4:10, and delegates this office to man himself to be exercised through the state, or, Num. 35:19f., through the individual 'avenger of blood.'" Murder has never been tolerated by any ethnic group because the right to life is man's fundamental right, and it is so because he was made in the image of God (v. 6). Whitelaw (PCG, 141): "*Shall*. Not merely a permissive legalising, but an imperative command enjoining, capital punishment,

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the reason for which follows: *for in the image of God made he man.*" Some expositors have found nothing in this law but an ordinary prophecy that the shedding of blood would always bring reprisal in civil law (in the form of capital punishment). It is plain, however, that the law against murder was a positive Divine enactment, and not a prophecy in any sense, as well as the penalty for its violation. Whether Christ, in any of his teaching, has given us the right to believe that the penalty has been removed, is yet an open question. "Given to Noah, this statute, however, was designed for the universal family of man, until repealed by the Authority who ordained it. Not having been exclusively a Jewish statute, the abrogation of the Mosaic economy does not affect its stability. Christ, not having come to destroy the fundamental laws of Heaven, may fairly be presumed to have left this standing. Inferences from the spirit of Christianity have no validity against an express Divine commandment." The principle of Atonement, operating between Heaven and earth, seems always to have been *life for life*. (It should be noted too that a beast which might kill a human being was to forfeit its life, just as any human murderer must do: cf. v. 5, Exo. 21:28-29). To summarize the precepts given here: animals could be killed for food, but the blood must not be eaten; though the life of animals might be taken, human life was to be held sacred. Some would hold that we have in addition to the law of abstinence from blood, and the law prohibiting murder, the recognition of civil authority (cf. Rom. 13:4).

### 6. *The Rainbow Covenant* (9:8-17).

"8 *And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,* 9 *And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;* 10 *and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you; of all that go out of*

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*the ark, even every beast of the earth. 11 And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of the flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. 12 And God said, this is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations; 13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. 14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud, 15 and I will remember my covenant which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. 17 And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth."*

(1) Note the word "covenant." It designates, not a compact, not a contract, not even an agreement, but a dispensation of Divine grace to be appropriated by human faith. The God of the Bible is a covenant God. God overtures and states the conditions: man accepts the conditions and thus enters into covenant relationship with God.

(2) *The Pre-Diluvian Covenant* (Gen. 6:18-22). In v. 18 here we have the first occurrence of the word *berith*, translated "covenant," in the Scriptures. God informs Noah that He will establish His covenant with him. "It is a sovereign dispensing of grace on God's part, and the security arises from the action of God. It is God's covenant, and He establishes it. Flowing from this dispensation to Noah there are corresponding obligations. Noah and his family were to come into the ark and he was to bring with him the specified number of animals and birds

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and creeping things. Thus there is no conflict between sovereign administration of grace and ensuing obligations" (NBD, 264).

(3) *The Post-Diluvian Covenant* (Gen. 9:8-17). (a) This covenant is unconditional, that is, unilateral: no conditions are specified as terms on which the Divine grace bestowed is made contingent. (b) It is conceived and established by God Himself. "There is no human contribution to the agency by which the promises are fulfilled. The sign does not even take the form of an ordinance to be performed by man at the divine behest. The bow in the cloud is for the purpose of attesting the faithfulness of God and, in anthropomorphic terms, is to bring to God's remembrance His covenant promise. It is not a sign over which men exercise any control." (c) It is universal in its scope. It embraces not only Noah but also his seed after him and every living creature. *It is a covenant between God and all flesh.* (d) It is everlasting. "No uncertainty or mutability can belong to God's unconditional promise." (e) The bow in the cloud is the sign of the covenant. (f) The essence of the covenant is that the earth shall never again be devastated by a Flood (cf. 8:21-22).

(4) *The Bow in the Cloud*: the token or sign of the covenant, that is to say, of the Divine promise. (a) Was this the first appearance of the rainbow? We think not. Experience informs us that a rainbow has always been formed when sunshine and rainfall occur in the relationship determined by the Lawgiver of the physical (astronomical) world. But, some will say, there was no rainfall before the Flood: they base their view on the words of Gen. 2:5-6. However, in these two verses we have (as explained in my *Genesis*, Vol. I, pp. 426-427) an account of the conditions that prevailed on the third "day" of the Creation, following the creation of energy-matter and

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light (on Day 1), and the atmosphere (on Day 2), and the lands and seas (on Day 3), prior to the first appearance of plant life (on the same Day). All these physical phenomena—light, atmosphere, lands, seas—necessarily preceded the return of the vaporous substances (“mists”) to the earth in the form of rainfall. There is no reason for assuming that rainfall did not continue to occur from that point on, even to the age of the Flood when “the windows of heaven” were thrown wide open to let torrential rains through upon the wicked antediluvian peoples.

(b) Note 9:13—“I do set my bow in the cloud.” White-law (PCG, 143): “Literally, *I have given, or placed.*” Rotherham (EB, 40): “My bow *have I set* in the cloud.”

By way of comparison, when Jesus established the Communion service, He did not then make the bread or the fruit of the vine (Matt. 26:26-29, I Cor. 11:23-26): He merely selected these two substances which had existed from time immemorial and *appointed them* to be the emblems of His crucified sinless body and his shed blood as long as the Church should exist on this earth, that is, to the time of His Second Coming. So it was with the rainbow in Noah’s time: as if God said to the patriarch, “I have placed my bow in the cloud. I now appoint it to be a sign of the my covenant promise that I will never again bring a flood upon the earth to destroy mankind. Every time you and your posterity see this rainbow in the heavens you will remember my promise, and I will remember this, my everlasting covenant, which is between me and you and all living creatures.” Thus we rightly designate the Rainbow Covenant the Covenant of Hope. (JB, 25 n.): “The covenant with Noah, the rainbow its emblem, involves the whole creation: Abraham’s covenant, whose sign is to be circumcision, embraces his descendants only, Gn. 17; under Moses the Covenant is confined to Israel, and brings with it an obligation: fidelity to the Law, Ex. 19:5, 24:7-8, and to the sabbath observance in

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particular, Ex. 31:16-17." The seal of the New (spiritual) Covenant is the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:10, 4:30).

### 7. *Noah's Last Days* (9:18-28.)

*"18 And the sons of Noah, that went forth from the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan. 19 These three were the sons of Noah: and of these was the whole earth overspread. 20 And Noah began to be a husbandman, and planted a vineyard; and he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. 22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. 23 And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. 24 And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his youngest son had done unto him. 25 And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. 26 And he said, Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant. 27 God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant. 28 And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. 29 And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died."*

### (1) *Noah's Progeny* (9:18-19).

(a) Cornfeld (AtD, 36): "Genesis does not tell us where Noah and his family lived after the Flood, but only that the earth was repopulated by Noah's three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. The chronicler regards Noah as the main link in the generations reaching to Abraham, and carefully notes that Ham, father of Canaan, is not of the same stock as Shem, the father of the Hebrews." It should be noted, however, that the emphasis continues to be on the Messianic Line, beginning with Shem and

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continuing through Noah to Abraham. Cornfeld again (AtD, 36): "As we continue to read the genealogies, we note that the focus grows more and more narrow. The emphasis at the conclusion is on Shem, the ancestor of the Semites (see Gen. 10:21-30), which include "all the sons of Eber" who embraced the Hebrews. The final narrowing of the generations of Eber would come in the next chapter: read 11:16-26)." (b) Of Shem, Ham, and Japheth it is said: "of these was the whole earth overspread." This statement leaves us little room for doubt that Noah sired no other children than the three sons mentioned. (Of course again we have to consider the fact that in this text *erets* could be just as correctly translated "land" as "earth.").

(2) *Noah's Sin* (9:20-23). "Noah began to be a husbandman, and planted a vineyard." A "husbandman" is a farmer, a tiller of the ground. Hence JB renders this line, "Noah, a tiller of the soil, was the first to plant the vine." This could mean, without any rending of the text and context, that he was the first to plant a vineyard *after the Flood*. Two views of this incident have been rather common among Bible students: one is that the patriarch, having been the first to cultivate a vineyard was not aware of the intoxicating qualities of its fruit, and that his intoxication was the consequence of this ignorance. Thus Skinner (ICCG, 181): "Noah is here introduced in an entirely different character, as the discoverer of the culture of the vine, and the first victim to immoderate indulgence in its fruit." The other view is simply that Noah, probably in an exuberance of joy over his deliverance and newly found freedom, imbibed a little too freely of the fermented juice of the grape, even to the point of intoxication and some of the shameful indecencies which not infrequently attend such over-indulgence. The present writer can hardly convince him-

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self that Noah was the first to plant a vineyard and hence was unaware of the intoxicating character of wine. It is inconceivable that husbandry and vine cultivation were unknown throughout all those centuries before the Flood. Whitelaw (PCG, 148): "That Armenia is a vine-growing country is testified by Xenophon (*Anab.* iv, 4, 9). That the vine was abundantly cultivated in Egypt is evident from representations on the monuments, as well as from Scriptural allusions. The Egyptians said that Osiris, the Greeks that Dionysos, the Romans that Saturn, first taught men the cultivation of the tree and the use of its fruits. . . . Though this is the first mention of wine in Scripture, it is scarcely possible that the natural process of fermentation for so many centuries escaped the notice of the enterprising Cainites, or even of the Sethites. . . . Since the sin of Noah cannot be ascribed to ignorance, it is perhaps right, as well as charitable, to attribute it to age and inadvertence. . . . But from whatever cause induced, the drunkenness of Noah was not entirely guiltless; it was sinful in itself, and led to futher shame." The simple fact is that Noah "slipped," lapsed, this one time only, we hope, from the path of virtue. He planted a vineyard and, doubtless through knowledge acquired in antediluvian experience, he made wine from the grapes which his vineyard produced. In spite of his lifelong piety, and his experience with the debauchery and viciousness of his former neighbors, recollections of which should have prompted him to restrain himself, he drank so much of the wine that he became intoxicated. Intoxication naturally leads to sensuality, carelessness, immodesty, and the like, and the old patriarch lay "uncovered" in his tent, that is, he shamefully exposed himself in some way in the presence of his sons. Ham, it seems, was the first to find him in this condition, and instead of being filled with pity on seeing his father in late age in such a maudlin

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state, laughed about it as if the whole thing were a lark, and rushed to tell his brothers. Shem and Japheth immediately came to the tent, took a garment, and laid it on both their shoulders, and walking backward placed it over their father without even looking on his nakedness. Thus did the other two brothers act with becoming modesty while at the same time protecting their father's honor, whereas Ham had been guilty of a profane breach of filial piety and disregard for elders in general, which was an offense of the first magnitude among primitive and early historic peoples (cf. Exo. 20:12). (Noah's lapse in his old age is evidence that humankind was still a "fallen" race).

The fact should be re-emphasized here that *the Bible pictures life just as it is*. It is the only book in the world which portrays human character realistically. Not for one moment does it turn aside from the faithful record to conceal the weaknesses and derelictions of its great men: it pictures their lives just as they lived them. Biographers of men usually dwell glowingly on the virtues of those about whom they are writing, to the neglect of recording their faults. Not so with the Bible. No matter that Noah was "perfect" in his generations; no matter that he walked by faith; no matter that he was God's chosen representative in the Messianic Line; he finally sinned, and that in his declining years. And the Bible does not attempt to conceal his fault. There is no false modesty in the Book of Books. It uses old-fashioned words to designate old-fashioned things. It is primarily the *Book of Life*.

(3) *Noah's Prophecy* (9:24-27). We read that Noah "awoke from his wine, and knew what his youngest son had done unto him." Evidently he knew this by inspiration (or intuition?), and immediately uttered a series of terse prophetic statements which undoubtedly were inspired. We can hardly question this fact, because human

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history surely records, in broad outlines at least, the fulfillment of these pronouncements. (A word of caution here: I must be understood that the destinies of the peoples who sprang from the loins of Shem and Ham and Japheth were not foreordained to be what they were. Rather, these destinies were determined by the respective progenies themselves; however, they were foreknown to God and so could be communicated to Noah by Divine inspiration and thus disclosed to mankind long before they actually occurred. We must remember that foreknowledge does not necessarily imply foreordination, except with reference, of course, to the details of the Plan of Redemption. Obviously, in uttering these predictions Noah was not moved by personal resentment, but was acting simply as God's mouthpiece. Prophecy has always been used by the Spirit to attest the truth of revelation.)

(a) "Cursed be Canaan, A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren." Note that the dominant feature of this entire prophecy is the curse on Canaan, which not only stands first, but is repeated in the blessing on the two brothers. It seems evident that prophetic insight testified that Canaan would inherit the profane disposition of his father, Ham, and that the Canaanites would abundantly deserve the destiny foretold of them; also that the curse was general in its nature and hence included the entire posterity of Ham and Canaan (for which see 10:6-20). Note the phrase, "a servant of servants," etc. This is the superlative degree, literally, "the meanest slave." The curse simply means that the descendants of Canaan were doomed to enslavement to the other two branches of the family. This destiny seemingly was reversed when Nimrod and Mizraim founded Babylonia and Egypt respectively. But it was abundantly fulfilled in early antiquity when the Canaanites in Joshua's time were partly exterminated and partly reduced to abject slavery by the Israelites who belonged to the family of Shem, and those

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that remained were further reduced by Solomon (Josh. 9:23, 1 Ki. 9:20-21). It was fulfilled later when the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, and Egyptians, all of whom belonged to the Line of Canaan, were reduced to subjection by the Japhetic Persians, Macedonians, and Romans. These peoples, the Canaanites included, all were obsessed with the gross sexual indulgences characteristic of the ancient Cult of Fertility, as described by the Apostle Paul in Romans 1:18-32. It may be fulfilled too in the long-standing moral and spiritual (and cultural) backwardness of the South African peoples who perhaps more than any other have been forcibly reduced to abject slavery by Semitic, and more particularly Japhetic, nations. As a matter of fact, "African slavery" is one of the darkest blots on the whole history of mankind. The fact is that there is no moral ground on which any man can obtain a legitimate title to another man's person: this is true for the simple reason that one soul is worth as much as another in the sight of God and hence that Christ died for all men alike.

(b) "Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Shem, And let Canaan be his servant." To "bless" Yahweh is simply to praise Him. The blessing here must be *indirectly* a blessing on the Line of Shem, that is, in assuming the spiritual primacy of the Semites by virtue of their having Yahweh for their God. The second part of the prophecy was fulfilled in the conquest of Canaan under Joshua, Saul, David and Solomon. By the time the Israelites were ready to enter Canaan under Joshua, the Canaanites by their grossly idolatrous and licentious "religious" practices had proved themselves vessels fit only for destruction (Judg. 1:28, 31, 33; Gen. 15:13-16; Acts 7:6).

(c) "God enlarge Japheth, And let him dwell in the tents of Shem; And let Canaan be his servant." That is, "make room for the one who spreads abroad." This part

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of the prophecy was simply a foretelling of the widespread diffusion and remarkable prosperity of the Japhetic (Aryan) peoples; as a matter of fact, the history of the human family is largely the record of this "enlargement," geographically, politically, economically, and socially. Indeed the phenomenon is evident also in the extension of Biblical religion into all parts of the world. The descendants of Japheth pushed across Asia Minor into Europe, and moving thence both to the North and to the West they populated the European continent, ultimately finding their way to the shores of the Americas. Nordic, Alpine and Mediterranean peoples are all of the Line of Japheth. "And let him dwell in the tents of Shem." The fulfillment of this passage is obvious: certainly it occurred in the reception of the Gentiles into the duties, privileges, and rewards of Biblical religion, especially in the admission of the Gentiles into the Body of Christ (cf. Acts 10:44-48, 11:15-18; Eph. 2:11-18; 1 Cor. 12:12-13). Smith and Fields (OTH, 443): "Japheth has come to dwell in the tents of Shem as a result of the Semitic Jews' rejection of their Messiah, Jesus. When this occurred the Japhetic Gentiles were given the gospel of God and entered into the spiritual relationship with God that the Jews (except for a believing remnant) forfeited: Rom. 11:11, 20-24." The last part of this Noahic prophecy, "Let Canaan be his servant," was used for many years as a Divine warrant for the institution of African slavery. There is a great difference, however, between a positive command such as in Gen. 9:5-6, and an inspired *prophecy*. Even though Noah, looking into the future, may have foreseen the spiritual and cultural backwardness of many Hamitic peoples, still and all these words do not constitute a divine authorization of slavery. They should be looked upon as only a prophetic statement of what history shows to have been a fact.

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### (4) *Noah's Death* (9:28-29).

Noah, we are told here, lived after the Flood three hundred and fifty years. His life terminated, when he was nine hundred and fifty years old, on the same tragic note that characterizes the family of man: "an he died" (Heb. 9:27). It is interesting to note, in this connection, by way of comparison, that Abraham lived to be only one hundred and seventy-five years old (Gen. 25:7), and Moses only one hundred and twenty years old (Deut. 34:7). How shall we account for this constantly decreasing longevity?

\* \* \* \* \*

## FOR MEDITATION AND SERMONIZING

### *The Bow in the Cloud*

1. *The rainbow in the cloud was a most meaningful emblem.* It had the prime characteristic of *universality*. It is a phenomenon which occurs in all parts of the earth where there is the proper relation between sunshine and shower. The Rainbow Covenant was not for just one people, one nation, one race. Unlike the covenant of circumcision which was for the fleshly seed of Abraham only, the Rainbow Covenant was God's promise to the entire family of man, in fact, to "every living creature of all flesh" (9:15). Hence the sign of this covenant has to be one which is universal in scope, one that might be seen in every land. It was an *attractive* sign. Nothing is more beautiful, more attractive to the human eye, than the rainbow in the cloud. It stirs the finest of our emotions and the most fruitful of our meditations. In its selection, then, we detect another evidence of Divine grace. But, above all, it was a *hopeful* sign. It expresses the optimism of the entire book of Genesis. The darker the cloud, the more impressive is the bow in the cloud! And how forcefully this bow in the cloud reminds us of Calvary! There a cloud so dark descended upon the earth

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that even at midday there was intense darkness over the land (Matt. 27:45, Mark 15:33, Luke 23:44). But the eye of faith discerns in that, the heaviest cloud that ever gathered, the bright rainbow of eternal love suffering for a lost world! There is an aura of hope connected with the rainbow, even in Noah's experience, suggestive of the new world, the cleansed world, into which he had entered on withdrawing from the Ark, and of the Divine grace which had been extended to him all along the way. The Rainbow Covenant is rightly called the Covenant of Hope.

2. *The Rainbow Covenant teaches us that the blessings of nature are no longer conditioned on man's moral conduct.* All the blessings and benefits of what we call "the regular course of nature" are covenant blessings, flowing out of God's post-diluvian covenant with Noah. This covenant was to the effect that "while the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease" (8:22). Isaac Errett (EB, 80): "Even though the imaginations of men's hearts should be evil from their youth, the sun will rise, the moon will wax and wane, the rains will descend, and the seedtime and harvest will come in their appointed seasons. Men in their wickedness may deprive themselves of the blessings God thus designs to bestow, but His promise is none the less fulfilled. He makes the sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends His rain on the just and the unjust; for this is His promise (Matt. 5:45). Thus, as Paul writes, God 'left not himself without witness in that he did good and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness' (Acts 14:17). When we pause to reflect on what science unfolds to us of the ceaseless motions of innumerable worlds, and learn how the slightest variation from the established order might plunge system after system into confusion and disaster, we cannot but adore that everlasting truthfulness and unfailing goodness which hold all

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the mighty words and systems in harmony, and enable the astronomer to foretell for ages the sun's rising and setting, the transits of the planets, the eclipses of the sun and moon, and even the motions of comets. God's covenant of the day and night secures all this. God is forever true." *God is absolute Truth, absolute Beauty, and absolute Goodness.*

3. *However, the Rainbow Covenant is evidence that the present world-order is not to last forever.* The promise itself contains an intimation to the contrary: note well the words, "while the earth remaineth." Is not this an intimation that our earth will not always remain, or at least *not always remain what it is now?* But the earth will never again be devastated by *water*: this was the Divine assurance. Cf. 2 Pet. 3:5-7: the earth was once purged with water; it will in the next instance be swept clean by fire, in the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. Nevertheless, God's saints look for "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Pet. 3:13; cf. Isa. 65:17, 66:22; Psa. 102:25-27; Heb. 1:10-12, 12:26; Rev. 21:1-4).

### *The Design of Positive Institutions*

A moral law commands a thing to be done because it is right, but a positive law makes a thing right because God commands it. In popular parlance God's positive enactments are commonly designated "ordinances." All such positive institutions, although always embodying the moral quality of obedience, are primarily for the purpose of proving (testing?) the faith of the worshiper.

The fact that Noah, on entering the new and cleansed world, worshiped God instead of paying homage to ("blessing," burning incense to, pouring holy water on) the Ark, has a lesson of tremendous significance for all ages. In this act the very heart of the design of positive institutions revealed in Scripture is exemplified. The three following

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propositions will amplify this statement and serve to set forth the truly Divine purpose in all such institutions.

1. *Superstition makes everything of a positive ordinance.* Had Noah been a superstitious man he would have worshiped the Ark because it was the *visible* instrument of his deliverance. Man's corrupt nature makes it difficult for him to look beyond the visible and temporal to the invisible and eternal (2 Cor. 4:18). These facts account for the mass of ritual which has grown up under the aegis of the older denominations of Christendom: men have gotten so thoroughly imbued with traditions and superstitions, many of them borrowed from pagan sources, that they are willing to bow before lifeless images, put crucifixes on their walls, sprinkle holy water, wear sacred relics as amulets, etc. Their cathedrals reek with the light of candles and the odor of incense as all ancient pagan temples did. In all such cases the Christian faith itself becomes an empty shell, just sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. There are those in New Testament churches who worship baptism instead of the Christ who commanded it. No one can literally *believe in* baptism; rather, one believes in Christ who has ordained that believers should witness by this act of faith, to the facts of the Gospel—the death and burial and resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 15:1-4, Rom. 6:17). There is no efficacy in the water *as such*, that is, there is no *magic* involved in the institution; the efficacy is in the faith that is exemplified in this positive act of the obedience of love for the redeeming Savior. If there is any efficacy in water, it might be right to practice infant sprinkling (infant baptism is infant immersion); if there be such a thing as "water regeneration," it certainly would be implicit in the act of sprinkling or pouring water on a baby (the act which is generally and erroneously called "infant baptism"). The unknowing babe has no understanding of what is going on; it has no

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conscience entering into the transaction (cf. 1 Pet. 3:21); hence the efficacy in such an act, if any, must lie in the water and in the water alone. But who believes such a thing? Is it not sheer magic, sheer superstition? Most certainly the Bible does not teach "water regeneration," nor does it authorize the patting of a few drops of water on a baby's head and calling that a "baptism." Baptism is for the penitent believer: it is the expression to the world of his faith in Christ and of his love for Christ; it is his testimonial to the facts of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. The moment the sinner begins to worship the ordinance instead of the Christ who ordained it, his faith—if it can be called that—has degenerated into mere superstition. Take an example from the Old Testament: As long as the Children of Israel looked on the brazen serpent in the wilderness, and looked through it to the God who ordained it and its specific purpose, and then took God at His Word by doing what He commanded them to do, they were healed (Num. 21:9, John 3:14). However, there came a time when they drifted into the worship of the *thing* itself instead of worshipping the God who, in His benevolence, had ordained it for their good; it was then that Hezekiah the king ordered the brazen serpent broken into pieces, calling it "Nehushtan," that is, "a piece of brass" (2 Ki. 18:4).

2. *Mysticism, infidelity, and profanity make nothing of a positive institution.* The mystic prates about "the mere word," as if it were something to be trifled with. He forgets that this is the Word which created and which sustains our universe in all its aspects and processes (Psa. 33:6-9, 148:1-6; John 1:1-3; Heb. 1:1-4; Col. 1:13-17; Rom. 10:4-17). The mystic depends on feeling as his spiritual barometer, talks a great deal about "heartfelt religion," "spiritual experiences," about "being in tune with the Infinite," etc., but, insofar as his actions are the norm, seems to care very little about the Bible. (Such

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groups as the Quakers, the Christian Scientists, the Unity cults, etc., "spiritualize" both baptism and the Lord's Supper out of concrete existence altogether.) The unbeliever scoffs at Divine institutions, and dubs them "superstitions," "hangover of folklore," etc. The profane person, while halfheartedly recognizing a positive ordinance as having something of divinity, still manifests no respect for it or for the God who ordained it. To all these classes we might issue the warning expressed in the old axiom, "He who despises an ordinance of God, despises the God of the ordinance," and in the blunt words of the prophet Samuel to King Saul, "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams" (I Sam. 15:22).

3. *Faith regards and uses a positive institution as a Divine appointment*, as God intended it to be used. Noah made use of the Ark as he was supposed to do, according to God's leading, in obedience to God's Word. Biblical positive ordinances are solemn trysts, Divine appointments, wherein Divine grace and human faith "meet together." Christian baptism, for example, is the appointed institution wherein God meets the penitent believer to bestow on him remission of sins and the indwelling Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; Rom. 5:5; 1 Cor. 3:16-17, 6:19-20; Gal. 3:2). The Lord's Supper is the appointed memorial institution wherein our Elder Brother meets, from Lord's Day to Lord's Day, with all whom He has bought with His own precious blood and incorporated into His Body, the Church (Matt. 26:26-29; 1 Cor. 10:16-17, 11:23-30; Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:18-20; Rev. 5:9). In like manner, the Ark was the Divinely appointed meeting-place wherein Noah met God and received deliverance from the Divine judgment which fell upon the ungodly antediluvian world. Noah was a man of faith, and faith takes God at His Word (Heb. 11:7, Rom. 10:17). Faith, which is the substance of things hoped for and a convic-

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tion with respect to things not seen (Heb. 11:1), appropriates the Divine positive ordinances as solemn appointments as God intends them to be used.

### *Noah: God's Man for an Emergency*

God always has His man for an emergency, and Noah certainly was no exception to the rule. Let us note the successive phases of Noah's life.

1. *Noah in "the world of the ungodly."* Contemplation of faithful Noah living in the midst of a perverse generation, warning them of judgment "not seen as yet," pleading with the people to repent and reform their lives, should remind the Christian of his constant duty in spite of every obstacle and discouragement; that he should go his way testifying of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come, regardless of the sneers of the worldly wise, the tauntings of the vicious, and the opposition of the hypocritical purveyors of false, assumed piety. A true Christian cannot expect to pitch his tabernacle on the mountain top, as Peter wanted to do on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matt. 17:4); his work lies down in the valley where there is poverty, passion, toil, sorrow, pride, incestuousness, sin of every kind.

"I said, 'Let me walk in the fields,'

God said, 'No, walk in the town.'

I said, 'There are no flowers there,'

He said, 'No flowers, but a crown.'

I said, 'But the sky is black,

And there is smoke and bustle and din';

He wept as He brought me back again,

And said, 'There is more—there is sin.'"

2. *Noah passing through the Flood.* His deliverance through the raging waters of the Deluge is a striking figure of Christian baptism (1 Pet. 3:20-21). Water is the symbol of cleansing: hence in all ages God has maintained His water-line between the saved and the lost, between

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His people and the people of the world (cf. 1 Cor. 10:2; Exo. 29:4, 40:12; Lev. 8:6, 16:4, 24 with 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6; Matt. 3:5-7, 28:19, etc.). As the water separated those of faith, in the days of Noah, from the world of the ungodly, so in our Dispensation the same line of demarcation is fixed between the church and the unsaved world. The water which rolled over the eight persons in the Ark sanctified them, set them apart for Divine deliverance. As they passed from the wicked antediluvian world, "through the water," into a new world where all was cleansed by this Divine judgment, so the penitent believer leaves the bondage of sin, comes to the water, passes through it, and arises to walk in newness of life (John 3:5, Gal. 3:27, Rom. 6:1-11). As Noah and his family were completely buried from view so that they could neither see nor be seen by those about them, so the penitent believer must be *buried* in the water, completely hidden from view, before he can claim to be baptized Scripturally (Col. 2:12, Matt. 3:16, Acts 8:36-39). Baptism is a profound spiritual heart act of the obedience of love (John 14:15, Rom. 6:17).

3. *Noah in the Ark* presents a different picture from the Noah in the ungodly world. In the antediluvian society there was no rest for his troubled soul, no peace of body or mind or spirit, but in the Ark was profound seclusion. No matter if the elements were raging without, he and his family must have felt, in the ark, that security and peace which obedient faith alone can give. In this respect the Ark becomes a figure of Christ. All of God's "waves and billows" (Psa. 42:7, Jonah 2:3) rolled over the innocent Jesus when He hung on the Cross (Matt. 27:46), and, as a blessed consequence of His vicarious Sacrifice, none of these must pass over the saints, all of whom He has purchased with His own precious blood. At Calvary we see once again "the fountains of the great deep broken up and the windows of heaven opened." At

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Calvary we see "deep calling unto deep at the noise of thy waterfalls" (Psa. 42:7). Jesus bore the burden of humanity's sin in His own body and paid humanity's debt (John 1:29, 1 Pet. 2:21-25). "He put himself under the weight of His people's liabilities and discharged them fully. The acceptance of this truth, through unqualified belief in Him, gives to the soul that peace 'which passeth all understanding.' Christ is our Ark of safety; in Him only can we find that blessed security which only redeeming love can bestow." (Phil. 4:7).

4. *Noah coming out of the Ark and taking his place in the cleansed new world* must have experienced mingled feelings of awe, gratitude, and sadness: *awe*, because of the strange and mighty works of God, *gratitude* for the deliverance of himself and his family, and *sadness* at the thought of his friends and neighbors having all perished in the Flood. Throughout all his experience, he had placed himself unreservedly in the hands of Jehovah and been guided by Him. The same God who said at first, "Make thee an ark of gopher wood," and later, "Come, thou and all thy house, into the ark," now "remembered" Noah and all that were with him in the ark, and "made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged; the fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained." The rays of the sun now poured down on a planet that had been baptized with a baptism of judgment. Judgment is one of God's terrible acts: He takes no delight in it, though He is glorified by it. The same God now said to Noah, "Go forth from the ark." And Noah went forth . . . and builded an altar unto Jehovah." All is simple faith and obedience. Noah, in all his varied experiences, never raised a question when God spoke! He did what God told him to do and in the way God told him to do it. What a different thing from the carping, caviling, evasive thing that men have today which they call "faith"! Faith never

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asks the *why* or *wherefore*, when God commands. (Heb. 11:7).

5. *When God closed the door of the Ark behind Noah and his house, he shut out the unbelieving and impenitent world.* Then the "fountains of the great deep were broken up and the windows of heaven were opened," and judgment was at hand. No matter that there were "giants in the earth" in those days, "mighty men, men of renown"; no matter that there were walled cities, and great herds and flocks on the outside; no matter that there were sounds of reveling by night, and wars and rumors of war by day—all had to be swept away! The sounds of the harp and the lyre were stilled, the forger's hammer lay unused, and the people cried for the rocks and the mountains, but it was *too late!* We may imagine that, if Noah could have given just one invitation from the door of the Ark, the people would have crowded in over each other's dead bodies! The Lord Jesus Christ opened the door of His Church on Pentecost, through His Apostles guided into all the truth by the Spirit, and it has never been closed from that day to this. It still stands ajar, ready to receive all who will enter in on the terms of the Gospel Covenant. The time is bound to come, however, when the Lord Himself shall close the door of His Church, and gather her unto Himself "as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. 21:2, 21:9-10, 22:17). When that time comes all opportunity for repentance will have terminated. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye (1 Cor. 15:51), He will come with His mighty angels, "in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. 1:7-10). Multitudes will cry for the rocks and the mountains to fall upon them, but everlastingly too late. The hopeless answer will be, "Jesus of Nazareth has passed by." *Now* is the accepted time, sinner friend: this should be the day of your salvation.

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Noah was God's man for an emergency. God always has His man in the time of crisis, and Noah was this man in the early moral history of the race. Dean (OBH, 16): "Some names are forever associated with great epochs: Lincoln with Emancipation, Cromwell with the Commonwealth, Moses with the Exodus, so Noah with the Deluge. Read Gen. 6:9, 7:1; Ezek. 14:14. Noah was God's man—a heroic figure in an apostate age. Altar after altar had crumbled, but the fires on Noah's altar did not go out till quenched by the Flood. It calls for courage to stand alone. But Noah dared to lead where few dared to follow. The absolute obedience and safety of Noah, the hopeless corruption and ruin of the race—such as the impressive lessons. For one hundred and twenty years Noah faithfully preached and heroically lived. Only seven converts rewarded his labors: his wife, and his sons, Shem, Ham, and Jepheth, and their wives. Yet Noah was successful: he did *his* duty, and he outrode the Flood."

\* \* \* \* \*

### REVIEW QUESTIONS ON PART TWENTY-TWO

1. How many days of Noah's life were spent in the Ark?
2. List the successive phases of "the days of prevailing" of the waters upon the earth.
3. List the successive phases of the days of "assuaging."
4. On what basis do we conclude that a month in Noah's life was a period of thirty days?
5. Would you consider it reasonable to hold that the period of Noah's life spent in the Ark can be harmonized with the localized-Flood theory? Explain.
6. Where did the Ark finally come to rest?
7. Is there any definite conclusion to be drawn from the fact that the word *erets* may be translated either "earth" or "land"?

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8. What are the three pivotal events in the history of earth?
9. How answer these questions: (1) Is there enough water on our planet to cover it entirely? (2) Whence came the waters which produced the Deluge? (3) Where did they go when the Flood subsided?
10. What is meant by the statement that God "remembered" the occupants of the Ark when the time arrived for them to disembark?
11. What is the significance of the statement that He "remembered" the animals that were with Noah in the Ark?
12. Why was the raven probably sent out first?
13. What was the significance of the sending out of the dove? How many times was the dove sent out?
14. What was probably the symbolism of the freshly-plucked olive-leaf?
15. What are the characteristics of a dove? What does the dove symbolize in the Scriptures?
16. What is the connection between this symbolism and the manifestations which occurred after the baptism of Jesus?
17. What probably is meant by the "covering" of the Ark?
18. What interesting facts are revealed about the families in the Ark?
19. Name the sons of Noah and state what each name means.
20. What was Noah's first act on withdrawing from the Ark?
21. What is the significance of the fact that Noah worshiped God and not the Ark?
22. How do we know that Noah was not a superstitious man?
23. What probably did the statement mean that Yahweh "smelled the sweet savor" of Noah's sacrifice?

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24. What seems to have been the deeper meaning of God's soliloquy in 8:21-22?
25. In what special way was man's dominion over the lower animals reaffirmed?
26. What was the change in the feelings of the animals toward man after the Flood?
27. What does Noah's altar teach us about the institution of Sacrifice?
28. What was the Divine blessing bestowed on Noah and his sons?
29. Is there any conclusive Scripture evidence that man was permitted only a vegetarian diet prior to the Flood?
30. What part of living creatures was prohibited as food after the Flood?
31. What law was ordained about the eating of blood? Why this prohibition?
32. What law was ordained about murder? What is murder?
33. What was the ordination with respect to a beast that killed a human being?
34. What was the purpose of the practice of blood vengeance?
35. How shall we regard the law against murder in relation to capital punishment?
36. Were these fundamental laws universal or only Mosaic in their scope? Explain your answer.
37. What is a covenant?
38. What was God's pre-diluvian covenant with Noah and his house?
39. What was the essence of His post-diluvian covenant with Noah?
40. What Divine promise did this covenant include about future floods?
41. Was this covenant unilateral? If so, in what sense?
42. What was the sign of this covenant?

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43. Does this necessarily mean that no rainbow had appeared before this time? Explain.
44. Of what people was the earth "overspread" after the Flood?
45. What sin did Noah commit after the Flood?
46. What light does this throw on our statement that the Bible is the Book of Life?
47. What various attitudes did Noah's sons take with regard to their father's sin?
48. What does the New Testament teach about drunkenness?
49. What was wrong in Ham's attitude? What fundamental moral law did he break?
50. Explain the historical fulfillment of Noah's curse on the Line of Ham and Canaan.
51. Explain the historical fulfillment of Noah's blessing on the Line of Shem.
52. Explain the historical fulfillment of the blessings pronounced by Noah on the Line of Japheth.
53. How old was Noah when he died? Compare this with Abraham's age when he died, and with the age of Moses when he died? How account for the descending longevity?
54. What lessons are to be derived from the story of the Rainbow Covenant?
55. What is the essential character of a Divine positive ordinance?
56. How does a superstitious man treat a positive Divine ordinance?
57. What lesson do we learn from the Old Testament story of the Brazen Serpent about the design of positive institutions mentioned in Scripture?
58. What attitude does the mystic take toward Divine positive institutions?
59. How does unbelief treat such an institution?

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60. How does a profane person treat God's positive ordinances?
60. What two kinds of worship does God require of His people? What is the essential character of external worship?
61. What do we mean when we say that positive ordinances are Divine appointments?
62. What does this teach us about the design of the Christian ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper?
63. What was wrong in Peter's attitude on the Mount of Transfiguration?
64. Summarize the successive phases of Noah's life.
65. What does the writer of Hebrews say about Noah's faith? How did Noah show his great faith?
66. Why did we say that Noah was "God's man for an emergency"?