

Sermon for February 7, 2021, “I will remember my covenant with you”

SCRIPTURE - Genesis 9:8-17: ⁸ Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹ “As for me, I am establishing my covenant with you and your descendants after you, ¹⁰ and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the domestic animals, and every animal of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark. ¹¹ I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of a flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.” ¹² 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 clouds, 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.

Introduction: God's way of dealing with human sin.

Genesis chapter 6 tells us that sin was prevalent in Noah's day. So, God has been waiting for people to repent for a hundred and twenty years. However, people have sinned more and more without repenting. In the end, God judged the world with a flood.

After the flood judgment, God promised not to judge humans again that way. God decided to change His thoughts about dealing with sin in the world. Rather than asking the sinner to be held responsible for his sin, He made His son take responsibility for it. This is Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. The rainbow covenant shown in today's text is a model of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. We hope that the blessings of realizing the magnitude of God's love for us will overflow through the various covenants of God granted to us.

Body: The covenant from the Lord.

Today's text is a promise from God to Noah's family after the flood is over. The promise is that God will never again kill all living creatures with floodwaters. Today's text **Genesis 9:11 says, “I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.”**

In Genesis, there are four covenants that God gave to people. The first covenant is the covenant given to Adam and Eve. In this covenant God gives Adam and Eve the authority to rule the world created by God. The second covenant is the covenant given to Noah. This covenant says that God will never judge the world again with floodwaters. The third covenant was given to Abraham. Abraham's descendants will be as great as the stars in the sky and as the grains of sand in the sea. The fourth covenant was given to Moses. It is a promise that God will protect the Israelites by giving them the law. However, the most important promise remains. It is a covenant given to us through Jesus, the Son of God. The promise is that everyone who believes in Jesus Christ will not perish, but will have eternal life. It is the promise of salvation. Now, let's consider the meaning of the rainbow covenant in today's text.

1. The Rainbow Covenant

Today's text says that after God judges the world with floodwaters, He will never again judge the world in that way again. He shows a rainbow and tells us to remember God's eternal covenant. Then, what is the meaning of the rainbow covenant that God made with Noah? The rainbow covenant between Noah and God is in other words called the "**Covenant of Preservation.**" This covenant has five meanings.

The first is the promise of nature's regularity.

“As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.” (Genesis 8:22)

This verse is what God said when Noah came out of the ark and offered a sacrifice to God as a clean animal. These words are promises that natural phenomena will continue regularly. We can see why this is so important. What if the sun didn't rise and the night continued in the world? Probably, the temperature would continue to drop

and everyone would freeze to death. But when night passes, the morning comes. When the cold winter passes, warm spring surely comes. If the environment is destroyed, we cannot expect this natural order. But, we can wait for the winter of Iowa to pass and the spring to come because the order of nature is governed by the Lord works according to the rules.

The second is the promise of population growth.

“Then God blessed Noah and his sons, saying to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth.” (Genesis 9:1)

Noah has three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth. But what would happen to the world if they felt weak while living in the ark for a year, and all three sons died, their daughters-in-law died of illness, and Noah and his wife were shocked to death? God blessed Noah and his family so that they could remain fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth. Even in today's society, the decline in the fertility rate raises serious problems that threaten society.

Third is the promise of food supply.

“Everything that lives and moves will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything.” (Genesis 9:3)

As the population grows, more food is needed to eat. So God gave vegetables and meat to feed people. Food is the most basic need for human beings to live. A society in which the needs of these basic people are not met will inevitably fail. But, the Lord promises to provide abundant food.

Fourth is the promise of human life protection.

“Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.” (Genesis 9:6)

Anyone who kills another person will also die. Of course, people who accidentally kill others can be spared, but if the killing is intentional, they must pay the price for their sins. This is the promise of life protection. Since the world cannot live only with food, human dignity must be respected. People's lives must be protected by law and human dignity must be preserved.

Fifth is the promise to prohibit the destruction of the world due to the floodwaters.

“I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth.” (Genesis 9:11)

It means that even if a flood occurs, there will be no annihilation of all mankind and living things like in Noah's day. It is a part that shows God's mercy and compassion.

Like this, the rainbow covenant contains very important content even though it may seem simple. Thanks to this covenant, we can thrive, eat food, sustain life, and live in peace in society.

In fact, the most important meaning of the Rainbow Covenant is not the above mentioned content, but the grace that God does not ask for sin, but forgives and saves, to the chosen people.

Isaiah 54:9-10 says, “To me this is like the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth. So now I have sworn not to be angry with you, never to rebuke you again. Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed,” says the LORD, who has compassion on you.” (Isaiah 54:9-10)

This verse clearly shows God's mercy toward the Israelites. By the way, if God never judges the world again with floodwaters, how would He rule the sins of the world?

2. The promise of Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross

God promises to forgive the sins of the world through His own sacrifice. So, God focuses on the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ, for the salvation of the world. This will of God appears in **Isaiah chapter 53 verses 5 through 6 in the song of the suffering servant. “But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”**

This passage in Isaiah shows Jesus suffering and sacrifice on our behalf. Also, **Romans 8:1-2** says, **“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.”** Through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross, we have eternal rest.

Conclusion: Christians who live with confidence in the love of the cross and the strength that the Lord gives

Now let's summarize today's sermon. People always wish for a better world. And to achieve it, we make efforts in the areas of politics, economy, society, science, culture, and environment. But we always experience limitations and failures.

Christians are saved as a result of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. That is why it is important that we do our best in each area of life, but our best must be made not by my strength, but by the result of faith through the help of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, two things are crucially important to a Christian. First, we must be confident that Jesus is our Savior. Second, as a saved person, we must live as a responsible being in each area of life by relying on the Holy Spirit. I hope all may experience this grace.