

## “THE RENEWING NATURE OF GRACE”

**INTRODUCTION:** There are four great events in redemptive history that modern man cannot accept:

1. Four great Old Testament events essential to the salvation of mankind:
  - a. **First:** The creation of the world and mankind by the direct power and Word of God. (*Evolution disputes that*)
  - b. **Second:** The historicity and fall of Adam and Eve (*Genetic studies deny this possibility*)
  - c. **Third:** The Worldwide Flood of Noah’s age (*Earth Sciences dispute this fact*)
  - d. **Fourth:** The miraculous deliverance of Israel, through the Red Sea, under the leadership of Moses. (*Naturalism and Ancient History deny the possibility of this event*)
  - e. **Why?** *Because all these events (and more) rely upon a belief in the supernatural, something scientific society can’t (won’t) accept as remotely possible.*
2. I know what I am talking about: *Prior to my conversion in 1976, I questioned, doubted and even denied all four of these historical events:*
  - a. I believed in evolution: *The Naked Ape: A Zoologist’s Study of the Human Animal. Desmond Morris (1967) and the sequel The Human Zoo (1969).*
  - b. Adam and Eve? *A religious myth*
  - c. Worldwide Flood? *Geology Course at OSU killed that idea*
  - d. The Exodus? **Reader’s Digest:** *Great People of the Bible and How They Lived (1974); p. 77.*
    - i. *A group of fugitive slaves makes its escape as the heavy war chariots of the Egyptians are mired in a swamp and trapped as the water rises. Biblical translations made many years ago gave the impression that the Israelites escaped their Egyptian pursuers when the water of the Red Sea parted. More recent research shows that they probably crossed the “Reed Sea,” which was located in the swamps that now border the Suez Canal just north of the Bitter Lakes.*
    - ii. This view necessitates the miraculous more than the parting of the sea. How so?...
    - iii. The miraculous stupidity of horsemen who stay with their chariots and drown as the tide gradually rises!
3. **I was determined to not** believe the Genesis and Exodus records because I believed “intelligent” people could not possibly accept such “myth”: *Anthropologists, Geologists, and other professors at the Ohio State University.*
4. I once told my friend, **Wiley Patterson**, that I would...
  - a. *Never* believe everything in the Bible: “Adam and Eve, a Big Flood and a Red Sea parting!”
  - b. *Never* become one of those “born-again freaks!”
  - c. *Never* leave the Roman Catholic Church!

- d. *Never* marry some sweet, big-eyed, soft-voiced, long-haired, beautiful southern belle!
  - e. *Never* leave my job, go off to seminary and become a missionary to Africa!
  - f. **Never tell God what you'll never do! Never!**
5. But now, some 44 years later, I have come to believe these four great stories and to see their significance to my life, my people, and my world.
6. Did I just become more *stupid* and *gullible* as I got older? Did I turn off my brain (*reason*) when I became a man of *faith*? Did I stuff my *education* just to get along with an ignorant and silly evangelical subculture?
7. **Or...was there evidence to support these stories?**
8. We are looking at the *Gospel and Culture*, and the **Big Themes** of Genesis 1-11; issues we must face in the Spirit, the Word and the Church in evangelizing our 21<sup>st</sup> Century Culture.
- a. A final "Gospel" series in our *Year of Outreach (2012)*
  - b. *...but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.* (1 Peter 3:15-16)
  - c. **Theme One:** *The Good and Noble Life (Genesis 1)*
  - d. **Theme Two:** *The Historicity of Adam and Eve (Genesis 2)*
  - e. **Theme Three:** *The Emergence of "Strong Women" (Genesis 3)*
  - f. **Theme Four:** *The Evolution of "Lost Boys" (Genesis 4)*
  - g. **Theme Five:** *The Redesign of Humanity (Genesis 5-6)*
9. **Tonight:** Theme #6: *The Renewing Nature of Grace*
10. The Genesis Flood Narrative is the longest story in the Bible: *Genesis 6:9-9:18*
- a. Can't cover it all tonight
  - b. We are **not** preaching verse by verse through these themes
  - c. Looking at *big block issues* that have shaped humanity, our world, human culture
  - d. How *the Gospel* answers the challenge of our 21<sup>st</sup> Century world
  - e. *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.* (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.* (Revelation 11:15)
- Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and*

*they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." (Revelation 21:1-5)*

11. These are four major **themes** in this **Fourth Story** in Genesis, each with two scenes/two acts:

- a. Creation: the world/mankind (Genesis 1, 2)
- b. Fall: Adam and Eve/society (Genesis 3, 4)
- c. Corruption of Mankind: Genealogy of Seth/Race of Nephiliim (4:25-6:8)
- d. **The Flood:** *Judgment/Covenant* (6:9-9:19)

12. **Before I mention these four themes in Story #4**, I want to give you reasons to trust the Flood Narrative of Genesis 6-9.

#### I. REASONS THE FLOOD STORY IS TRUE (Gen. 6:9-8:19)

1. **Don't have time to read the text, but I will answer 8 common questions about the Great Noahic Flood**

2. **Question #1:** *How could Noah's Ark (boat) carry all those millions of animals?*

- a. The Bible never said there were "millions of animals."
  - i. Two of each *kind* (species)
  - ii. Fourteen of some species
- b. *Genesis 7:13-14:* "...according to its kind" = classifications of animals
  - i. There are 700+ families = classifications of animals today
  - ii. 1,072,300 species (*Ernst Mayer:* American taxonomist)
- c. Not all species needed to be on the Ark (water creatures).
- d. Some species were not taken: Wholly Mammouth, Saber tooth tigers, dinosaurs, etc. *Approx. 35,000-70,000 creatures taken.*
- e. **Key:** average size animal is smaller than a sheep
  - i. Size of the Ark? 450 feet long; 75 feet wide; 45 feet high
  - ii. Took approx. 100 years to build
  - iii. Capacity: roughly 569 railroad boxcars/double deck
  - iv. i.e., 1,396,000 cubic feet
  - v. 240 sheep to a double deck boxcar (today)
  - vi. All Noah's animals could fit comfortably in 50% of the Ark leaving the rest for food, fodder, living quarters.

- f. The Ark was a large, flat bottom, rectangular structure (with 3 decks/levels).
  - g. Note: *Not until 1858 was there built an ocean liner larger than Noah's Ark: the **Great Easterner***
  - h. The Ark was like a medium-sized oil tanker today.
3. **Question #2:** *Why is there no archaeological evidence of this massive ark?*
- a. What wood structure could last over 6,000-7,000 years?
  - b. But: There are amazing numbers of people who testify to coming across Noah's Ark in the mountains of Northern Turkey.
  - c. Is this all true or hoax? *Go to YouTube and type in "Discovery of Noah's Ark" and see for yourself.*
  - d. Incidentally: We have no remains of the Cross either.
4. **Question #3:** *How could Noah get all those animals to willingly enter the Ark and not eat one another, or him and his family?*
- a. Not until after the flood did animals become afraid of man.  
*And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered." (Genesis 9:1-2)*
  - b. Animals had not yet spread out all over the globe, and if they had, Noah did not need two of every species.
  - c. Men were vegetarians until Genesis 9. Not prone to eat animals but to domesticate them.
  - d. God gathered these animals in a sovereign manner.
5. **Question #4:** *How much water fell from rain over 40 days to cause a worldwide flood?*
- a. *In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the heavens were opened. And rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights. (Genesis 7:11-12)*
  - b. The Greenhouse Canopy broke and came down.
  - c. The subterranean waters burst upward.
  - d. A massive crunch of rain and flooding
  - e. Research tells us that 6,000 years ago, seas were 250-300 feet higher than today.
  - f. Why? *Noah's flood waters gathered in them!*
6. **Question #5:** *How did the water run off so quickly, and where did it go?*
- a. The timing is crucial...
    - i. Rising flood for 40 days
    - ii. 110 days of level water (day 40 to day 150)

- iii. 74 days for water to recede enough for Noah to see the mountain peaks
  - iv. 40 more days until the Raven was sent out
  - v. 7 more days until the 1<sup>st</sup> dove sent out
  - vi. 7 more days until the 2<sup>nd</sup> dove sent out
  - vii. 7 more days until the 3<sup>rd</sup> dove sent out
  - viii. Noah waits another 29 until the mud dries out enough to disembark. Takes off the roof and releases the birds.
  - ix. Waits 57 more days before his family leaves the Ark
  - x. *371 days in total: 40 flooding, 110 level, 221 receding*
- b. But that **does not** say the earth was 100% dry. Just the mountain ranges where Noah disembarks.
  - c. It may have taken decades for the waters to settle into newer, larger, deeper seas. (centuries ?)
  - d. And centuries for plant life to again return in full.
  - e. How? *Floating seeds, leaves, grasses, roots and covers.*

7. **Question #6:** *Was this a universal flood or just local?*

- a. It would not take one year (371 days) for a local flood to cover and recede from mountains 16,854 feet tall.
- b. *And the waters prevailed so mightily on the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. (Genesis 7:19)*
- c. Expressions of a universal flood occur more than 30 times in Genesis 6-9.
- d. You don't need a huge ark and tens of thousands of animals for a local flood. You just walk to higher ground.
- e. Everybody on the earth dies except for 8 people.

*The waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep. And all flesh died that moved on the earth, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all mankind. Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens. They were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. (Genesis 7:20-23)*

- f. The Bible traces all people to Noah's sons.
- g. Several other Old Testament and New Testament passages cite a universal flood.
- h. **Jesus Himself:** *uses the flood to speak of coming, universal judgment. Nothing "local"*

8. **Question #7:** *Are there other stories and references to this universal flood? (Anthropological evidence?)*

- a. Yes. There are 213 different flood narratives in ancient and contemporary people groups.
- b. And there is an *amazing similarity* to these stories

- i. 88% - one family is saved
- ii. 70% - build a boat to survive
- iii. 95% - Divine Judgment = cause of the flood
- iv. 66% - provoked by man's wickedness
- v. 67% - animals are also on the boat
- vi. 57% - the survivors end up on mountain tops
- vii. Also: birds are sent out, 8 persons are saved, and *rainbows are seen as a divine portent.*

c. **Hugh Miller:** *The Ark of Ararat*; p. 268 (**Boice**; vol. 1; p. 288).

*The destruction of well nigh the whole human race in an early age of the world's history by a great deluge appears to have so impressed the minds of the few survivors and seems to have been handed down to their children, in consequence, with such terror-struck impressiveness, that their remote descendants of the present day have not even yet forgotten it. It appears in almost every mythology, and lives in the most distant countries and among the most barbarous tribes.*

d. *Four major stories in most people's folklore and religion: Creation, Fall, Flood, Rescue.*

9. **Question #8:** *Is there any geological proof (scientific evidence) of a great flood?*

- a. Herein lays the great debate: *interpreting the layers of ancient strata which give evidence of disruption.*
- b. **Ossiferous fissures:** huge cracks in the earth's crust (for the waters beneath the earth to break loose?)
- c. **Rubble Drift:** huge deposits of all kinds of animal/human (?) bones, torn to pieces, mixed together, deposited in low places and pits, covered by silt
- d. Where? *England, Spain, Russia, USA, Germany, other places*
- e. **Example:** Northwest Nebraska: remains of an estimated 9,000 animals buried under one hill!
- f. Gist: carcasses gathered and silted over in great crevasses or shallow valleys or depressions, over thousands of years old.
- g. **Large inland bodies of water** now dried up – “backwaters” of the flood now evaporated
- h. **Coal beds and oil fields:** large deposits of vegetation, under massive weight of dirt (silt), compressed into “*fossil fuel*”
- i. **Polar ice caps** seemed to have “suddenly” appeared, as scientists tell us.
- j. **Interesting fact:** *In Siberia...*
  - i. Siberian saber tooth tiger dead with prey in its mouth.
  - ii. 5,000 mammoths died, at same time, in same region, over 2,000 mile stretch of Arctic Ocean beachfront (huge tidal wave?).

iii. Many in upright, standing position, but buried in silt as if suddenly killed and instantly buried.

10. **My point:** *There is ample evidence to convince us that Noah's Ark and a universal flood are a true story.*

11. The reason we **do not** accept these historical, anthropological, and scientific evidences is simply this: *Willful Unbelief...*

a. *This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles, knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation." For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. (2 Peter 3:1-7)*

b. **James M. Boice:** *Genesis: Volume 1; p. 288.*

*Yet strangely, in spite of widespread knowledge of the Bible and the persistence of flood traditions in virtually every culture and nation on the globe, modern man seems to have forgotten the Flood of God's judgment and argues as those whose views Peter anticipated: "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation" (2 Peter 3:4). Why is this? There is only one explanation. It is not that the evidence for the intervening judgment of God in history is lacking. The evidence abounds. It is rather, as Peter says, that our contemporaries "deliberately forget" (v. 5) these things so they can continue in their own sinful way unbothered by such disturbing concepts as accountability, sin, judgment, and the destruction of the ungodly.*

c. Our ignorance is willful and deliberate.

*For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. (Romans 1:18-23)*

12. This **fourth story** of Genesis 1-11 reminds us of **Four Great Themes** of creation, life and redemption...

13. **The Four Parameters of Life Renewed by God...**

## II. THE LESSONS THE FLOOD STORY TEACHES (Genesis 8:20-9:19)

### A. The Renewal of Gospel Religion (8:20-22)

1. *Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, the LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease."* (Genesis 8:20-22)
2. The **first** thing Noah does is to worship the God of grace who saved him, his family, mankind and the creation...
  - a. *But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.* (Genesis 6:8)
  - b. *They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life.* (Genesis 7:15)
  - c. *But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided.* (Genesis 8:1)
  - d. *Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.* (Genesis 8:20)
3. God's **grace** redeems Noah, rescues his family, remembers his travail and renews his faith.
4. **Noah possessed saving faith and justifying grace:**

*By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.* (Hebrews 11:7)
5. **First Parameter:** God saves people who trust in Him, who walk in the obedience of faith, and who will worship Him in truth. This is Gospel Religion.

*But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.*

*Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.*

*Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace. And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. (2 Peter 3:8-18)*

1. God's grace is as needed now as it was in Adam's age, Noah's age or any age in the past. Why?
  - a. *The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. (Genesis 6:5)*
  - b. *And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, the LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. (Genesis 8:21)*
  - c. *...knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires. (2 Peter 3:3)*

2. We **do not** walk with God by means of archaeological proof, or geological evidence, or artifacts in a museum but by means of *faith in the Word of God and His gracious Gospel promises.*
3. *His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. (2 Peter 1:3-4)*
4. **David Atkinson:** *Genesis 1-11: BST; pp. 147-148.*

*The salvation of the man and his family, and with them representatives of every living creature, is now presented to us as a picture of a creation restored. God is concerned that life will go on. Life is to be lived in covenant with God in a cleansed world order. Here is a picture that is pointing beyond this age. For surely, a new creation is pictured here.*

#### B. The Recommission of the Human Family (9:1-4)

1. *And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. (Genesis 9:1-4)*
2. God gives to Noah and his family the same **Cultural Mandate** that He gave to Adam and Eve...

- a. *And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." (Genesis 1:28)*
  - b. *And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. (Genesis 9:1)*
3. But He **expands** that dominion and that management: *Mankind can now eat the flesh of animals and not just the fruits and vegetables of the garden (earth)*
- a. Man can *hunt*,
  - b. Man can engage in *husbandry*,
  - c. Man need not be *vegetarian* any more,
  - d. Man owns the *animals*, and...
  - e. **His life is more important than theirs.**

4. **H. C. Leupold:** *Leupold on the Old Testament: Genesis I; p. 327.*

*Certain things follow as a direct sequel to the Flood. First, basic ordinances are set forth by God. These ordinances are more nearly adapted to the altered conditions that prevail since the Flood, or at least they govern situations that are the outgrowth of sin and definitely require regulation. None of the regulations that follow is temporary or ever to be abrogated as long as the present world era continues.*

5. **Bruce Waltke:** *Genesis: A Commentary; p. 144.*

*God adds animals to the human diet to protect human life. Humanity has the power of life and death over the animal kingdom. For the human diet, God at this time makes no distinction between clean and unclean.*

6. **But...***God is neither naïve nor foolish. He gives the animals a natural protection from man...*
- a. Instinctive fear of humans ("*wild animals*")
  - b. *The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. (Genesis 9:2)*
  - c. Lest man simply call the creatures to himself for needless slaughter.
7. **Key point:** The great *Cultural Mandate* to subdue, manage and improve the entire creation, though more difficult now than before the Fall and before the Flood, is still mankind's number one responsibility.
8. **Second parameter:** The recommissioning of the human family as God's primary agent of work in the world.
9. But added to Faith and Family is added a third parameter of *common grace*...

C. The Institution of Human Government (9:5-7)

1. *And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man. From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man.*

*"Whoever sheds the blood of man,  
by man shall his blood be shed,  
for God made man in his own image.*

*And you, be fruitful and multiply, teem on the earth and multiply in it." (Genesis 9:5-7)*

2. God institutes a **rudimentary government** by means of Law #1 – *The Sanctity of Life*.
  - a. Human life protected from both man and beast
  - b. Capital punishment for murder by either man or beast
  - c. Man is empowered to execute murderers
    - a. *"Whoever sheds the blood of man,  
by man shall his blood be shed,  
for God made man in his own image. (Genesis 9:6)*
3. **Victor P. Hamilton:** *Genesis 1-17: NICOT; p. 315.*
  - a. *Murder is placed in the orbit of sacral law. To kill another human being is to destroy one who is a bearer of the divine image. Thus man's divine creation should be a deterrent to criminal behavior. The controversy in the verse is the identification of who is to carry out the sanctions for murder – God or another human being. On the one hand, most of the modern versions read, "by man [bā'ādām] shall his blood be shed." As such, this verse has become the scriptural locus classicus for capital punishment. It is the lex talionis in operation. The penalty must be commensurate with the crime. A life taken demands the taking of another life. On the other hand, some suggest that bā'ādām does not mean "by man" but "(in exchange) for that man." In other words, this verse does not at all delegate authority to man to institute capital punishment. The implication of "for that man his blood shall be shed" is that God will administer the punishment. The weakness in this interpretation is that it ascribes to the preposition b<sup>e</sup> an unusual meaning when one of the standard uses of b<sup>e</sup> makes sense in the verse. We prefer to see vv. 5 and 6 together, with both prohibiting the taking of human life. The penalty for shedding blood may be exacted either by God (v. 5) or by man (v. 6).*
  - b. i.e., God exacts capital punishment on murderers via the state, empowered with "the sword" of justice.
  - c. *Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.(Rom. 13:1-4)*
4. The **first duty** of all government is the protection of human life, by means of its political and police powers from God:

- a. To execute a *just war* to protect its people
- b. To put to death *murderers* to deter violent crimes
- c. To preserve *life in the womb* from abortion
- d. To promote the life of *the handicapped, the elderly, the sick and the helpless*; to prohibit infanticide or euthanasia
- e. To patrol the streets with *police* to deter crime
- f. To pass *just laws* maintaining the sanctity, the security and the dignity of all human life
- g. ...and I might add: *to protect animal life against cruelty, needless slaughter, mismanagement, neglect or extinction*

5. **Parameter #3:** The protection of all human life by means of a just government, with righteousness and the use of legitimate powers.

*First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior... (1 Timothy 2:1-3)*

D. The Covenant of God with Mankind (9:8-19)

1. *Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, "Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, 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. 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." God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."*

*The sons of Noah who went forth from the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.) These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the people of the whole earth were dispersed. (Genesis 9:8-19)*

2. **Phase two** of the Covenant of Grace: *The Covenant of Preservation*. The promise of God to Noah and "every living creature" to preserve nature, the world and life on earth until the final judgment of Jesus Christ.
3. This *Covenant of Preservation* binds all mankind together under the gracious hand of God.
- a. It acknowledges the reality of **judgment** – the historicity of the great flood.
  - b. It joins us together as men **accountable** to God and one another for how we live in God's world.

- c. It reminds us of God's **saving grace** afforded to those we trust in Him and His promises (Gospel).
- d. It moves us to **compassion and care** for the rest of mankind, especially those who suffer.

4. **David Atkinson:** *The Message of Genesis 1-11: BST; pp. 145-146.*

*Noah can serve as a pointer to that deepest of human problems: the suffering of those who don't deserve it. Whether we think of the pre-birth trauma of the unwanted fetus in the womb, or whether we broaden our vision to survey the floods of Bangladesh, the famines of Sudan or the millions of Jewish people who lost their lives in the Holocaust, we are pushed to one of the most powerful arguments for the non-existence of God. How can God allow such things? And in terms of rational argument and deductive logic, there is no reply. We are able to trace hints of an answer in the doctrine of original sin: that in some inscrutable way we will share in the sins and pains of others. We can try to make some sense of the fact that within the human community we all belong to one another, and to some degree share what the Old Testament specialists sometimes call a 'corporate personality'. The only answer comes at a different level. It comes as we recall that it is God who provides the ark. It comes most clearly as we gaze at a man nailed to a cross, and allow the shedding of his innocent blood to touch our spirits. For there the perfect man is dying as a criminal; their Innocence is made guilty; there we know that when we stand at the abyss of undeserved suffering and incomprehensible evil Christ stands there with us. At the cross, God himself takes responsibility for the suffering of the world. He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Though we do not understand, we find that God is there with us. In the depths of our struggle, God does not let us go. The turning-point comes when we reach our hands up from the blackness of the pit, and find that all along God has been holding on to us.*

5. Here is the **precondition for evangelism:** We share with other men four things:

- a. A common world full of suffering and sorrows
- b. A common ancestor: Noah, the Father of us all
- c. A common grace: God's preservation of life on earth
- d. A common Savior: a Son of God and a Son of Noah – one of "us" in the world.
- e. *Jesus, when he began his ministry, was about thirty years of age, being the son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli...the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalaleel, the son of Cainan, the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God. (Luke 3:23, 36-38)*

6. The great contrast is **not** Adam and Noah, Cain and Seth or even Cain and Abel. The great contrast of Genesis 1-11 is **Cain and Noah** –

- a. *Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" (Genesis 4:9)*
- b. *When Lamech had lived 182 years, he fathered a son and called his name Noah, saying, "Out of the ground that the LORD has cursed this one shall bring us relief from our work and from the painful toil of our hands." (Genesis 5:28-29)*
- c. **Noah...** "a preacher of righteousness" (2 Peter 2:5)

- i. The first evangelist in the world
  - ii. The “keeper” of mankind...his brother!
  - d. Noah preached for *100 years* for men to flee to God for grace and deliverance from judgment.
  - e. And the God of grace “waited” 120 years before the flood was sent.
  - f. And this is our **calling** as well: *We are our brothers’ keepers!*
7. Our year’s verse (1 Peter 3:15) ends with the story of **Noah**.

*...but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God’s will, than for doing evil.*

*For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit, in which he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, because they formerly did not obey, when God’s patience waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him. (1 Peter 3:15-22)*

8. This is **still** our message:
- a. Man’s sinfulness and wicked heart
  - b. The just and holy God
  - c. The judgment on sin yet to come
  - d. *“But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect. (Mt. 24:36-39, 44)*
  - e. The Covenant of Grace: “*But Noah found grace with God*”
  - f. The saving heroics of Noah’s son – *Jesus Christ*
  - g. The promise of salvation for those of the faith of Noah

*And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him. By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. (Hebrews 11:6-7)*

9. *Noah found grace with God* and sought to share it with all men. **And so should we!**