

Bible Basics Conference 2012: “Genesis 1-12”

Part 11

Speaker	Hugh Clark; Michael Hardt; Graham Warnes; Hans Ruedi Graf; Paul Dronsfield; Geoff Hawes; Simon Attwood; Nick Fleet; Andrew Poots; Bible Basics Conference
Place	Catfort
Date	11.11.2012
Duration	00:37:32
Online version	https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/hc004/bible-basics-conference-2012-genesis-1-12

Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:01] Good afternoon. Genesis chapter 9. I would suggest that this session has worked out very happily in terms of where it comes in the program, because we are taking it up in the afternoon of the Lord's Day and many of us, most of us possibly, have been occupied this morning with the person of the Lord Jesus, in remembering him in the way he has asked of us. We've had brought before us the preciousness of the person and the work of the Lord Jesus and the efficacy, the value of his work to God. And I'd like us to start this session [00:01:02] by reminding ourselves of what we had at the end of the last session, and that's that the first thing that Noah did was to build an altar unto the Lord. And we read, he took of every clean animal, of every clean bird, and offered burnt offerings on the altar, and the Lord smelled a sweet savour. That's Genesis 8, verses 20 and 21. And I'd like to stress that to have a proper appreciation of Genesis chapter 9, we really need to grasp that the basis of it are these two verses in chapter 8, the burnt offering. Noah offered burnt offerings, not an offering for sin, not a trespass offering, not a peace offering, [00:02:02] not a meal offering, the aspects of which we don't get until later, but here, as in throughout Genesis, a burnt offering, burnt offerings. It speaks of what is for God. It speaks of the person of Christ. It speaks of his, the value of himself and his work in God's sight. And Noah had an appreciation of that, wonderful insight that Noah had. And so I would suggest that to understand properly chapter 9 of Genesis, we must really grasp this, that the basis of it is what is spoken of in the burnt offerings. So perhaps we might read together as we go through the chapter, Genesis chapter 9, and verse 1, we read, and God blessed Noah and his sons and said unto them, be fruitful and multiply and [00:03:07] replenish the earth. So we have at the outset a blessing on Noah and his sons. And we might ask ourselves, on what basis could and did God bless Noah and his sons? And the answer is on the basis of the burnt offerings. What do the burnt offerings speak of? They speak of Christ and his work. And God took account of that. God took account of Noah's intelligence as to this matter. And on that basis, I suggest we should understand that God could come out in blessing and bless Noah and his sons. And the exaltation to Noah in verse 1 was to be fruitful and to multiply and replenish the earth. So there was an expectation that this [00:04:02] blessing should have results. There should be fruit. There should be evidence of it in replenishing the earth. And then in verse 2, we read, and the fear of you, the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth and upon all the fishes of the sea, into your hand they are delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you, even

as the green herb have I given you all things. And so we now come on to this matter that there's now a new order of things.

And in chapter 9, we have established a completely new order of things. Indeed, when we looked at the dispensations, we noticed that this marks the beginning of a new dispensation. [00:05:02] And the new order has its basis in this work of Christ and the value of it to God. And now God introduces a change. And God says that whereas before, where man was to live on the fruits of what is grown, now meat is to be part of the diet. It was introduced as a matter of godly instruction. And I suggest we should understand by this that Noah, his sons and his descendants, men, were to be nourished and fed on the results of death in a practical way. Life was going to be hard. Post-flood, the condition of the earth was not as conducive to growing lush vegetation as it had been. A matter of practical survival would necessitate the eating of meat. [00:06:02] And God introduced this new order. Now for us, of course, I suggest this remains.

It's right and proper that we should eat meat. But what is the spiritual significance of it? Well, we have it fully developed or more fully developed in John chapter 6. We're to cast our minds back to this whole matter of death. It speaks to us of Christ. And the believer is to be nourished, is to feed on the results of death. All that we have and enjoy in our spiritual life, it has its basis in the death of Christ. And we're to be occupied with him. We're to be occupied with that which has come out of death. And a proper apprehension of this will preserve believers from taking up vegetarianism as a principle.

[00:07:04] You may be surprised that I make such a comment. But I would ask you to think of this. There are many religions that advocate vegetarianism. And they have their basis in falsehood. They have their basis in one idea or another such as reincarnation.

The idea that when we die we come back as some other creature. The idea that man is no different from any other animal. We're just another kind of animal. Now such thoughts, if taken up logically, would lead, yes, to the repugnance of eating meat and to vegetarianism. But really it's flying in the face of godly order. And do we know better? Do we presume to say to God, actually, I don't think it's right to eat meat. [00:08:01] I find it distasteful. Well, you know, it's a solemn matter. The whole matter of sin is and was distasteful to God. The very fact that the Lord had to die, it's a distasteful matter.

And we must accept that. We can't brush it aside. And it seems that God is desiring that in our life, practically and spiritually, we should apprehend this, that the necessity of Christ's death, the results of that, is that which should sustain the believer. So we now, we find that Noah and his sons, they were to be sustained by the eating of meat. And this matter is taken up a little further, verse 4, but flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, ye shall not eat. [00:09:01] And surely your blood of your lives will I require at the hand of every beast, will I require it. And at the hand of man, at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the life of man. So we have now the concept that in God's eyes, the blood is very significant.

Now, I'm sure as believers we understand something of this. We know, we speak about the precious blood of the Lord Jesus. We speak of without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins. And at the beginning of this new order, God desires that this principle might be established in our hearts and minds. The blood conveys the thought of life.

And when we speak of the shedding of blood, it goes beyond merely the pouring out of blood.

[00:10:03] It speaks of the whole matter of death itself. The Lord Jesus shed his blood, and what's meant by that is he laid down his life. And we have here a motif, a symbol that's used for blood donation.

And even the world understands that the blood is very significant. Give blood, give life. Well, the believer, I trust, takes even more account of this symbolic matter.

Life is in the blood. And so there's to be a prohibition, and this prohibition remains today for the believer where not to eat blood. Now, it might just, you might have a question. I'll just go back to this symbol. You might ask ourselves, well, you know, when we put a joint of meat in the oven, isn't there blood there? [00:11:04] Well, I think the answer's quite simple. What looks like blood, it's not. The blood is that which flows in the veins. And there's this distinction between the blood that circulates and what appears to be blood in meat. So that really should touch that matter. And then in verse 6 we have this consequence that life is to be considered sacred.

Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.

For in the image of God made he man.

And so we have introduced the death penalty. Now, this is not a popular matter today.

It's seen as barbaric. But we take account that God introduced the death penalty to emphasize the sanctity of life. [00:12:06] The sanctity of life.

And so much so that now God says he who sheds man's blood, his blood shall be shed.

Now, this is a departure or something new, a new development from what we have earlier. In the case of Cain and Abel, Cain, we know he killed his brother. But in Cain's case, he was sent out.

And he had a mark put on him.

There was to be no revenge or retaliation. But now God introduces something new.

And so this principle of life for life, the death penalty, is brought in. And it's brought in in verse 6. And in this verse, in the notes, you'll see that the heading for verse 6 is government. [00:13:02] And you might ask yourself, how does government come in here in verse 6? I don't see the word, I don't really see the thought introduced. But I'd like us to think of it like this. The death penalty is introduced. Somebody has to carry that out. There has to be some form of government. It's not to be a mob rule.

How is such a thing to be worked out? Well, it's a matter of government. And the second clue, I think, we find in the end of verse 6. Where it says that, in the image of God, made he man.

And really, the whole point of government is that man is taking up a place in the representation of God. It's not his own authority with which he rules.

[00:14:05] But he's ruling with God's authority. It's authority that God has given him. God has said, and it's man's responsibility to ensure that God's thoughts are carried out. And I suggest to us that this is where we see, here in verse 6, the matter of government brought in. It's introduced on the specific

principle of the death penalty. But now this responsibility is given into the hands of men in taking the place of God. They're not taking the place under their own authority, but they're given the authority by God himself. Now, this slide I chose to try and illustrate the idea of government.

And maybe to those of us who live in the UK, we understand what this refers to. [00:15:01] But there's an aspect I want to draw our attention to.

Because when we think of these houses of parliament, we really think of the principle of democracy. And that's not what is brought in here in verse 6. It's not the principle of democratic government. But rather, the principle that God has established kings and rulers. Now, in the case of Noah, Noah is the one who is given to govern.

And this is really the principle. It's not a question of what the people want, what they take counsel together. And we'll see a little later in one of the later sessions what democratic rule leads to in the Tower of Babel. And we'll come back to this slide just before the end. [00:16:01] But I want to show by virtue of this slide that what God had in mind in giving into the hands of Noah the role of government was to have a representative for himself on this earth. Now, through failure, which we'll come to later, the government was given into the hands of others. But ultimately, what God had in mind was the person of Christ.

And this really, I think, is what we see figured by Noah.

Well, we move on.

And now we read in verse 7.

And you be ye fruitful and multiply, bring forth abundantly in the earth and multiply therein. God spake unto Noah and to his sons with him, saying, And I behold, I establish my covenant with you and with your seed after you, [00:17:01] and with every living creature that is with you, the fowl of the cattle of the beast of the earth with you, from all that go out of the ark to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you. Neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood. Neither shall there be any more be a flood to destroy the earth. 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. I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass when I bring a cloud over the earth, and the bow shall be seen in the cloud, and I will remember my covenant which is between me and you, and every living creature of all flesh, and the water shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh, and the bow shall be in the cloud, and I will look upon it, [00:18:02] that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. 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. Now, if I were to ask the children, what do we need to see a rainbow?

What do we need to see a rainbow? We need sunshine, and we need rain.

Now, we get plenty of rain in this country. It's no good looking out every time it rains to look for a rainbow. Sometimes we get sun.

No good looking outside when it's sunny to see a rainbow. You need sun and rain.

And I suggest we have, even in this simple picture, a very wonderful spiritual principle.

[00:19:03] To see a rainbow, we need a shower, we need rain, we need clouds, and we need sun. And you know, the way of blessing that God brings in, the sun I suppose would speak to us, as we've heard already, of the source of God himself.

God is light.

We have the glory of the Lord Jesus. God is the outshining source of blessing. But in a practical way, he blesses us in our circumstances. And now in this new order of things, for the first time we have showers, we have rain. No longer do we have the earth watered by mist coming up and dew falling on the earth. Now, the earth is watered by showers.

And so we have these two things brought together. The blessing of this earth, the covenant that God made between himself and the earth, has this basis. [00:20:05] The sun and the rain.

And I trust we can learn something from this. We must put God in his rightful place. He is the centre and the source of all these things. But the way in which he brings his blessing through us, is through our circumstances. Through the clouds, through the rain, through the showers, through our difficulties. That's when we learn really the wonderful depths and extent of the blessing of God. And I suggest that this covenant is really ultimately to be fulfilled in the world to come. When all in this world will be sustained and supplied in perfection.

No lack, all is supplied. The sun, the rain, every man will sit under his vine.

[00:21:03] All will be supplied, there will be plenty. And I think we need to look to this world to come to see this covenant of God in its fullest fulfilment. But nevertheless, God has made a covenant with man. And we might say it's a one-sided covenant.

There's nothing on man's side.

God has made the covenant. And I brought this picture in because, you know when we look at a rainbow, we only see a semicircle. But if we were to go up in an aeroplane, if we were to see the rainbow from, as it were, God's side, we'd see a full circle. Slightly squashed in this slide. But we have here a wonderful picture, I suggest, of what God sees when he sees the bow. Maybe we don't see every rainbow, I'm sure we don't. But you know, God sees everyone. [00:22:03] And he remembers his covenant with the earth. There's no failure with God. Because it's based on the person and the work of Christ. The matter of the burnt offerings is brought in once again. So you children, you remember, when you see a rainbow, remember that there's another side to it. And as you go round the rainbow, it never ends. There's no break.

There's no ending, no break in the promises of God from God's side.

We have a picture here. The wolf will live with the lamb. Quotation from Isaiah 11, verse 6. Just a reminder, I think in a coming day, in the world to come, we will see the fulfilment of this covenant of God worked out in a practical way. Until then, we're marked by failure.

Man's failure has brought in ruin. [00:23:01] But God will not forget his covenant.

He remembers his covenant and he will bring it about. And it will be established in the fullest possible way. Well, now we move on to verse 18.

The sons of Noah that went forth of the ark were Shem, Ham and Japheth. And Ham is the father of Canaan.

So here we have Noah and his sons.

And we're told in verse 1, God blessed Noah and his sons.

These are the families of God. Now, regrettably, failure came in.

We need to now read on.

Verse 19.

These are the three sons of Noah.

And of them the whole earth overspread. [00:24:02] Noah began to be in husbandmen. He planted a vineyard. And he drank of the wine and was drunken. And he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their shoulders and went backwards. And covered the nakedness of their father. And their faces were backward and they saw not their father's nakedness. And Noah awoke from his wine, knew what his younger son had done unto him. And he said, Cursed be Canaan. A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. Well, we must bring in this matter of failure.

And did we see how it developed? We have in verse 20.

Noah began to be in husbandmen. We should say there's nothing wrong with that. [00:25:02] He planted a vineyard.

Nothing wrong with that.

He drank of the wine. Nothing wrong with that. And now we have the first step of failure.

He became drunken.

And one step of failure leads to further failure.

We have to say what we have here is a picture of how not to act in regard to verse 6.

God established government.

Noah was established as the head of the families on earth.

He was to govern.

But he failed to govern himself. And that's a very solemn matter. And this is where we can learn a spiritual lesson. Because everything starts with ourselves. Very easy, isn't it, to look at one another and to see our failings, failings to criticize. [00:26:07] But what about ourselves? How do we carry ourselves?

How do we behave ourselves?

Well, sadly, Noah, he failed.

And when he failed in regard to government, we can go back now and see how it was necessary that in due course, the government of the land, it passed into the hands of others. And then into the nation of Israel and their kings. But because of failure, failure first begun in Noah, government rule was passed into the hands of others. And we're now living in a day in the time of the Gentiles.

Rule, government in this world is in the hand of the Gentile nations.

[00:27:02] And that's really as a consequence of failure.

Man's failure.

But the wonderful thing is that one day, God will put it all right. And power will be taken out of the nations and will return into the hands of the Lord Jesus. The king of kings, lord of lords, the one who is really the answer to Israel's king, Israel's first true king. They chose Saul, again, a principle of democracy.

When they had the choice, they wanted a king like the other nations and they chose Saul. But David was a man after God's heart. And the true David is the person of the Lord Jesus. And in the coming day, he will rule. And he will rule perfectly in the world to come. In the meantime, we have the consequences of Noah and his failure.

[00:28:06] I'd like us to note very carefully.

Ham, the youngest, or the second son, it's Shem, Ham and Japheth.

So the second son, he came in and he saw Noah's drunken, disorderly, ungoverned condition.

And what did he do?

Instead of trying to resolve the matter, he went and told his brethren. And I think we see here also a principle. This world loves scandal.

It lives for it.

This world loves nothing more than rejoicing in the failure of others. That's what sells newspapers, what keeps the television cameras rolling.

[00:29:03] Political scandal, moral scandal.

And we see the mind of man. It loves to be occupied with sin.

And here, Ham, he made things worse by spreading it about.

Thankfully, the other brothers, they dealt with the matter in an appropriate way, as we see depicted here. But it had consequences. Now, we have, let's just go back here.

Now, if we move on, verse 24.

Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done unto him. And he said, Cursed be Canaan. A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. We noticed it says, Cursed be Canaan.

Have you ever wondered why, why doesn't it say, Cursed be Ham? It was Ham that failed. [00:30:02] Ham that dishonoured his father. Why did not Noah curse Ham?

Well, he couldn't.

We've already started this session with verse 1. God blessed Noah and his sons.

And it would not have been right for Noah to curse Ham.

But Ham had other sons.

Now, here is the family tree of Ham emphasized or exaggerated, enlarged. We find that Ham had four sons, whose names are mentioned. Cush, Mizraim, Fat and Canaan.

So, Canaan was the youngest of the sons. Now, if we go back, we find that there's something in the names of these three sons of Noah.

Now, not all books on names of Hebrew pronouns, they don't all agree. [00:31:04] So, you need to do a bit of research yourself. But generally speaking, it's accepted that the three sons of Noah, their names mean this. Shem means renown.

Ham means black and Japheth enlargement. Now, we need to be very clear here that the disobedience or the dishonor of Ham resulted in Noah cursing Canaan. Only one of his four sons.

And we must make it absolutely clear that there's no scriptural authority, there's no scriptural reason to suggest, but some have tried to suggest that Canaan was cursed because he was black.

Now, this is something that in the past has been pressed. And it's not borne out by scripture. Ham, it would appear, was black.

[00:32:04] And his four sons, Cush, Mizraim, Fat and Canaan would have passed on those genetic characteristics. Canaan was not cursed because he was black, but because of the sovereignty of God. Now, if we go back and further look at this, Shem is renown.

His name means renown. And it's God's will that the renown of Shem should be brought out in the

person of Christ.

God's plan that the Lord Jesus should be born as a son of Shem, the Semitic races.

Christ is the one through whom we enjoy all blessings. And it has pleased God to bring out his renown, his glory through Shem. [00:33:04] In regard to Japheth, now we're told something about Japheth, we're not told about Shem and Ham. And that is that the descendants of Japheth inhabited the Isles of the Sea. And it's understood that really all the Gentile nations are descended from Japheth. And Japheth's blessing comes about through the grace of God.

The enlargement in Japheth comes about because God looks in grace upon Japheth.

Now let's read in verse 26.

And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant. So Japheth is blessed how? By coming into the tents of Shem. [00:34:03] In other words, the only way we are blessed in God is by coming under the banner of Christ. By acknowledging that God blesses man through his son, the Lord Jesus, who was born of Shem. And that's in grace how God has blessed Japheth.

Now, wonderful grace.

In the New Testament, we read of three characters who come under the blessing of God. Saul of Tarsus, a Jew, Pharisee of the Pharisees.

He tells the Jews that he's a perfect example.

If he had anything to boast in regard to his lineage, he had it. And yet what a wicked man he was in himself.

[00:35:05] He had to say, I'm the chief of sinners. And yet in God's grace, Saul of Tarsus, descendant of Shem, was brought into blessing.

Then we have the Ethiopian eunuch. Now, just to make it clear, the Ethiopian would have been a descendant of Cush. Not of Mizraim, not of Thut or Canaan, but Cush.

So we can see now, Philip the Evangelist, he went and he met with the Ethiopian eunuch.

He explained to him the meaning of Isaiah. And the Ethiopian was brought into blessing. A descendant of Ham came into the blessing of Christ in the line of Shem through the grace of God. [00:36:01] And then lastly we have Cornelius the Centurion. Just one example of a Gentile who found blessing by coming into, as it were, the tents of Shem.

So we have the grace of God to man brought out in these three sons of Ham.

We're all descended from one of these three sons. And that might be of interest, but what's of more importance is that we have come into the tents of Shem. We've accepted the person and the work of

the Lord Jesus. There's no other way of blessing in this scene.

Well, we can conclude with reminding ourselves God's covenant. He has made a covenant with the earth. And through the person and the work of Christ, he will bring it about. It's not going to be affected by man's failure. [00:37:03] Everything else has been, but God's covenant will not be affected by man's failure. In the world to come, he will bring all these things out in a wonderful way. As we can see, the rightful rule of this world will be seen perfectly for the first time in the person of the Lord Jesus.