

READ

Genesis 9

CONSIDER

Though we can admire and learn much from the people in the Old Testament, their stories and lives ultimately bear witness to God and how He has revealed Himself and interacted with them throughout history. In the case of Noah, God's covenant with him and his family to not destroy all life again by a flood is a powerful testament to His faithfulness and mercy. Even when the people were bent on evil and wickedness, God makes a way for a second chance for them and creation to be restored in their relationship with Him and for the good and beautiful purpose they were made for. This promise to preserve and provide continuation of the human race after the flood is an expression of undeserved grace and the redemptive nature of who God is. Furthermore, the enduring sign of the rainbow in the sky is a constant reminder that He remembers His covenant to us, even when we are faithless and have turned away.

In light of this promise, the second half of Genesis 9 shows how soon and easily this new beginning is squandered, only to begin the cycle again when animosity and dishonour corrupts a family and impacts their future generations. Left to our own devices, our efforts are neither strong or sufficient enough to sustain our relationship with God. But if we remember that this account is about God and His faithfulness, we can hold onto His covenant with and for us, remembering that each day is a second chance to trust and obey Him. The fulfillment of this covenant was fully realized in Jesus generations later, when He took on the consequence and punishment for all sin, though sinless Himself, so that in Him, all would have new life and a new beginning. The calling for us is to receive and live into this second chance we've been given, in full humility and gratitude, as a sign and expression of His covenant.

Looking forward to our time in God's Word together,

Pastor Jon Nip

P R A Y

Faithful and merciful God, we praise you because you have made your covenant and promises to us. We thank you that they lead us back to you and are the hope for our lives. Even when we have fallen short and failed in the mandate you have given us, you have forgiven us and provided a new beginning to be restored to you and live in your ways. Would you impress on us a deeper sense and empowerment of what it means to be a sign of your covenant to the world. In Jesus Name, Amen.

D I V I N G D E E P E R

What are ways in which we are tempted to fulfill our mandate to "be fruitful, increase, and fill the earth" by our own terms, rather than the way God has called us to?

How are we to live in light of God's covenant and the second chance He gives to us?

If the church is to be a sign and expression of God's covenant to the world, how does that impact our interaction with one another and our neighbourhood?

What would a new beginning look like for the most challenging relationships and circumstances in our lives?