GENESIS: THE BOOK OF BEGINNINGS · STUDY NOTES

Study 7: After the flood

For personal study or groups

Your name

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How to use these notes. Watch each part's video on biblehelp.net, or read the text below. Look up each passage in your own Bible and write the answer on the lines. The verses are printed at the back if you need them. At the end there are questions to think about on your own or to discuss in a group.

📖 **Before you start: read Genesis 9:1–29.** Read it in your own Bible, all the way through, before the videos. Then in this study we go through it together, a few verses at a time. (About 4 minutes.)

PART 1

Life after the flood

Genesis 9:1–11

Noah and his family have stepped out of the ark onto a new, empty earth. Now God speaks to them: He blesses them, tells them how life will be in the world after the flood, and binds Himself by a covenant.

1. A new beginning, but not Eden again. "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth" are almost exactly the words God spoke to Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:28). Noah stands at the head of a new beginning: every person alive today comes from him and his three sons. But this is not Eden all over again: "The fear and dread of you will fall on every living creature". Man still rules over the animals, but the peace of the garden has gone. God is realistic: He gives Noah what he needs for life as it really will be.

1 **Read Genesis 9:1–3**

What did God tell Noah and his sons to do? What did He give them for food?

2. Food, a gift from God's hand. At the beginning God gave the green plants for food; now He gives meat as well. Whatever we eat, it is God who gives it: "every creation of God is good, and nothing that is received with thanksgiving should be rejected" (1 Timothy 4:4). But a gift is not a licence for cruelty: "A righteous man regards the life of his animal" (Proverbs 12:10).

2 **Read 1 Timothy 4:4–5**

How should we receive what God has made? What makes it holy?

3. The life is in the blood. "But you must not eat meat with its lifeblood still in it." In the Bible blood stands for life. Life belongs to God, and even an animal's life is not to be taken carelessly. Later God explained: "the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for your souls upon the altar" (Leviticus 17:11). All the blood of the sacrifices pointed forward to the blood of Christ, shed once for all.

3 **Read Leviticus 17:11**

Where is the life of the flesh? What did God give the blood for?

4. "I will demand an accounting." The flood came because the earth was "full of violence" (6:11). Now God draws a line: if a human life is taken, He will require an account for it. A murderer may escape every court on earth, but he will never escape God.

4 **Read Genesis 9:4–7**

What did God forbid? What will He demand an accounting for? Why is taking a human life so serious?

5. In the image of God. "For in His own image God has made mankind." The image of God is spoiled by sin, but not wiped out, after the fall and after the flood. To kill a person is to strike at God's image, an attack on God Himself. God does not demand the death of the murderer because life is cheap, but because it is precious. And the Lord Jesus showed that hatred is murder in the heart: "anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment" (Matthew 5:22).

5 **Read Matthew 5:21–22**

What did Jesus say about anger?

6. Justice, not revenge. "By man his blood will be shed." For the first time God puts into human hands the duty to punish murder. This is not permission for private revenge. Lamech had boasted: "If Cain is avenged sevenfold, then Lamech seventy-sevenfold" (Genesis 4:24). God does not want anyone to punish others with his own hands: "Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but leave room for God's wrath" (Romans 12:19). He places this duty on those He has set in authority, and surrounds it with care: "A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses" (Deuteronomy 19:15).

6 **Read Romans 12:19**

What are we told not to do, and why?

7. God's servant for your good. The one in authority "does not carry the sword in vain. He is God's servant" (Romans 13:4). Rulers will answer to God for how they use the sword. We should respect the authority God has set over us, and pray for those who hold it, "so that we may lead tranquil and quiet lives in all godliness and dignity" (1 Timothy 2:2).

7 **Read Romans 13:4**

Whose servant is the one in authority? Why does he carry the sword?

8 **Read 1 Timothy 2:1–2**

For whom are we urged to pray, and why?

8. God loves life. God ends as He began: "But as for you, be fruitful and multiply". He did not send the flood because there were too many people, but because the earth was full of violence. Now He wants it filled again with families and children, people who bear His image. Children are a blessing from God, not a burden.

9. A covenant God alone makes. God had promised it before the flood (6:18): "Behold, I now establish My covenant with you". Only God makes the promises; Noah promises nothing in return. There are no conditions, only "Never again", said twice in one verse. God made the promise knowing that "every inclination of his heart is evil from his youth" (8:21). It rests on His faithfulness, not on ours.

9 **Read Genesis 9:8–11**

With whom did God establish His covenant? What did He promise?

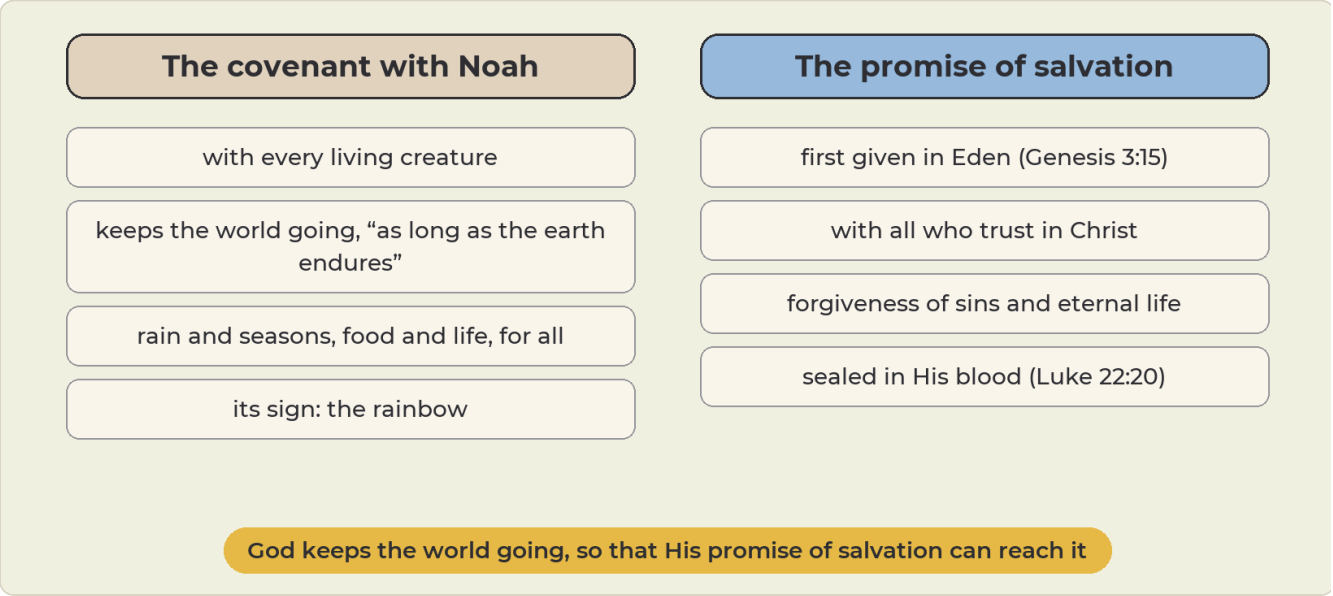
10. With every living creature. This covenant is made not only with God's people but with the whole world: good and evil people alike, and even the animals. It is a covenant of preservation: God keeps the world going until the end. "He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matthew 5:45).

10 **Read Matthew 5:45**

On whom does God cause His sun to rise and send rain?

11. Two covenants. The covenant with Noah does not promise forgiveness or eternal life; it keeps the world going. The promise of salvation was first given in Eden (Genesis 3:15). It is for all who trust in Christ, and it was sealed with His blood: "This cup is the new covenant in My blood"

(Luke 22:20). The two belong together: God keeps the world going so that His promise of salvation can reach it.



Two covenants: the covenant with Noah (with every living creature; it keeps the world going; its sign the rainbow) and the promise of salvation (first given in Eden; with all who trust in Christ; forgiveness and eternal life; sealed in His blood).

11 **Read Luke 22:20**

What did Jesus call the cup?

PART 2

The rainbow in the clouds

Genesis 9:12–17

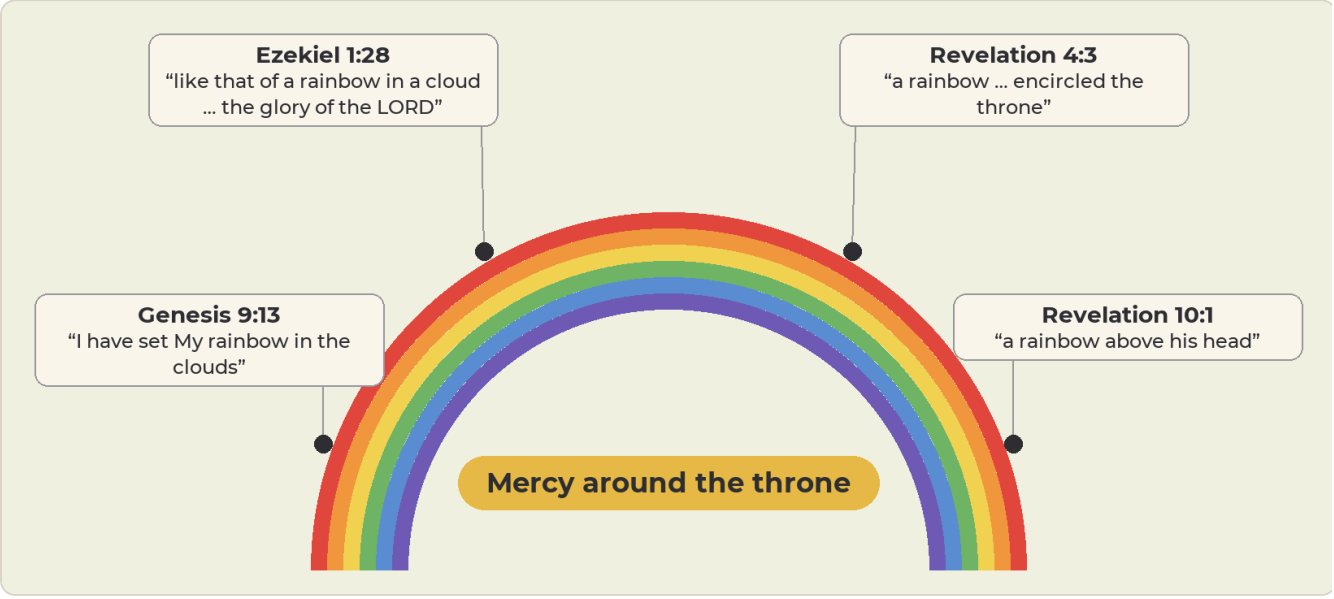
1. A sign of the covenant. A sign is something you can see that points to something you cannot see, as a wedding ring points to the vows of a marriage. The rainbow is God's sign of His promise. It appears in the very clouds that bring the rain, the thing that might make us afraid. And God says, "I will see it and remember": the rainbow is a sign for God first. When God "remembers", He turns to act faithfully on His promise.

12 **Read Genesis 9:12–17**

What did God set in the clouds? What will He do whenever it appears?

2. "My bow." In Hebrew the word for "rainbow" here is simply "bow", the same word as a warrior's bow: "If one does not repent, God will sharpen His sword; He has bent and strung His bow" (Psalm 7:12). Many teachers have seen here God hanging up His bow in the clouds, turned up towards heaven, not aimed at the earth. The Bible does not explain it in these words, so we cannot be sure. But it fits what God says: it is a sign of peace, not of war.

3. The rainbow in the Bible. When Ezekiel saw the glory of God, the light around Him "was like that of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day" (Ezekiel 1:28). When John was shown God's throne in heaven, "a rainbow that gleamed like an emerald encircled the throne" (Revelation 4:3). The throne of the Judge of all the earth has a rainbow around it: the God who judges sin keeps His promises of mercy.



The rainbow in the Bible: Genesis 9:13, Ezekiel 1:28, Revelation 4:3 and Revelation 10:1.

13 **Read Revelation 4:3**

What did John see around the throne?

4. A link the Bible itself makes. Through Isaiah, God pointed back to His oath to Noah: "For to Me this is like the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth. So I have sworn that I will not be angry with you or rebuke you." For thousands of years God has kept His word about the waters. Just as surely, He will keep His covenant of peace with all who belong to Him.

14 **Read Isaiah 54:9–10**

What did God swear in the days of Noah? What does He promise His people?

5. "Never again … by a flood", not "never again judgement". People will mock the idea that Christ will come again: "everything continues as it has from the beginning of creation." Peter answers: you have forgotten the flood. "By that same word, the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men." The rainbow does not mean that God no longer cares about sin. He holds back His judgement because He "is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

15 **Read 2 Peter 3:3–7**

What will the scoffers say? What do they overlook? For what are the present heavens and earth kept?

6. A new heaven and a new earth. After the flood the earth was washed clean, but sin was still in the human heart. After the day of the Lord there will be "a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells". So Peter asks: "what kind of people ought you to be?" We should live "in holiness and godliness", waiting with hope.

16 **Read 2 Peter 3:10–13**

How will the Day of the Lord come? What kind of people should we be? What are we looking forward to?

7. Three judgements. God's judgement on the whole world comes twice: once in the past, by water, and once in the future, by fire. Between them stands the cross, where the Lord Jesus went under the judgement of God for the sins of His people. Like the ark, which took the full force of the waters while Noah was safe inside, Christ took the full force of God's judgement, so that all who are in Him are safe.



Three judgements: the flood (water, past; eight people safe in the ark), the cross (Christ bore God's judgement for His people), and the day of the Lord (fire, still to come; all who are in Christ safe).

8. To bring you to God. "For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God." His sacrifice never needs to be repeated; the One without sin took the place of sinners; and He did it not only to rescue us but to bring us home to God. He rose and "has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God" (1 Peter 3:22). The rainbow says that God keeps His word, that His patience gives us time, and that judgement is still coming. Christ is the only safe place.

17 **Read 1 Peter 3:18**

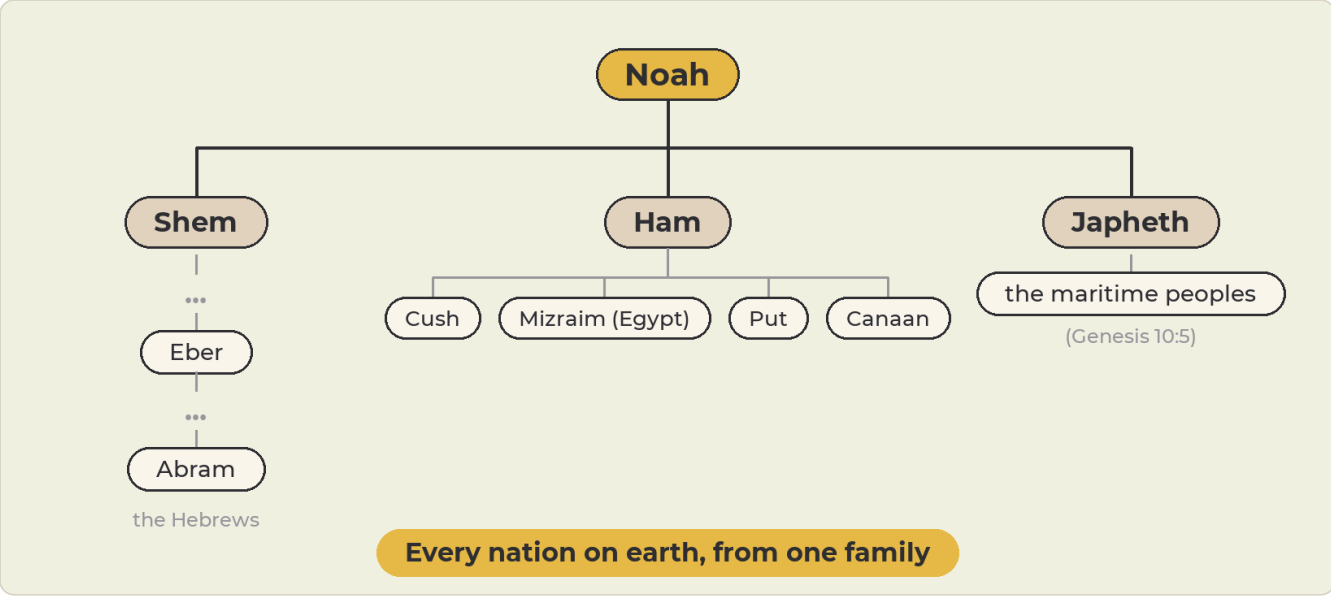
How often did Christ suffer for sins? For whom? Why?

PART 3

Noah's sons

Genesis 9:18–29

1. Three brothers, one family. "From them the whole earth was populated." From Shem came the Hebrews, Abram, and at last the Lord Jesus, "the son of Shem, the son of Noah" (Luke 3:36). From Ham came peoples mostly to the south, among them Egypt and Canaan. From Japheth came the "maritime peoples" of the coasts and islands (Genesis 10:5). But they were three brothers with the same father and mother: "From one man He made every nation of men" (Acts 17:26).



Noah's family tree: Shem (... Eber ... Abram), Ham (Cush, Mizraim or Egypt, Put, Canaan) and Japheth (the maritime peoples). Every nation on earth, from one family.

18 **Read Genesis 9:18–19**

What were the names of Noah's sons? Whose father was Ham? What happened through these three?

2. A man of the soil. Like Adam, who was made from the ground and set to work it, Noah was "a man of the soil", and he planted a vineyard. Wine is one of God's good gifts, "wine that gladdens the heart of man" (Psalm 104:15). But Noah drank, became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent. The righteous man who walked with God and obeyed Him "precisely" fell.

19 **Read Genesis 9:20–21**

What did Noah plant? What happened when he drank its wine?

3. Why the Bible tells us this. The Bible never hides the sins of its heroes; it shows us sinners saved by grace. And the flood washed the earth, but not the heart. All the wicked of the old world were gone, yet sin broke out in the best man on earth. Kevin DeYoung put it this way: "God had wiped clean the world, but the world was still in Noah." Noah fell not in the long years of building, but afterwards, when he was at rest. "So the one who thinks he is standing firm should be careful not to fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12).

20 **Read 1 Corinthians 10:12**

What should the one who thinks he is standing firm be careful of?

4. Wine and drunkenness. The Bible does not call wine evil, but it warns strongly against drunkenness: "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to reckless indiscretion. Instead, be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18); "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is a brawler" (Proverbs 20:1). Noah's sin did not stay with him: it became the occasion for his son's sin. Our sins always touch others.

21 **Read Ephesians 5:18**

What does drunkenness lead to? What are we to be filled with instead?

5. What Ham did. Ham "saw his father's nakedness and told his two brothers outside." Moses describes in detail what Shem and Japheth did, because it is the opposite: they took a garment, walked in backwards and covered their father, with their faces turned away. Ham looked when he should have turned away, and spread his father's shame instead of covering it. It was a sin against the honour due to a father: "Honor your father and mother" (Exodus 20:12).

22 **Read Genesis 9:22–23**

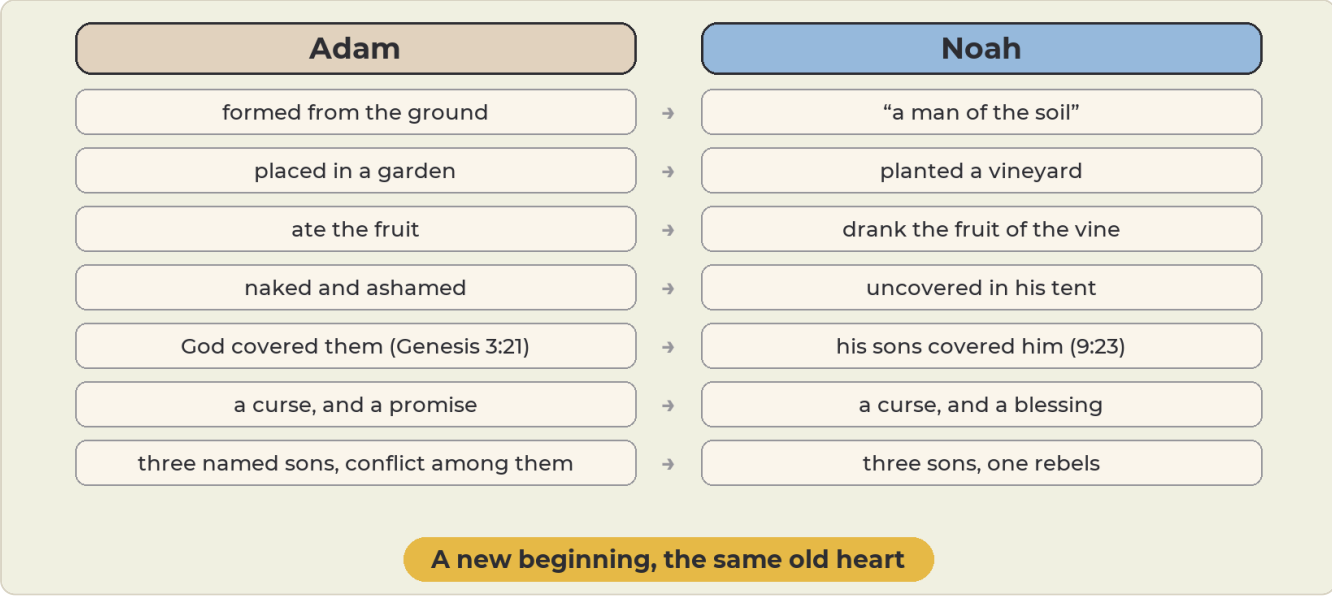
What did Ham do? What did Shem and Japheth do?

6. Love covers. When someone falls, there is something in our sinful hearts that enjoys spreading it. "Above all, love one another deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins" (1 Peter 4:8). This does not mean pretending that sin is not sin. It means refusing to make another's shame worse: "restore him with a spirit of gentleness. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted" (Galatians 6:1). It means honouring our parents too, even when they fail.

23 **Read Galatians 6:1**

How should we treat someone caught in a trespass? What warning is given?

7. A new beginning, the same old heart. Many teachers have noticed how this story echoes Adam's fall: a man from the ground, a garden or vineyard, fruit, nakedness and shame, a covering, and words of curse and blessing. Jim Hamilton sums it up: the new Adam in the new creation has a new fall. No new start, no fresh environment, no good man can fix the human heart. The world needed another Adam, One who would not fall.



Adam and Noah side by side: formed from the ground / a man of the soil; a garden / a vineyard; the fruit / the fruit of the vine; naked and ashamed / uncovered in his tent; covered by God / covered by his sons; a curse and a promise / a curse and a blessing.

8. "Cursed be Canaan!" These are Noah's only recorded words, spoken not in temper but as a prophecy that came true. Ham sinned as a son, and the consequences fell on his son. Canaan's people became known for the same kind of sin: "you must not follow the practices of the land of Canaan" (Leviticus 18:3). Moses wrote this for Israel as they were about to enter Canaan, and in Joshua's day some Canaanites became "woodcutters and water carriers … for the congregation of the LORD" (Joshua 9:27).

24 **Read Genesis 9:24–27**

Whom did Noah curse? Whom did he bless, and how?

9. Not about race. In past centuries some claimed that this passage justified the enslavement of Africans. That is completely wrong, a wicked twisting of God's Word. The curse is on Canaan, not on Ham's other sons; it has nothing to do with the colour of anyone's skin; and the Canaanites lived in Canaan, not in Africa. Every person of every people bears the image of God. Even for Canaanites the door of mercy was open: Rahab became an ancestor of Jesus (Matthew 1:5), and Jesus said to a Canaanite woman, "your faith is great!" (Matthew 15:28). "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us" (Galatians 3:13).

25 **Read Matthew 15:22–28**

Who came to Jesus, and what did she ask? What did Jesus say about her faith?

10. "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem!" Noah blesses the LORD, not Shem. Shem's greatest blessing was that the LORD was his God: it is about worship, not race. And through Shem's line the promise of Eden went on: from Shem to Abram, to David, and at last to Christ.

11. "May he dwell in the tents of Shem." "Japheth" sounds like the Hebrew word for "expand", and his peoples spread far and wide. To dwell in someone's tent is to share his home and his blessing. This came true through the gospel: people from nations far away came to know the God of Shem through Jesus, Shem's greatest Son. Those who were once "strangers to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world" have been "brought near through the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:12–13).

26 **Read Ephesians 2:12–13 and 2:19**

What were the Gentiles once? What are they now in Christ Jesus?

12. "And then he died." Noah lived 350 more years, and nothing else is recorded. He could not defeat sin and death. Adam fell in a garden, Noah in his vineyard; but the last Adam was "tempted in every way that we are, yet was without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). "Through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous" (Romans 5:19). Shem and Japheth could cover their father's body, but not take away his sin. Christ took our sin on Himself and clothes us with His righteousness: "He has clothed me with garments of salvation and wrapped me in a robe of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10).

27 **Read Romans 5:19**

What happened through the disobedience of one man? What happens through the obedience of the One?

28 **Read Isaiah 61:10**

With what has the LORD clothed His people?

Study 7 in summary

After the flood God blessed Noah and his sons as He had blessed Adam and Eve, gave them food, and taught them how precious every human life is, because every person bears His image. He made a covenant, with no conditions, with every living creature: never again would a flood destroy the earth. He set His rainbow in the clouds as its sign, and He keeps His word, though the present world is kept for a day of judgement by fire. But the flood washed the earth, not the human heart: Noah fell, Ham shamed him, and Noah's words of curse and blessing shaped the nations. All through these chapters the Bible points us to Christ: the One who bore God's judgement so that all who are in Him are safe; the Son of Shem in whom the nations are brought near; and the last Adam, who did not fall, and who clothes us in His righteousness.

THINK IT THROUGH

Questions for reflection and discussion

1. Why does God say that taking a human life is so serious (9:6)?

2. What does the rainbow promise, and what does it not promise?

3. Why do you think the Bible tells us about Noah's sin, so soon after the flood?

4. How should we respond when someone we know falls into sin?

HIDE IT IN YOUR HEART

Memory verse for study 7

Learn this verse by heart this week. Cut out the card and keep it where you will see it.

GENESIS · STUDY 7 · MEMORY VERSE

“I have set My rainbow in the clouds, and it will be a sign of the covenant between Me and the earth.”

Genesis 9:13

Berean Standard Bible · biblehelp.net

“I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You.” (Psalm 119:11, BSB)

AT THE BACK

The Bible passages (BSB)

1 **Genesis 9:1–3** *[1]And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. [2]The fear and dread of you will fall on every living creature on the earth, every bird of the air, every creature that crawls on the ground, and all the fish of the sea. They are delivered into your hand. [3]Everything that lives and moves will be food for you; just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you all things.*

2 **1 Timothy 4:4–5** *[4]For every creation of God is good, and nothing that is received with thanksgiving should be rejected, [5]because it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.*

3 **Leviticus 17:11** *For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for your souls upon the altar; for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul.*

4 **Genesis 9:4–7** *[4]But you must not eat meat with its lifeblood still in it. [5]And surely I will require the life of any man or beast by whose hand your lifeblood is shed. I will demand an accounting from anyone who takes the life of his fellow man: [6]Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man his blood will be shed; for in His own image God has made mankind. [7]But as for you, be fruitful and multiply; spread out across the earth and multiply upon it."*

5 **Matthew 5:21–22** *[21]You have heard that it was said to the ancients, 'Do not murder' and 'Anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.' [22]But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' will be subject to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be subject to the fire of hell.*

6 **Romans 12:19** *Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but leave room for God's wrath. For it is written: "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, says the Lord."*

7 **Romans 13:4** *For he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not carry the sword in vain. He is God's servant, an agent of retribution to the wrongdoer.*

8 **1 Timothy 2:1–2** *[1]First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving be offered for everyone— [2]for kings and all those in authority—so that we may lead tranquil and quiet lives in all godliness and dignity.*

9 **Genesis 9:8–11** *[8]Then God said to Noah and his sons with him, [9]"Behold, I now establish My covenant with you and your descendants after you, [10]and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth—every living thing that came out of the ark. [11]And 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."*

10 **Matthew 5:45** *that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.*

11 **Luke 22:20** *In the same way, after supper He took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you.*

12 **Genesis 9:12–17** *12And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between Me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: 13I have set My rainbow in the clouds, and it will be a sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. 14Whenever I form clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, 15I will remember My covenant between Me and you and every living creature of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. 16And whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of every kind that is on the earth." 17So God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between Me and every creature on the earth."*

13 **Revelation 4:3** *The One seated there looked like jasper and carnelian, and a rainbow that gleamed like an emerald encircled the throne.*

14 **Isaiah 54:9–10** *9"For to Me this is like the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth. So I have sworn that I will not be angry with you or rebuke you. 10Though the mountains may be removed and the hills may be shaken, My loving devotion will not depart from you, and My covenant of peace will not be broken," says the LORD, who has compassion on you.*

15 **2 Peter 3:3–7** *3Most importantly, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. 4"Where is the promise of His coming?" they will ask. "Ever since our fathers fell asleep, everything continues as it has from the beginning of creation." 5But they deliberately overlook the fact that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and by water, 6through which the world of that time perished in the flood. 7And by that same word, the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.*

16 **2 Peter 3:10–13** *10But the Day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar, the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and its works will be laid bare. 11Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to conduct yourselves in holiness and godliness 12as you anticipate and hasten the coming of the day of God, when the heavens will be destroyed by fire and the elements will melt in the heat. 13But in keeping with God's promise, we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.*

17 **1 Peter 3:18** *For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit,*

18 **Genesis 9:18–19** *18The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And Ham was the father of Canaan. 19These three were the sons of Noah, and from them the whole earth was populated.*

19 **Genesis 9:20–21** *20Now Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded to plant a vineyard. 21But when he drank some of its wine, he became drunk and uncovered himself inside his tent.*

20 **1 Corinthians 10:12** *So the one who thinks he is standing firm should be careful not to fall.*

21 **Ephesians 5:18** *Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to reckless indiscretion. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.*

22 **Genesis 9:22–23** *22And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father's nakedness and told his two brothers outside. 23Then Shem and Japheth took a garment and placed it across their shoulders, and walking backward, they covered their father's nakedness. Their faces were turned away so that they did not see their father's nakedness.*

23 **Galatians 6:1** *Brothers, if someone is caught in a trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him with a spirit of gentleness. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.*

24 **Genesis 9:24–27** *24When Noah awoke from his drunkenness and learned what his youngest son had done to him, 25he said, "Cursed be Canaan! A servant of servants shall he be to his brothers." 26He also declared: "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem! May Canaan be the servant of Shem. 27May God expand the territory of Japheth; may he dwell in the tents of Shem, and may Canaan be his servant."*

25 **Matthew 15:22–28** *22And a Canaanite woman from that region came to Him, crying out, "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is miserably possessed by a demon." 23But Jesus did not answer a word. So His disciples came and urged Him, "Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us." 24He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." 25The woman came and knelt before Him. "Lord, help me!" she said. 26But Jesus replied, "It is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs." 27"Yes, Lord," she said, "even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table." 28"O woman," Jesus answered, "your faith is great! Let it be done for you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.*

26 **Ephesians 2:12–13** *12remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. 13But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.*

27 **Romans 5:19** *For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.*

28 **Isaiah 61:10** *I will rejoice greatly in the LORD, my soul will exult in my God; for He has clothed me with garments of salvation and wrapped me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom wears a priestly headdress, as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.*

Scripture: Berean Standard Bible (BSB), public domain. Quotations keep its American spelling. Like many English Bibles, it often says 'man', 'he' or 'brothers' where it means people in general, men and women alike.

FOR GROUP LEADERS

Study 7: After the flood

> **Memory verse:** “I have set My rainbow in the clouds, and it will be a sign of the covenant between Me and the earth.” (Genesis 9:13). Say it together at the end, and ask who can say it without looking.

Aims

- See from Genesis 9:1–11 that God blessed the new world as He blessed the first, gave food as a gift, and taught that every human life is precious because every person bears His image; and that He bound Himself by a covenant, with no conditions, with every living creature.
- See from Genesis 9:12–17 that the rainbow is God's sign that He keeps His word; that the flood warns of a judgement still to come (2 Peter 3); and that Christ, who bore God's judgement, is the only safe place.
- See from Genesis 9:18–29 that the flood washed the earth but not the human heart; that love covers another's shame; that the curse on Canaan has nothing to do with race; and that the nations are blessed through Shem's greatest Son, the last Adam who did not fall.

Suggested timing (about 90 minutes, or three meetings)

- **5 min** Welcome and short prayer. Ask the group to read Genesis 9 before the meeting.
- **25 min** Part 1 video (14 min); Genesis 9:1–11, with Leviticus 17:11, Romans 12:19, Romans 13:4 and 1 Timothy 2:1–2.
- **20 min** Part 2 video (12 min); Genesis 9:12–17, with Isaiah 54:9–10, 2 Peter 3:3–13 and 1 Peter 3:18.
- **30 min** Part 3 video (19 min); Genesis 9:18–29, with Ephesians 5:18, 1 Peter 4:8, Galatians 6:1, Matthew 15:22–28 and Ephesians 2:12–19.
- **10 min** Reflection questions. Close in prayer, thanking God for His patience and for Christ, who covers our shame.

For most groups, take one part each week. If you do, read the passage for that part aloud together before the video.

Tips

- Genesis 9:6 speaks of the death penalty for murder. The study teaches the principle of the text (human life is so precious that taking it is the greatest crime, and God gave rulers the duty of justice), and says plainly that God does not want anyone to take revenge. It says nothing about any country's laws. If the discussion turns to politics, bring it back to the image of God and to Jesus' words about anger (Matthew 5:21–22).
- Make sure the group sees what the covenant with Noah does not promise: it keeps the world going, but it does not forgive sin. The picture of the two covenants (Part 1) helps.
- The warrior's bow (Part 2) is offered as a picture many have seen, not as certain teaching. Keep it light.
- 2 Peter 3 can be sobering. End Part 2 with the hope of "a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells", and with Christ, the only ark.
- Ham's sin: keep to what the text says (he looked, and spread his father's shame). There is no need to discuss the darker theories people have suggested.
- The curse on Canaan has been misused in the past to defend slavery. The study rejects that clearly. If someone in your group has been hurt by such teaching, speak gently, and point to Rahab, to the Canaanite woman, and to Galatians 3:13.

- Wine: the Bible calls it a good gift and warns strongly against drunkenness. Some Christians choose not to drink at all; respect both, and keep the focus on Noah's fall.
- The pictures (two covenants, the rainbow in the Bible, three judgements, Noah's family tree, and Adam and Noah) are good for a short recap at the next meeting.