Congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ,

We have three pets at home, Lucy, the dog of our missionaries in PNG, the Vaatstras, Ash, our cat, and Bartholomew, the goldfish. And I am sure that many of you Cadets and GEMS and others will have pets at your place too. And maybe some of you have chickens or a sheep or a goat or a pig or a cow, from which you get eggs and wool and milk and bacon and steak, etc. Well, we are going to see that having pets and farm animals has to do with God’s words to Noah in this passage. For as we shall see, the relationship between humans and animals, before the flood, was part of the reason why the flood was necessary. But now, after the flood, God establishes a new order that involves even the relationship between mankind and the animal world. And this new order is in the form of a covenant.

And I want to stress here how important this passage is for our understanding of the Bible. You see, a very popular way of understanding history and the Bible is called **dispensationalism**. If you are watching a TV preacher or listening to one on local Christian radio, there is probably a higher than 90% chance that he or she is dispensational in their theology. And your teacher at the local non-denominational Christian school is also probably dispensational in their theology. Dispensationalists divide history into seven dispensations or eras or ages, with each dispensation having a new ‘salvation test.’ And we have looked closely at dispensationalism in a previous sermon, so I won’t repeat the details today. But we hold to what is called **covenant theology**. And we believe that there is one covenant, the covenant of grace, which God established after the Fall in Genesis 3. It promises eternal life to all who believe in Jesus Christ. For Old Testament believers, this was a faith that looked *forward* to the promised Messiah. And for New Testament believers, it is faith that looks *back* to the Christ who has come. So, one covenant of grace. But there are certain moments in history where God revealed more about the covenant of grace. And they are the covenant moments of the Bible. One is them is the covenant that God established here with Noah, one is the covenant that God established with Abraham, one is the covenant that God established with Moses and people of Israel, one is the covenant that God established with King David, and then there is the new covenant that was established with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. But they are not *different* covenants; they are more revelation about the covenant of grace. They provide new information about God and His relationship with His people, and His saving and redeeming purposes in Jesus Christ. And if you want to know more about covenant theology, read Chapter 7 of the Westminster Confession of Faith, and/or, get a hold of O. Palmer Robertson’s Book, ‘*The Christ of the Covenants*.’ But understanding where you are in the Bible in relation to each of these covenants is really important for interpretation. And we want to see that in the passage in front of us today.

For in this passage, **God** **establishes** **a covenant with Noah as a new Adam**. And we will unpack this in five parts as we consider a new **Adam**, a new **Dynamic**, a new **Diet**, a new **Penalty**, and a new **Covenant**. Now, there is simply too much in this passage for us to consider in one sermon. So, we will come back to verses 8-17 and the new covenant next Lord’s Day, God willing. But what we look at today is part of this new covenant. So, think of it as one sermon in two parts.

1. Let’s begin then with Noah as **the new Adam**.
   1. When brother Brett preached on the receding floodwaters and Noah sending out the raven and dove and leaving the ark, he mentioned that there is a lot of creation language here. And so, we saw a wind blowing over the earth, which caused the waters to recede and dry land to appear – that’s days 1 & 3 of creation week language. And in 8:17 God says that the animals and birds and creeping things are to be fruitful and multiply – that’s days 5&6 language. And now that Noah and his family have emerged, God says to them, in verses 1&7, “*Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth* … *be fruitful and multiply, increase greatly on the earth and multiply in it*.” And that is exactly what God said to Adam and his wife on day 6. So, God wants us to associate this moment with creation. He is beginning again. This is a re-creation moment. Noah is a new Adam.
      1. And we have seen **why this re-creation was necessary**. God had made Adam in His image. He commanded Adam and his wife to have lots of in-God’s-image children; to fill the earth with copies of themselves who would worship God and spread His beauty around the globe. But then came the Fall, which brought the curse of sin into creation. And mankind was immediately divided into the line of the serpent and unbelief, and the line of the woman and faith. And we saw in chapters 5-6 how quickly the line of the serpent took control, to the point that there was only one man in the line of faith left – Noah. The world was a place of almost universal wickedness and unbelief. And this is why God resolved to destroy the world and begin again with Noah.
      2. And back in **Genesis 5:28-29** we are told that when Noah was born, his father, Lamech, said, “*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*.” In other words, Lamech hoped that his son was the promised Messiah. Well, we will see in the next part of Genesis 9 that despite Noah’s faith and obedience, he was a flesh and blood sinner just like you and me. So, he was not the promised Messiah. And this should not surprise any of us, because, unlike the first Adam, who was sinless when God gave Him the dominion command, Noah was already sinful.
   2. But we should also briefly note here, because of the times we live in, that the command to be fruitful and multiply that God gave to Noah still holds for God’s people today. Our world says that the world is over-populated, and we are running out of food, so, do not have children or maybe one at the most. But we saw last week, in 8:22, that God will preserve seedtime and harvest until Christ returns. We will not run out of food on a global scale. So, God’s command is that, if we are physically able to, we should be fruitful and multiply. And in Psalm 127:3-5, we read, “*Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them!*”
2. So, that is Noah as **a new Adam**. But what we see in verse 2 is **a new dynamic** – our second point. For there, God said to Noah, “*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*.”
   1. Immediately after Day 6 of creation, there was a harmony between mankind and the animal world. But the Fall ruined that harmony. Many animals were now carnivores. And animals typically breed much faster than humans do. And so, before the flood, alongside the violence and murder that was going on from human to human, it is reasonable to assume that many humans were also being killed by animals. And now, after the flood, there were just eight human beings on the planet, and at least several thousand animals and birds and creeping things. And so, God instilled a natural fear of humans into the animal world. No longer was their first instinct to kill humans, it was now to run away.
      1. And this kept humans from being quickly wiped out by animal predators. And while there are times when animals or sharks do kill humans, for the most part, they run or swim away, and this is why we are able to walk in forests and swim in the ocean, which I am sure we all really enjoy!
      2. But this act of God also **made farming much easier**. Think of milking, and putting saddles on horses, and yoke on oxen, to use them, and how meekly sheep and goats and llamas allow us to shear their wool.
      3. But it also made **having animals as pets** possible. And as I said at the beginning of the sermon, many of us enjoy having pet animals.
      4. And all this has its origins in this fear of humans that God instilled into the animal world as a new creation dynamic.
   2. Before we move on to our next point, though, one possible consequence of this new dynamic is that it may well be what led to the extinction of those animals that we typically call **dinosaurs**. For, this new fear of man, together with the fact that God now permitted humans to eat animals, which we shall look at in our next point, and the invention or discovery of things like better weapons and traps and poisons and fire, and the sinful greed of man, would have made the hunting of the large dinosaurs much easier. And this may well have been what happened after the flood. And I mention this simply because the extinction of the dinosaurs is probably something we have all wondered about at one time or another.
3. So, that’s **the new dynamic**. And closely related to it is **the new diet** that is described in verse 3: “*Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything*.” And this is our third point.
   1. At creation, God gave humans and animals plants and fruit as their diet. In other words, our original diet was vegetarian. But as we noted, after the Fall, some animals became carnivores – meat eaters. Well, God now permitted humans to eat meat also.
      1. And notice the words “***every***” and “***everything***.” Noah and his family could eat any animal they wished. And so, it would seem that the reference to clean animals in chapters 7 and 8 had *sacrifices* in view, not food. Restrictions on what foods could be eaten would come later, with Israel.
      2. But this verse is **important for our day** also. For there is a growing sentiment in the world that eating meat is morally wrong; that we are murdering our fellow living creatures. And if it was just atheistic evolutionists preaching this doctrine, that would be one thing. But more and more professing Christians have fallen for this ideology as well. So, while we are free to choose a vegetarian diet, God has allowed us to eat animals and fish and birds as food. Therefore, we have no business telling each other that eating meat is wrong. And Romans 14:2-3 states exactly this: “*One person believes he may eat anything, while [another] eats only vegetables. Let not the one who eats [meat] despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats*.”
   2. But notice the restriction that God put on this new diet, in verse 4, which was that Noah and his family were not to “*eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood, in it*.”
      1. And one reason for this prohibition was that God did not want mankind catching an animal and devouring it on the spot like animals do. So, humans had to first drain all the blood out and then cook the meat.
      2. Another reason was **the connection between blood and the sacrifice for sins**. Hebrews 9:22 says, “*Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins*.” And as we saw last week, this pointed forward to Christ’s work on the cross, for it is by His blood that our sin and guilt is washed away. And so, to teach His people about the relationship between blood and forgiveness, God forbade them from eating blood.
         1. And **this prohibition remained right through Old Testament times, and for a very short while in the New Testament church**. In Acts 15, the Apostles called on Non-Jewish believers to abstain from blood, meaning eating meat with blood in it. After many centuries of carefully draining away every drop of blood from the meat they ate, for the reasons given above, it was just too difficult for a Jewish believer to see a non-Jewish person eating their steak, rare, with blood oozing out over the plate, at a church shared lunch. But that prohibition was just for that short-changeover time. So, we may eat our steak rare, today.
4. Well, that brings us to verses 5-6, and **the new penalty**, which is our fourth and last point today. God said to Noah, “*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*.”
   1. Back in Genesis 4 Cain murdered his brother Abel. And Cain instinctively knew that others would want to execute him for having done this. And so, God spared Cain’s life by putting some sort of protecting mark on him. And one of Cain’s descendants was a man named Lamech, who is not to be confused with the father of Noah. And that Lamech killed a man and threatened murder on anyone who tried to wound him. So, it would appear that murder was a widespread problem before the flood. But that needed to stop. And so, God now required life for life: “*Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed*.” And we see in verse 5 that God would require this also from animals that killed humans. And so, in **Exodus 21:28-29**, we are told that if an ox gored a man to death, the ox was to be stoned to death and *not* eaten. And the reason for this requirement is stated at the end of verse 6: “…*for God made man in his own image*.” To murder a human is to murder a being who is like God. Therefore, the punishment must be death.
      1. And people of God, **nowhere in the Bible is the requirement of life for life removed**. This is not the ceremonial or civil law of Israel; this is the moral and abiding law of God.
      2. What was part of the civil law of Israel was that the putting to death of a murderer was to be done by someone from the family of the murder victim, who was called “*the avenger of blood*.” But that is not the case anymore. Romans 13 speaks about the civil government that God has instituted. And one of the reasons that civil government exists is to administer justice. And listen to what Romans 13:4 says about the God-appointed governor: 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*.” And the mention of a sword and “an avenger” are clearly linked to this precept in Genesis 9:6.
      3. Now, must every care be taken not to execute the innocent? Yes. And should this be done in as humane way possible? Absolutely. But this is fundamentally about obeying God, and preserving and upholding the value of the life of those who bear God’s image. And we see in our news feeds, almost daily, what happens when the killing of image-bearers is not dealt with in the way that God prescribes.

Now congregation, as we draw to a close, what should be obvious from what we have already seen in this passage is that despite a new Adam, a new dynamic, a new diet, and a new penalty, this was not the new creation that the covenant of grace ultimately had in view. The very fact that the Lord needed to instil fear of human in animals, and provide rules about not eating blood and the appropriate punishment for murder, makes it plain that this was still a fallen and broken world.

And as we noted, despite Noah being a new Adam, he could not secure forgiveness for sinners or eternal life. So, this passage reveals that **we sinful human beings need another Adam** – someone who is like us and who *can* represent us. And 1 Corinthians 15:45 calls Jesus “*the last Adam*.” For while the first Adam disobeyed the commands of God, and plunged us all into sin and death, Jesus, as the last Adam, obeyed the commands of God, and secured for us the forgiveness of sins and eternal life on the cross. And while the first Adam plunged all creation into bondage and decay, when Jesus comes again, He will bring in the new heavens and new earth!

But even the new penalty for murder that God established here has a gospel connection. For who is the perfect image-bearer of God? It is the Lord Jesus Christ. And how did He die? He was murdered by the citizens and religious leaders and the civil government of His day. But through faith in Him, we become image-bearers of God in the fullest sense! And we become those who will inherit the new creation when Jesus returns. And we will see more of the gospel of God’s grace in Christ when we continue with this passage next time and consider this new covenant.

But let us now turn to God in prayer: