

Series: Isaiah

Title: As the Waters of Noah

Text: Isaiah 54: 8-10

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Isaiah 54: 8: In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer. 9: For this *is as* the waters of Noah unto me: for *as* I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. 10: For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.

I. WHAT IS A COVENANT?

A covenant is a promise—**Isaiah 54: 8: I will have mercy on thee,...9: I have sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee....10: my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.**

Also, God's covenant to his people is everlasting and eternal. Plus, the covenant God makes with his elect, in the heart of those born of God, is not conditioned upon something we do—it is unconditional. God's covenant to us is performed by God, apart from our works. Someone might say that faith is a condition. No, God giving us faith is part of his promise toward his people. We would not have faith if God had not promised to give it and faith would have nothing to believe if God had not made a promise to us. Our faith believes God and the covenant he has made unto us, God who has promised and cannot lie. God's everlasting covenant is the faith of our faith.

Jeremiah 32: 39 And I will give them one heart, [one faith] and one way, [that way is Christ] that [so that, in order that—our faith is of God—so that]--they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: 40: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.

Jeremiah 31:33: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, [included in that covenant, as the effectual result of God's work, is this:] and they shall be my people.

Application: So God's everlasting covenant is unconditional—not based on any work performed by us, not even on our faith—but all parts of his everlasting covenant are wholly performed by our triune God. Our faith is not a condition but is included in God's covenant. We have no room to boast in our faith.

Application: So here are the three things to define God's covenant to his people: God's covenant is a promise to his people, God's covenant is unconditional—there is nothing to be performed by us—all is finished by our God, and God's covenant lasts forever and is eternal.

II. SECONDLY, LET'S COMPARE GOD'S COVENANT TO THE BELIEVER, WITH NOAH'S COVENANT—Isaiah 54: 8: In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer. 9: For this is as the waters of Noah unto me:

God compares this covenant to the covenant God made with Noah in this way: **Isaiah 54: 9:...for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.**

Let's read God's covenant to Noah in Genesis 8. The ark is a type of Christ. In Noah's day, God judged the world because of their sin against God. The rain covered the earth, the waters from beneath were broken up, so God justly killed all men because they sinned against God. The flood represents the judgment of God upon sinners like us. But instead of judging in himself, God judged Noah in the ark, when he sent the flood upon the ark. Noah was inside the ark. The floods beat upon the ark rather than upon Noah. So Noah lived and God was just.

Be sure to get this: Just as the whole world was judged in Noah's day, when God judged Christ on the cross, the whole world was judged at that time: God's elect were judged in Christ and the judgment of the rest of the world outside of Christ was settled—their end was settled—because judgment was settled in Christ. Like as the whole world was judged when God sent the flood upon the ark: some in the ark; the rest outside the ark—so it was when Christ died: some in Christ, the rest outside of Christ. Christ said, "Now is the judgment of this world." (Jn 12: 31) The only work that remains in our day is for God to call those he redeemed with the good news that we are redeemed. That is what the preaching of the gospel is. In the last day, in the last judgment, God will declare publicly who is righteous in his Son; all the rest outside of Christ shall be damned because they believed not the gospel and did not get in Christ just as those in Noah's day were damned because they believed not the gospel Noah declared and refused to get into the ark.

Application: Sinner, hear this gospel today! Are you one for Christ died? Can you believe him? All for whom he died, shall be made by God to believe and each shall believe on Christ.

In the passage we are about to read, the flood of judgment is over. The ark as ascended up out of the water, Noah is delivered to the new world—

Genesis 8: 20: And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD;

This is a picture of Christ, ascending to the throne of God, presenting himself to the Father—Christ is our Altar and Christ is the offering which God is pleased with.

Genesis 8: 20:...and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. 21: And the LORD smelled a sweet savour;

Christ did this for a chosen people—for us who believe.

Ephesians 5: 2:...Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Christ loved his people. Christ gave himself for us—in our room and stead—the same way that Noah's ark bore the flood of judgment in place of Noah, so Christ gave himself for us and bore the flood of judgment in our room and stead. Christ gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour--Christ is the offering and the sacrifice that satisfied God—satisfied judgment, on behalf of those for whom he died. Christ ascended out of judgment to the Father and presented himself and God smelled a sweet savour.

Application: Believer, outside of Christ God smells an abomination from us. But in Christ, God smells a sweet smelling savour from us.

So the picture in our text is that work of redemption has been accomplished, for all God's elect. We are righteous—not by our doing—by Christ's doing. Christ having finished the work is the one cause that God comes and makes this everlasting covenant in our hearts, like as God came and made a covenant to Noah. Here was the covenant he made to Noah—**Genesis 8: 21:...and the LORD said in his heart,**

God said this into Noah's heart. If God makes his covenant with you today it will be through this gospel I am preaching. If God makes his covenant with you today it will be by God saying into your heart as he did Noah. Here is the covenant God made with Noah—**Genesis 8: 21:..I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. 22: While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.**

God's covenant with Noah is that the earth will never again be cursed by a flood. God will see to it that while the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

Our text in Isaiah 54 says, **Isaiah 54: 6: For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God 7: For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. 8: In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.**

We sinned in Adam. It seemed to us God forsook us. He turned his face from us until Christ came and bore the judgment of God in our place. Now, God has called us and made this covenant in our heart, saying, "with great mercies will I gather thee, with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer."

Isaiah 54: 9: For this is as the waters of Noah unto me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee.

Application: Believer, our judgment is forever settled in Christ. God will no more be angry with us. God will not more rebuke—judge us—because he judged his Son in our room and stead. Sinner, if God has given you the ability to believe on Christ then you can rest assured your judgment is settled before God. You will never be punished but have everlasting life with God.

III. THIRDLY, LET ME SHOW YOU TWO CONTRAST BETWEEN THE COVENANT GOD MAKES WITH THE BELIEVER AND THE COVENANT GOD MADE WITH NOAH—

First, our covenant is everlasting and eternal, whereas Noah's was only temporal. God put a limit on his covenant to Noah, while the earth remains—**Genesis 8: 22: While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.**

The ark in Noah's day was only a picture. It only saved from temporal judgment. So God only made an earthly covenant with Noah. But God put no time limit on his covenant with his people—**Isaiah 54: 10: For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee.**

Christ is eternal God. What Christ accomplished is eternal. So God's covenant with us is eternal

Application: Believer, we have an everlasting & eternal covenant of peace established by our God in Christ.

The second contrast is in God's token of assurance to us. God gave Noah a temporal, temporary token to assure him—a rainbow set in the cloud—**Genesis 9:11: 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 any more be a flood to destroy the earth. 12: 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: 13: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. 14: And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: 15: And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16: And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.**

But our assurance is Christ at the right hand of God. God raised and set Christ as he did the rainbow to be a token of assurance to his people. Christ is the Covenant of his people.

Isaiah 49:8 Thus saith the LORD, In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee: and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages;

God set the rainbow in the clouds above us, God set Christ at his right hand.

Hebrew 1:3: Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Revelation 10: 1: And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: 2: And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, 3: And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

God looks upon the rainbow, not upon us—God said, “I will look upon it,”—God looks upon his Son, not upon us.—“he shall see his Seed, he shall prolong his days.” (Is 53: 10) God, looking upon the rainbow, is the one who remembers his covenant and keeps his covenant, not us—God said, “I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.”—even better, God looks upon Christ remembers his covenant with his people. The rainbow is an empty bow, pointed up, but it has no arrow in it—Christ holds a bow, but the arrow of justice has forever been shot and settled in Christ.

Application: Let me end by saying to you sinners, who believe Christ, by this everlasting covenant, which God has made with us in Christ, we can say with David,

2 Samuel 23:5: Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.

And to you who do not yet believe on Christ, hear God speak,

Isaiah 55:3: Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

Amen!