

GOD'S PROMISE TO NOAH – PART 2

GOD'S POST-FLOOD COVENANT CONTINUED

The Charge to Multiply

Genesis 9:1 ~ And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.

- God reiterated His command that He gave in Gen 8:17 to multiply and fill the earth except there the charge was to the animals to reproduce whereas here the charge is to Noah and his sons
- This was a restatement of the initial command given in Gen 1:22 to the animals and in Gen 1:28 to Adam
- With the world’s population destroyed, there was a need for mankind to repopulate it; hence, the command to not only Noah in this verse but also to “his sons” since they were the ones who would actually be reproducing after the flood
- The charge is repeated one more time in v. 7
- This means that sexual relations between a husband and wife are God’s invention
- Not only does He allow it within the marriage context, He encourages it and gives it to a married couple to enjoy for each other’s fulfillment and for reproduction

Hebrews 13:4 ~ Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge.

- “This doesn’t mean that everyone should marry, or that all marriages necessarily produce children. Rather, having children and filling the earth is part of God’s plan for *humanity as a whole*.”¹
- Furthermore, the purpose of the command to “be fruitful and multiply” is to “fill the earth” and once this purpose has been fulfilled, the command is no longer operative
- The many times that God repeated this command to “be fruitful and multiply” should have made His wishes clear; however, only 100 years later mankind would disobey these commands and build a tower at Babel
- Some have suggested that overpopulation (as a result of filling the earth) is a serious threat to the world
- In fact, there are many fear-mongers and doom-mongers who claim that population control policies should be put in place and that the population of the world should be reduced in order to prevent large-scale famine
- However, this ignores the fact that many parts of the world are completely uninhabited and uncultivated and that 7 billion people could fit into an area the size of Great Britain with an average space of about 350 square feet each
- Also, population growth has largely been good for the world because it has increased the resourcefulness of humanity including new ways to provide energy, new methods of growing more food, and new advances in medicine and sanitation

The Permission to Eat Meat

Genesis 9:2-4 ~ The fear of you and the terror of you will be on every beast of the earth and on every bird of the sky; with everything that creeps on the ground, and all the fish of the sea, into your hand they are given. 3 Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as I gave the green plant. 4 Only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.

¹ Jonathan Sarfati, *The Genesis Account*, 262 (emphasis original).

- There was a marked contrast in human-animal relations after the flood as compared with prior to the flood
- But this was first preceded by a marked contrast in animal-animal relations after the Fall
- Prior to the Fall, there was animal-animal harmony and animal-human harmony because God originally created the world “very good” (Gen 1:31)
- And the diet that was assigned to humans and animals was vegetarian

Genesis 1:29-30 ~ Then God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; 30 and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food”; and it was so.

- God in His grace and mercy gave all living creatures plants for food; however, it is possible that milk, honey, etc. may have been included in a pre-fall diet
- This means that even meat-eating animals today were herbivorous prior to the Fall
- This reality is something Isaiah anticipates in the Millennium which in some way, at least in large part, is the restoration of the idyllic state in Eden where there was

Isaiah 11:6-9 ~ And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, And the leopard will lie down with the young goat, And the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little boy will lead them. 7 Also the cow and the bear will graze, Their young will lie down together, And the lion will eat straw like the ox. 8 The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper’s den. 9 They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD As the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 65:25 ~ “The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and dust will be the serpent’s food. They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain,” says the LORD.

- Isaiah looks forward to the day when there will once again be “animal-animal harmony” (Is 11:6-7) and “animal-human harmony” (Is 11:8)
- Furthermore, he anticipates that Edenic age when the nature and diet of carnivorous animals will be changed to fit the new kingdom conditions (Is 11:7)
- This likely will be a reflection of the pre-Fall animal life
- A couple of important observations about pre-Fall animal life:²

1. Before the Fall, many attack/defense structures could have been used in a vegetarian lifestyle

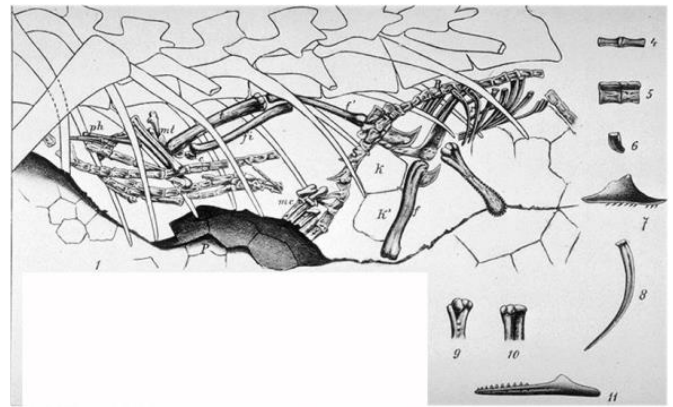
- Spider webs could have been used to catch pollen for food
- Even today, there are examples of lions that don’t eat meat, piranhas that are vegetarian, and vultures and fruit bats that eat only plants
- Notably, panda bears have sharp teeth and claws but eat mainly bamboo
- Although black bears are omnivores, they eat mostly plants, fruits, nuts, berries, and honey

2. God foreknew the Fall, so He programmed creatures with the information for attack and defense features, which they would need in a cursed world. This information was “switched on” at the Fall.

- God is the master genetic programmer...so it is plausible that programmer could have also switched on information at the Fall which would turn herbivores into carnivores

² Adapted from Sarfati, *The Genesis Account*, 396-400.

- So the Fall ruined the animal-animal harmony and likely brought about carnivory
- Although we don't know for sure when animal carnivory began, the Fall likely marked the transition from herbivory to carnivory for animals
- “If one believes what the Scriptures teach, then one should believe that a change took place, or at least began, at the Fall of Adam. If God completed His creation according to His purpose, then one must acknowledge that God designed creation to eat vegetation, with a change taking place in the creation sometime later.”³
- Actually, there is perhaps a hint in the Bible that there was pre-Flood carnivory
- When Cain was angry with God for rejecting his sacrifice, God warned him that “sin is crouching at the door” (Gen 4:7)
- God pictures sin as “crouching” and ready to spring forth
- Such imagery could indicate that animal predation had already started by this time
- This time could be a little under 130 years after Creation as we know that Eve regarded Seth as God's replacement for Abel (Gen 4:25), and Seth was born when Adam was 130 (Gen 5:3)
- Furthermore, we know from the fossil record that by the time of the flood there was animal carnivory



The little Jurassic lizard *Bavariasaurus* was found inside the belly of the little Jurassic dinosaur, *Compsognathus*.
Illustration by Franz Nopcsa 1903.



The “fighting dinosaurs” fossil of a *Velociraptor* and *Protoceratops* locked in mortal combat

³ <https://answersingenesis.org/animal-behavior/what-animals-eat/creations-original-diet-and-the-changes-at-the-fall/>

- So, while it is clear that animal carnivory occurred prior to the flood, human carnivory didn't take place until after the flood
- Here for the first time God permitted humans to eat animals representing a major change in man's relationship with animals
- In v. 2, God told Noah that, instead of harmony between man and animals, the animals would have "fear" and "terror" of them
- Animals would come to dread man's presence
- One reason for this fear was because man would be allowed to eat them
- Another reason would have likely been to protect man from the animals since the animals were greater in number, reproduced more rapidly, and were stronger
- Thus, although the creation mandate (Gen 1:28) was still in effect, it became harder as a result of this
- In v. 3, God freely allowed animals to be used as meat
- The language God used in v. 3 contrasts the animal diet with the previous plant diet: "Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as I gave the green plants."
- In this statement, God reaffirms that He had previously established only a vegetarian diet...now, mandatory vegetarianism would end
- There is also a parallel between this instruction and Genesis 2:16-17 where God allowed Adam to eat "from any tree of the garden" with only a single prohibition ("but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat")
- Here the allowance is for Noah to be able to eat "every moving thing that is alive" (v. 3) with only a single restriction ("only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood" – v. 4)
- Here, blood is equated with life...this is why its consumption is forbidden
- To shed blood represented death
- The connection of life with blood becomes very important in the Mosaic Law, especially in the well-known passage:

Leviticus 17:11 ~ For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it is the blood by reason of the life that makes atonement.
- The sacrifices offered under Moses ultimately looked ahead to the shedding of blood of Christ which signified His death
- In other words, Christ had to die not merely bleed

Hebrews 9:11-14, 22 ~ But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; 12 and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. 13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, 14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?...22 And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

- Because blood is so associated with the life of an animal, it was not to be consumed as food
- Does this also prohibit blood transfusions as the Jehovah's Witness claim? → No, the command to not ingest blood has nothing to do with transfusions
- Furthermore, eating blood is completely different than receiving a transfusion

The Death Penalty for Murder

Genesis 9:5-7 ~ Surely I will require your lifeblood; from every beast I will require it. And from every man, from every man's brother I will require the life of man. 6 Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man. 7 As for you, be fruitful and multiply; Populate the earth abundantly and multiply in it.

- The mention of blood in v. 4 serves as the connection for God ordaining the death penalty for murder
- Here "lifeblood" is used for the life as man as well
- Because of the Flood's destruction of life people might begin to think that God holds life cheap and assume that taking life is a small matter
- But here God shows that life is sacred and that man's life is not to be wantonly taken
- If an animal takes a person's life, it was to be killed (v. 5a)

Exodus 21:28 ~ If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall surely be stoned and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall go unpunished.

- If a person takes another person's life, they were to be executed (vv. 5b-6)
- One critical element of the Noahic Covenant was the establishment of human government and the institution of capital punishment for those guilty of murder
- This shows the very high value of human life...thus, human life is so valuable that anyone who takes it unlawfully was to pay for their crime with their own life
- One of the first things God imprinted on Noah's mind after the flood was a renewed appreciation for human life
- The reason for this is because "in the image of God He made man" (v. 6)
- This shows that, even though sin had marred the image of God in man, the Fall had not removed it entirely
- People are made in God's image and life is so precious that it must be protected
- Significantly, God also explains the means by which the execution of the murderer was to take place: "by man his blood shall be shed" (v. 6)
- "*Other humans* should put the offender to death...This seems to be the foundation for institution of human governments, so justice could be meted out."⁴
- This text serves as the inauguration of the mandatory practice of capital punishment/death penalty
- It has never been revoked
- In fact, it is supported and repeated in both the OT (as *lex taliones*) and the NT

Exodus 21:22-25 ~ If men struggle with each other and strike a woman with child so that she gives birth prematurely, yet there is no injury, he shall surely be fined as the woman's husband may demand of him, and he shall pay as the judges decide. 23 But if there is any further injury, then you shall appoint as a penalty life for life, 24 eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot 25 burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise.

Leviticus 24:17-20 ~ If a man takes the life of any human being, he shall surely be put to death. 18 The one who takes the life of an animal shall make it good, life for life. 19 If a man injures his neighbor, just as he has done, so it shall be done to him: 20 fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; just as he has injured a man, so it shall be inflicted on him.

Luke 23:39-41 ~ One of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!" 40 But the other answered, and rebuking him said, "Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same

⁴ Sarfati, *The Genesis Account*, 602 (emphasis original).

sentence of condemnation? 41 And we indeed are suffering justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.”

Acts 25:11 ~ If, then, I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die; but if none of those things is true of which these men accuse me, no one can hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar.

Romans 13:4 ~ for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

- Although capital punishment is a controversial topic in our society, it is clearly established in Scripture as a punishment for and deterrent to murder
- In other words, capital punishment is entirely Biblical
- Police officers, governors, and elected officials are authorized to use force to protect law-abiding citizens and to apprehend criminals and bring them to justice
- The primary responsibility of government is not to provide welfare, reallocation of wealth, to maintain roads, oversee other public works, educate our children
- Rather, the primary duty of civil government is law enforcement...to punish evildoers so they can't harm other people and to deter would be evildoers by firm and swift punishment
- Some will say that those who hold to capital punishment are inconsistent: On the one hand, some decry the evils of abortion and urge for the practice to be abolished; yet, on the other hand, they are in favor of capital punishment
- But there is no inconsistency at all...God is for the sanctity of life in both cases because He considers all human life precious
- Thus, human life is so sacred that if a person kills another person, they forfeit all rights and privileges to their own life