

## **Genesis 9:1-17 – The Christian’s Great Charter**

TSK, HebrewLexicon, Henry, Calvin, Pulpit, JFB, Geneva, INT, Whyttock, Puritan, PasN, Trapp, Maclaren, Sailhamer,

Beloved in the Lord: **When God made man in Eden he entered into covenant with him. He told him to multiply, fill the earth, and have dominion over it.**

It was **a command and yet it was a blessing** at the same time.

**But man fell into sin** and could not complete the task.

**God then made a plan to renew man’s ability to keep the covenant.**

That renewal came from **through the promise of Christ.**

With Noah and his family believing in Christ (and showing it by worship), **God renewed the Great Charter.** Hear this today.

Our headings are:

***The Great Charter Repeated***

***The Great Charter Continued***

***The Great Charter Signified.***

Our goals are: That you will **treasure the fact God entered into covenant with you** through Jesus Christ, that you will **learn well the terms (the work order) of the covenant,** and you will **fulfill (by grace) God’s stipulations of you in the covenant.**

### **The Great Charter – Repeated**

1 So God blessed **Noah and his sons**, and said to them: "Be **fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.** 7 And as for you, be **fruitful and multiply;** Bring forth abundantly in the earth And **multiply in it."**

**1. God commanded Noah and his sons to multiply and fill the earth - a repeated command after the flood.**

**This is one of the strangest things in the Bible: It was a command and a blessing – command to do and blessing to receive.**

This is sometimes called the cultural mandate. (Note the covenant heads are addressed, males, not females.)

**So man had to have children.**

**2. God commanded man to “be fruitful and multiply” but it was not only about having children; it was to have and raise them for the task of glorifying God.**

**Further, man was to multiply his achievements and thrive in all areas of his life so he could have dominion under God.**

Genesis 1: 28 Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be **fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over** the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

So **having and raising children was only part of the dominion strategy. Living life in balance was also part of the dominion strategy.**

**Man had to work, eat, sleep, worship, love...and multiply...and balance those things.** God repeats it in V7.

2 "And the **fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast** of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand.

**3. God commanded man not to fear – as he fulfilled his task of having dominion over the world.**

**Can you see the command in our text not to fear?** It is there.

**God put the dread and fear of man in animals.** Animals don't look people in the eye because of fear.

You have seen the control man has over animals in circuses.

Cows allow themselves to be milked, horses let people ride them.

Sheep allow themselves to be shorn.

So man should not fear.

3 "Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs. 4 "But you shall **not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.**

**4. God commanded man to make use of his God-given resources to have dominion, liking eating the animals he provided.**

*Vegetarians are vegetarians by choice, not by command.* The fact is, because of the fall, plants do not provide sufficient nutrition. People need meat.

Is there any successful vegetarian culture?

*Notice one limitation:* Man is not to eat or drink blood, for blood symbolized life. Pagans often drank the blood, but blood carries many horrible diseases – like horses.

*There is also a symbolic reason against drinking blood:* Because blood is a symbol of life, the one who drinks blood is (in effect) saying he has the ability to give himself life with the blood of the animal.

(Eskimos, who drink blood, die about 10 years sooner than others, but maybe there are other causes they die earlier.)

Leviticus 17:1 *'For the life of the flesh is in the blood,* and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls; for it *is* the blood *that* makes atonement for the soul.' 12 "Therefore I said to the children of Israel, *'No one among you shall eat blood, nor shall any stranger who dwells among you eat blood.'*

*Animals are not only for food, but for work, weapons, clothes and tents. Every sustenance man needed for the Great Charter he provided.*

5 "Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of 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.

*5. God commanded man to execute any murderer who sheds man's blood, which was really an attack against God's image in man.*

Capital punishment was justice, but it was also grace for God's people to be free to do God's work of having dominion.

When society rejects capital punishment, it is contempt for God. It is atheism.

(BTW, Noah was not a Jew and did not live in a theocracy– so it is wrong to say executions was only for Israel's time.)

*Jesus and the apostles confirmed the legitimacy of execution.*

Further, during Israel's theocracy, even an animal that killed a person was executed.

## 6. Lessons:

a. The Western World has lost the blessing of this Great Charter because of self-love.

Many count children as an unnecessary burden they would rather not carry. Many see children as a robber of fun and freedom.

But children are true blessings for well-trained Christians.

Even the difficulties you experience raising children are a means of your sanctification and ultimately, the basis of your heavenly reward.

b. God will equip you with what you need to fulfill the Great Charter. Don't act like you are unequipped.

The first thing he did was to save you through Jesus! This is the foundation of your strength. You are saved to serve.

c. No one should try to stop anyone from fulfilling the command to have dominion over the earth, this is why God established capital punishment.

Deuteronomy 19:21 "Your eye shall not pity: life *shall be* for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

But this is a warning against a tyrannical state: Remove obstacles to Christ's dominion or he will remove you.

The state must not show mercy! It must properly gather evidence and proceed with execution of a murderer, if convicted.

d. Live your whole life in balance so you can have dominion. Work, eat, sleep, worship, love...and multiply.

## The Great Charter - Continued

8 Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying: 9 "And as for Me, behold, I establish My covenant with you and with your descendants after you.

**1. God made an immutable covenant with Noah and his family and applied it to their descendants before they were born; he said so.**

Just as children were condemned in Adam, without their consent, before they could speak for themselves, they are **included in the covenant without their consent.**

**Keep in mind the covenant – the Great Charter- was about God’s word and work – his glory; it was not about man’s glory.**

**What a wonderful hope the inclusion of their children was in the sight of all the dead bodies Noah saw on the ground.**

10 "and with **every living creature** that is with you: the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth.

**2. God’s eternal covenant with man also included his work with animals (showing mercy).**

Man was not to abuse the animals.

11 "**Thus, I establish My covenant with you: Never again** shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; **never again** shall there be a flood to destroy the earth."

**3. God showed that the eternal covenant would continue by emphasizing (twice) he would never again destroy the earth.**

**4. Lessons:**

**a. Children of believers are in the covenant through Jesus Christ, their Covenant Keeper. Don’t reject what God has commanded.**

If God **would enter into an everlasting covenant with animals**, how is it some say children are not part of the covenant?

**It would make no sense that God made an eternal covenant with a chinchilla but not with a child of his child.**

**b. Don’t treat your children as pagans; treat them as covenant children.**

Teach them worship. Teach them to sing “Jesus loves me, this I know.”

Notice the reiteration of the covenant is attached to many other eternal covenant benefits...**the seasons**, **never destroying the earth** again, **never destroying the animals** again, specific **directions about food** (which have not changed), the

eternal rainbow, and even the institution of capital punishment.

Why would the covenant with children not continue?

Also, *God never excludes children...but calls them holy!*

Jesus called a foreign woman a dog, *but blessed children and threatened those who were chasing them away.*

*Positively, God promised to bless (covenant blessings) your children to 1000 generations if you fear him.*

There may be covenant children who reject the blessings, but that does not deny that God blesses them (and their punishment will be greater).

*c. If you can, have children and raise them in the covenant.* If you don't have children (and in God's providence some don't because they aren't able, can't afford to, or don't find a suitable spouse, etc.), help others who do.

Encourage mothers and fathers.

Teach covenant children to put their trust in the Covenant Keeper! Pray for them.

### **The Great Charter - Signified**

12 And God said: "This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: 13 "I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. 14 "It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow 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; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 "The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." 17 And God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth."

**1. God gave a sensible sign to help man to remember the covenant he made with them – a beautiful rainbow.**

Whenever man saw the rainbow, he would never fear the flood returning because he

would *remember God's promise of the spread of his kingdom and God's power to spread his kingdom.*

**All men through all generations were bound to remember this sign.**

They had to say to their covenant children: "*Whenever you see the rainbow, trust God, remember to give thanks, and work for him.*"

**2. There is significance about the rainbow in Hebrew etymology: The rainbow was the warrior without the arrow.**

There were mighty warriors before the flood, so God showed he had no weapon against man! Hallelujah.

**3. The rainbow was also a reminder to God of what he promised.**

Surely God does not forget his promise, so this was an anthropomorphic expression.

*God is seen as reminding himself so man would be reassured of his protection.*

Predictably, the rainbow was used in the last book of the Bible **over Christ's head to remind man God remembers his promise.**

Revelation 4:3 And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.

**4. Lessons:**

*a. Enjoy the sign of the rainbow, especially when you have troubles.* Look and have hope.

*b. Don't let the bullies of this world take away a symbol of love and power and make it a symbol of perversion and atheism.*

God will see their rebellion and judged them for ignoring his love.

*c. The rainbow was a beautiful sign, but use the Lord's Supper and baptism as even greater signs of God's love and power.*

Let these signs strengthen your faith so you work with more determination.

## **Conclusion:**

**God repeated the covenant** – the Great Charter he gave to Adam and Eve - with Noah: Multiply, fill the earth, and have dominion over it.

Knowing he was weak, Noah had to look for renewed strength in the coming Savior to fulfill the Great Charter.

He had to make **sure his children followed that covenant – so the covenant continued.**

God then graciously **marked it with a great, beautiful, and perpetual sign.**

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

**1. To fulfill the Great Charter, like Adam and Noah, you need to be restored with the ability to do so, so look to Jesus.**

Jesus will give you everything you need to do the job. He will save you and strengthen you.

**2. Being equipped, go out and work to fulfill your cultural mandate – multiply, fill the earth and rule the earth under God.**

Start with having and teaching this to your children. I don't simply mean reading a Bible story!

Discuss the charter with them – with the warning, cursing, and signs!

Don't simply have many children, but have them **and see them as part of the dominion strategy.**

Teach and discipline them so they will continue in truth.

Yes, have many arrows in your quiver, but make sure they are straight!

And then remember all other duties: **work, eat, sleep, love, and most of all, worship.**

**3. Those who don't look to Christ's sacrifice for forgiveness of their sins will suffer for their blindness.**

If you look to Christ sacrifice on the cross, you can enter into covenant with him and have a future in heaven, enjoying God's signs and seals of grace.

If you don't look up to the cross, you will look down to the Devil in hell.