**‘Starting Over…’**

***1So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. 2And 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. 3Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs. 4But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. 5Surely 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. 7 And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth And multiply in it.”***   Genesis 9:1-7

Noah’s post-flood burnt offering was a pleasing aroma to the Lord. God blessed Noah and his sons with the blessing that is written in verse one and repeated in verse seven. They were to ***“Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.”*** These were the same words the Lord had spoken to Adam and Eve in the beginning. God’s desire was for the earth to be filled with the creatures that bore His image.[[1]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2018/02/" \l "_ftn1) It is wonderful to realize that the sinfulness of man and the destruction of the earth through a flood didn’t alter God’s original intent for humankind.

The rulership of man over animals doesn’t appear to have changed from Genesis 1. What has changed is that God now tells Noah and his sons that they can eat the animals, birds, and fish.[[2]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2018/02/" \l "_ftn2) God said, ***3 ‘Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.’*** This was a new allowance by God to mankind, so it necessitated a change in how these creatures related to people. We read, ***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.”***  Are we to interpret this verse to mean that prior to the flood the animals had no such fear? I believe this was the case.

There was, however, a prohibition man was to observe when meat was to be his food. Noah and his sons were told, ***4 “But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.”*** Albert Barnes (1798-1870) writes,

***‘The design of this restriction is to prevent the horrid cruelty of mutilating or cooking an animal while yet alive and capable of suffering pain. The draining of the blood from the body is an obvious occasion of death, and therefore the prohibition to eat the flesh with the blood of life is a needful restraint from savage cruelty. It is also intended, perhaps, to teach that the life of the animal, which is in the blood, belongs not to man, but to God himself, who gave it.***[[3]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2018/02/" \l "_ftn3)

Since this prohibition was given to Noah and his sons, through whom the whole earth was populated, it can be considered a general prohibition for all human beings. What God told Noah was later formalized and expanded in Leviticus 17:13-14. ***13“Whatever man of the children of Israel, or of the strangers who dwell among you, who hunts and catches any animal or bird that may be eaten, he shall pour out its blood and cover it with dust; 14for it is the life of all flesh. Its blood sustains its life. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, ‘You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off.’*** God does allow the eating of animals, birds, and fish, but eating their blood in forbidden. God does not want us to take into ourselves the lifeblood (the life) of any animal, for God is the Source of all life.

After stating ***4 “But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood”*** God added, ***5Surely 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.*** God does keep a ledger on everything we say and do.[[4]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2018/02/" \l "_ftn4) This verse points to the high value God places on human life. It is not to be ended by anyone or carelessly thrown away as though it is without worth.

The phrase, ***“from the hand of every beast I will require it,”*** does not mean that the creatures who are carnivores will have to account for their kills. It means that should a beast take the life of a human being, that beast was to be put to death. This requirement was codified into God’s Law in Exodus 21:28-29.[[5]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2018/02/" \l "_ftn5) This practice is still widely observed in many nations today.

If the shedding of blood is so serious that God demands a reckoning of the blood shed by man or beast, how are we to understand verse six, ***6 “Whoever sheds man’s blood*** (whether by man or beast)***, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man”***? This verse establishes the judicial system as Barnes points out in his commentary on this verse.[[6]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2018/02/" \l "_ftn6)

These seven verses close as they began. God tells them, ***“And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth And multiply in it”*** Genesis 9:7. Noah and his sons had been given their instructions. It was time to start over.

[[1]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2018/02/" \l "_ftnref1) Mankind was created in the image and according to the likeness of the living God, and we were given dominion over the earth and all creatures. Since we bore God’s image, wherever we went in the earth, God expected us to treat the earth and everything in it AS GOD WOULD DO IT if He were here personally caring for it Himself. God is not a tyrant. So we were not to dominate the earth and its earth’s creatures through tyranny and cruelty. God is love. So we were created to love the earth and its creatures as God does.

[[2]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2018/02/" \l "_ftnref2) Unfortunately, just because God had forbidden man to eat animals, birds, and fish doesn’t necessarily mean that it wasn’t being done prior to the flood. Sin was rampant upon the earth. If some angels left their heavenly abode to go after the “strange” flesh of human women, it isn’t beyond our imaginations to think that humankind and the human-angelic hybrid offspring were eating the creatures which God had said were off-limits. The research of Steve Quayle, Tom Horn, Timothy Alberino, and Chris Putnam has uncovered that not only were the animals being eaten, human beings were being eaten as well. Such a thing would have been a great evil in God’s sight.

[[3]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2018/02/" \l "_ftnref3) <http://biblehub.com/commentaries/barnes/genesis/9.htm>

[[4]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2018/02/" \l "_ftnref4) The book we’re most familiar with is the Lamb’s Book of Life. That book lists every person who belongs to God through faith in His Son Jesus. These will live with God forever. All whose names are not listed in the Book of Life will be spent eternity apart from God and His love. This will be eternal torment.

[[5]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2018/02/" \l "_ftnref5) “If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, then the ox shall surely be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox *shall be* acquitted. But if the ox tended to thrust with its horn in times past, and it has been made known to his owner, and he has not kept it confined, so that it has killed a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned and its owner also shall be put to death.” Exodus 21:28-29

[[6]](http://yourbibleblog.com/2018/02/" \l "_ftnref6) Albert Barnes writes, “Here, then, is the formal institution of civil government. Here the civil sword is committed to the charge of man. The judgment of death by the executioner is solemnly delegated to man in vindication of human life. This trust is conveyed in the most general terms. “By man.” The divine legislator does not name the sovereign, define his powers, or determine the law of succession. All these practical conditions of a stable government are left open questions.

The emphasis is laid solely on “man.” On man is impressively laid the obligation of instituting a civil constitution suited to his present fallen condition. On the nation as a body it is an incumbent duty to select the sovereign, to form the civil compact between prince and people, to settle the prerogative of the sovereign and the rights of the subjects, to fix the order of succession, to constitute the legislative, judicial, and administrative bodies, and to render due submission to the constituted authorities. And all these arrangements are to be made according to the principles of Scripture and the light of nature.

The reason why retribution is exacted in the case of man is here also given. “For in the image of God has he made man.” This points on the one hand to the function of the magistrate, and on the other to the claims of the violated law; and in both respects illustrates the meaning of being created in the image of God. Man resembles God in this, that he is a moral being, judging of right and wrong, endowed with reason and will, and capable of holding and exercising rights. Hence, he is in the first place competent to rule, and on his creation authorized to exercise a mild and moral sway over the inferior creatures. His capacity to govern even among his fellow-men is now recognized. The function of self-government in civil things is now conferred upon man. When duly called to the office, he is declared to be at liberty to discharge the part of a ruler among his fellow-men, and is entitled on the ground of this divine arrangement to claim the obedience of those who are under his sway. He must rule in the Lord, and they must obey in the Lord.” https://biblehub.com/commentaries/barnes/genesis/9.htm