

Dr. Kenneth A. Mathews, Genesis, Session 8, Noah and the Flood, Part Two (Gen. 6:9-9:29)

NotebookLM's 20-min. Podcast

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Alright, ready to dive deep. Today, it's Noah's Ark, but we're going way beyond the usual animals and flood stuff.

We are. Using Dr. Kenneth Mathews' teaching on Genesis, we're going to uncover all kinds of things you might not know, like historical context, cultural stuff. Absolutely, the theological depth.

Yeah, the theological depth of this story is really fascinating. And it's interesting how it starts, right? Oh, how so? You know, it picks up after the flood, drops us right into this huge promise God makes to Noah. No more world-ending floods.

Oh, right. Predictable seasons, so they can actually, you know, grow crops and stuff. That's like Humanity 2.0, right? Brand new world.

Yeah, you'd think it's a total fresh start. But then Dr. Mathews brings up this John Calvin quote. Oh, tell me about it.

Calvin said, if God sent a flood for every sin, we'd be underwater constantly. Pretty much. So it challenges this whole fresh start idea, because God knows, even going into this promise, that humanity's still going to mess up.

That's so true. Makes you think about God's grace, doesn't it? Knowing we'll make mistakes, but still offering hope. It's amazing, isn't it? It really is.

And it's not just a casual promise. It's a whole covenant. A covenant, yeah, with a pretty epic sign to go with it.

You mean the rainbow. The rainbow. We see it as this beautiful thing, but in this story, it's the symbol of God's covenant with Noah, with his descendants.

Right, right. And actually, all living creatures. It's not just for them.

It's universal. It's for everybody. That's what blows my mind.

It's this huge symbol of peace, reconciliation, right there in the sky. It changes how you see rainbows, huh? I know. Every time I see one now, I'll be thinking about this.

Me too. And speaking of big picture to specific people, the story then shifts to Noah's sons, right? Oh, yeah. Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Exactly. And their actions, particularly Ham's, have been interpreted in so many ways. This is where understanding the context is key.

What do you mean? Well, there's this incident where Ham disrespects Noah, and then a curse is placed on Ham's son, Canaan. To us, it might seem like a little family argument. Right.

But back then, family honor, respect for authority, it was everything. Huge deal. Exactly.

What we might see as a minor thing was a major transgression in their culture. It makes sense. And Dr. Mathews is adamant this isn't about race or ethnicity, like some people say.

Yeah. It's about moral conduct. He even connects it to the Canaanite culture described in Leviticus.

Leviticus? Yeah. They were known for being, let's say, not so moral, especially compared to the Israelites. Oh, that's a smart connection.

Would have really hit home with the original audience. Absolutely. But why curse Canaan, the son? Why not Ham himself? It always seems strange to me.

It is a fascinating question. It gets to how they viewed sin back then. Dr. Mathews suggests this idea of father-like son was huge.

Children inherited consequences. So less about punishing Canaan specifically, more about showing how sin has this ripple effect, impacts future generations. That's a great way to put it.

Not predetermining fate, but highlighting a pattern that can be passed down. I see. I see.

And remember, this story was told to the Israelites as they prepared to enter Canaan. Oh, right. So hearing about this curse on Canaan, it was a warning.

Like a cautionary tale. Be careful what you're influenced by, what choices you make. Adds a whole other layer to the story.

Wow. Before we get too far ahead, anything standing out to you so far? What's grabbing your attention in this Noah's Ark deep dive? It really is amazing though,

right? How these old stories we're talking thousands of years ago still matter so much today. Fears, hopes, struggles, it's all there.

It's true. But there's one thing that's always bugged me about that curse on Canaan. Doesn't it kind of go against individual accountability? Good point.

And Dr. Mathews actually talks about that. He points to other parts of the Bible, like Jeremiah and Ezekiel. They're all about individual responsibility.

It's not like we're forced to repeat our parents' mistakes. That's reassuring. But I got to admit, the whole curse thing still throws me off.

God's supposed to be all loving, merciful. Curses just seem so harsh. I get it.

It can seem that way to us today, but we got to remember, the ancient world saw curses and blessings differently. It was part of how things work, like keeping balance. So not God getting angry and punishing people.

No, no. Dr. Mathews suggests it's more like Noah's saying a prayer, asking God to uphold what's right and deal with the bad stuff. Trusting God's in control, basically.

So less about God forcing things to happen, more about letting God's plan play out. Exactly. And if you look closely, Noah doesn't curse Ham directly, does he? It's cursed be Canaan.

The focus is on what comes from Ham's actions, not Ham himself. Oh, I never noticed that. And then right after, Noah blesses God, recognizing who really has the power here.

That's interesting. Even when he's upset, Noah still knows God's the one in charge. Like saying, I don't get it, but I trust you'll do what's right.

Powerful, isn't it? Surrendering to God, even when things don't make sense. Now, switching gears a bit, Dr. Mathews brings up another fascinating point about Noah. Oh, what's that? The parallels between him and Adam.

This is where it gets good. All those similarities Dr. Mathews points out. Both working the land, both connected to special trees.

The vine for Noah, knowledge of good and evil for Adam, and they both have sons who become rivals. It's like Noah; he's a new Adam, but with the same temptations, the same struggles. It's almost like humanity gets a do-over, but ends up making the same mistakes.

Makes you wonder if we ever really change. Right. It's a big question, but it also makes Noah more relatable, don't you think? He's not perfect.

He messes up, just like us. Makes him more human somehow. Exactly.

And that's why we still connect to the story so much. We're all flawed. We struggle, but there's still grace.

There's redemption. But here's the thing. Noah's story isn't just about the past.

It also points to the future. You mean the connection to Jesus? Exactly. Dr. Mathews talks about how Noah's story actually foreshadows Jesus's story.

Yeah. Yeah. He makes that parallel with the Ark, right? Like the Ark saves Noah and his family, gives them a new start.

And Jesus offers that same salvation, a new beginning to everyone. It's God's redemptive power working across time. Wow.

I never thought of it that way. Suddenly the Ark is this powerful symbol of hope, rescue. It points towards the ultimate rescue through Christ.

It does, doesn't it? And it shows how faithful God is, always offering a way out of darkness into the light. That's what's so powerful about Noah. It's not just a flood.

It's about God's love, his mercy, never giving up on us. Powerful stuff. What resonates most with you about this connection to Jesus? For me, it's the idea that God's always offering us a way out of the tough times.

He's reaching out, just like with Noah, just like through Jesus. Beautifully put. No matter how bad things get, we're never really alone.

God's there ready with a lifeline, a fresh start. Always. Now, before we finish up this part of our deep dive, anything really striking you? What's sticking with you the most from all this? It's amazing, isn't it? A story we've heard so many times, but there's always more to uncover.

As we wrap up our look at Noah's Ark, Dr. Mathews brings up one last thing. Something that really ties it all together. It's this idea of Noah as a preacher of righteousness.

You don't see that phrase in Genesis itself, though. Right. It comes from the New Testament.

Tepah Peter calls him a herald of righteousness, so he wasn't just quietly building that ark. He was warning people, right? Trying to, at least. Makes you wonder what he said to them.

How do you convince a whole society to change its ways? Must've felt like talking to a brick wall sometimes. Probably did. Knowing the context, though, Noah likely talked about God's holiness, how ignoring that has consequences, the need to repent, basically.

Almost like an ancient influencer. Love that analogy. Except, unlike today's influencers, Noah wasn't very popular.

I mean, everyone drowned except his family. True, but the point of preaching then or now isn't just about doom and gloom. It's about pointing to God's mercy.

Even with destruction coming, there was still a way out. A chance to turn back to God. And that's the parallel to Jesus, right? So powerful.

Noah offered physical salvation through the ark. Jesus offers spiritual salvation through his sacrifice. Different stories, but both about God providing a way out when things seem hopeless.

Exactly. It shows God's always been about that, offering grace, new beginnings, whether it's a literal ark or the power of faith. And that's what's so cool about this deep dive.

Yeah. We go beyond just the flood. We see it's about God's love, forgiveness, always wanting to connect with us.

It really makes you think. It does. Even stories we think we know can have these huge truths that still matter today.

Well said. And Dr. Mathews ends his teaching on such an interesting note. He points out that even though Noah's called this preacher, we never actually hear him preach in Genesis.

It's only later in the New Testament that his voice is amplified. That is fascinating, isn't it? The impact of what he was saying wasn't really understood until after the flood. It makes you wonder: are there messages we're missing now, voices we're not hearing that could be super important down the road? It's a good question to ask ourselves.

Maybe, like Noah, we're all called to speak truth, even if it takes time for people to really get it. I think we've just given everyone a lot to think about. But that's what these deep dives are all about, right? Pushing us to see things differently.

Thanks for joining us on this journey through Noah's Ark. We'll be back soon with another fascinating topic to explore. See you then.