

Genesis 9:18-29 The Woman and the Serpent's Seed Persist

I. The Introduction of Noah's Sons (18-19)

A. Noah's Sons are Named (18)

1. Noah's Sons are Shem, Ham, and Japheth
2. We will see that both "seeds" continue in Noah's sons
 - a. Interesting that only Canaan is mentioned as Ham's son (Noah's grandson)
 - b. In Gen. 10:6, we will see that Canaan is the youngest and fourth son of Ham.
 - c. Only Canaan is mentioned because we will see that the Canaanites were the primary enemies of Israel (Moses was recording Genesis right before Israel went into the land of Canaan.)
 - d. It is through Ham that the seed of the serpent continues. The land of Canaan will feature prominently as a symbol of corruption in Genesis

B. Noah's Sons Will Populate All The Earth (19)

1. All three sons of Noah have many sons
2. From Noah's sons the whole earth is "scattered" (i.e. populated)
 - a. All mankind find their progeny in the sons of Noah
 - b. Although we have seen a new creation – begun again through faithful Noah, the root problem still remains
 - c. The deceitfulness of the heart of sin has not been remedied in the new world. (even among God's faithful)

C. **The problem of sin is not fixed**

II. The Honor and Shame of Noah's Sons (20-23)

A. Noah's Sin (20-21)

1. Noah was a Man of "The Ground" (20)

- a. The word "husbandman" is used to translate

אִישׁ הָאֲדָמָה (*ish ha adamah*) "man of the ground"

- i. This means much more than "Noah began to be a farmer"
- ii. Up to this point the word used to denote farming or keeping the soil is עָבַד (to till) (Gen. 2:5; 3:23; 4:2)
- iii. Here Noah is said to be a man of the ground
- b. The word אֲדָמָה (*adamah*) has been an important term so far in Genesis
 - i. Man is made from the dust of the *adamah*
 - ii. The *adamah* is cursed (3:17)
 - iii. The *adamah* is what man returns to when he dies (3:19)

- c. The point may be that Noah remains “a man from Adam”
 - i. Noah is working and keeping the ground as Adam was mandated to do
 - ii. Noah does indeed plant a vineyard (and presumably works at other farming activities)
 - iii. Yet, Noah is not free from the curse in the new world – He is still a man of the ground
 - d. Noah Plants a Vineyard
 - i. This is not the beginning of wine-making – Matt. 24:38 - *For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark.*
 - ii. It takes years to plant a vineyard and make wine, Noah was not ignorant to the effects of wine or taken by surprise
2. Noah Sins in His Tent (21)
- a. Noah’s sin is not the focus of the text (Ham’s sin is), therefore, Genesis 9 does not excuse or condemn Noah’s actions
 - b. Noah’s Sin
 - i. Drunkenness - While wine itself is presented as a gift from God that “makes man’s heart glad” (Ps. 104:15, Judges 9:13), drunkenness is condemned throughout scripture
 - Prov. 20:1; 23:20, 29-32; Isa. 5:22; Eph 5:18
 - Noah sinned by becoming drunk
 - ii. Nakedness – Since Adam, “nakedness” is shameful to the Hebrew mind
 - Isa. 47:3 - Thy nakedness shall be uncovered, yea, thy shame shall be seen:
 - Hab. 2:15 - Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!
 - Lam 4:21 - Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, that dwellest in the land of Uz; the cup also shall pass through unto thee: thou shalt be drunken, and shalt make thyself naked.
 - c. Noah’s Fallen State
 - i. Noah’s sin is not the focus of the text, (it is not commented on at all, rather it is simply stated

briefly as the events that led up to the cursing and blessing)

- ii. Noah's actions show us that in all seasons of life, and through varying degrees of persecution and pressure, the temptation to sin is ever present in fallen mankind.
- iii. "When all the world was against Noah, he faced scorn and violence straight-up. But in his vineyard among his own who needed no proof of his virtue, he relaxed" – Kent Hughes

B. Ham's Dishonors His Father (22)

1. Ham (the Father of Canaan) "looked upon" His Father's Nakedness

- a. This in itself is a sin (See Leviticus 18:6-18) To "uncover the nakedness" of a relative.
 - i. Some take this to mean that Ham had sex with Noah (See Lev. 20:17 for the connection of sex and "seeing nakedness")
 - ii. This can't be taken from the text because Shem and Japheth did the opposite of Ham by walking backward to cover Noah's nakedness
- b. It is also possible that Noah's wife was also there and Ham looked upon them both
 - i. Leviticus – 19:8 - The nakedness of thy father's wife shalt thou not uncover: it is thy father's nakedness.
 - ii. This is just speculation and cannot be known for sure.

2. Ham's sin was not simply looking at Noah's nakedness

- a. Ham goes to his brothers and "tempts" them to participate in the degrading of their father
- b. The sin being committed here is that Ham did not honor his father as God commands
 - i. Ham delighted in his father's sin and brought accusation against his father before his brothers
 - ii. Dishonoring parents was punishable by death in Israelite culture (See. Ex. 21:15-17; Deut. 21:18-21)
 - iii. Parent-child relations are sacred to God – today, kids run the home – but that is not God's purpose

C. Shem and Japheth Cover Their Father's Sin (23)

- 1. The two brothers do everything they can to preserve their father's dignity
- 2. They walk backwards with a garment into Noah's tent and cover him without looking upon his nakedness

- a. Notice that they cover Noah's sin but Ham exposes Noah's sin before the brothers
- b. We see the characteristics of the "seed of the woman" and the "seed of the serpent" at work in Noah's sons.
 - i. The serpent is always the accuser seeking to condemn man
 - ii. The Savior is the one who covers sin and justifies man.
 - iii. The two brothers honor their father, they honor the image of God, and they give grace to their father
 - iv. Man's actions always identify which "line" he is in.

III. The Cursing and Blessing of Noah's Sons (24-27)

- A. Noah will pronounce a prophetic blessing and curse upon his sons
 - 1. We will see this repeated throughout Genesis (It is called a "patriarchal pronouncement")
 - 2. The "blessing" of the father passed to the son, mirrors the passage of the "seed" promise
 - a. Abraham gives a blessing to Isaac rather than Ishmael
 - b. Isaac gives the blessing to Jacob rather than Esau
 - c. Jacob blesses Ephraim rather than Manasseh (Joseph's sons)
 - d. We will see that this blessing (promise) is given without respect to who is the firstborn.
 - 3. NOTICE: This is the only time in Scripture we see Noah speak
 - 4. Noah's speech is given in Hebrew poetry just as the prophetic utterances of the OT prophets
- B. The Curse Pronounced on Canaan (24-25)
 - 1. Why is Canaan mentioned in the curse rather than Ham? (Remember, Canaan and the other grandchildren were probably alive at this time)
 - a. Canaan seems to be the focus of the story
 - b. Notice that every time Ham is mentioned, he is called "the father of Canaan"
 - 2. Canaan is not being punished for Ham's sin
 - a. Ham has three other sons (See Gen. 10:6) – why are they not mentioned?
 - b. Deut. 24:16 - The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.
 - c. Each generation is responsible for their own actions before God – (See Ezekiel 18)
 - d. There is no such thing as a "generational curse"
 - 3. Canaan exhibits the same moral abandonment as his Father

- a. Remember than Moses is writing Genesis just before Israel crosses over to take the land of Canaan
 - b. This is a record of the prophetic pronouncement of the continuation of the serpent's seed.
 - c. "... the character of the father is anticipated in the deeds of the sons. Hebrew theology recognized that due to parental influence future generations usually committed the same acts as their fathers whether for ill or good. In this case the curse is directed at Ham's son as Ham's just deserts for the disrespect he had toward his own father, Noah. Yet the imprecation was spoken against future generations of Canaanites who would suffer subjugation 'not because of the sins of Ham, but because they themselves acted like Ham, because of their own transgressions.'" – Kenneth Matthews
- 4. Canaan's cursing is NOT justification for the enslaving of any race or group of people
 - a. The curse here is an announcement of the depraved morals and ethics of the line (not based on physical characteristics)
 - b. The line of Ham (which included Egypt and Canaan) came from the same stock as the line of Shem and Japheth – They were all from one Father
 - c. "It was not an issue of ethnicity but of the wicked practices that characterized Canaanite culture. The biblical revelation made it clear that if Israel took up the customs of the Canaanites, they too would suffer expulsion." (See Lev. 18:28) – Kenneth Matthews
- 5. Noah's oracle identifies the seed of the serpent**
 - a. Rebellion against God always results in slavery and servitude
 - b. Satan's plan was to draw the line of the woman's seed into rebellion and sin -
- C. The Blessing Pronounced on Shem (26)
 - 1. Notice that Shem is not blessed by Noah But "The God of Shem"
 - a. This is the presentation of the characteristic of the "seed of the woman" – this line is characterized by FAITH
 - b. From Shem – the "Semitic" people will come
 - c. Abraham will be in the line of Shem – and later, David, then Jesus
 - 2. Canaan is pronounced to be servants of the line of Shem
 - a. Fulfilled when Joshua conquers the promised land
 - b. Israel enters the "land of Canaan" and God delivers the people into their hands
- D. The Blessing Pronounced FOR Japheth (27)

1. Noah pronounces that God will enlarge Japheth (i.e. his line will grow into a numerous people)
2. Noah pronounces that the line of Japheth will dwell in the tents of Shem
 - a. Many people see in this the inclusion of the Gentiles in salvation
 - b. Jesus (salvation) came to the nation of Israel (i.e. Semitic) but that salvation was opened to all the nations calling them to come into relationship with the God of Israel

IV. The Epilogue of The Genealogy (28-29)

- A. This picks up where the genealogy of chapter 5 left off
- B. Notice the same structure found there – “And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.”
 1. Chapters 6-9 are a parenthesis in the genealogy giving us the story of Noah and the flood