



In the Beginning

A study of Genesis Chapters 1 - 11

Christian Life Assembly

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The Journey 2018

In the Beginning

- Genesis 9:1 And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth. 2 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. 5 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 Noahic Covenant

- Genesis 8:21 The Lord smelled the soothing aroma; and the Lord said to Himself, “I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man’s heart is evil from his youth; and I will never again destroy every living thing, as I have done. 22 “While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.”



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- Genesis 9:8 Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying, 9 “Now behold, I Myself do establish My covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; 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 comes out of the ark, even every beast of the earth. 11 I establish My covenant with you; and all flesh shall never again be cut off by the water of the flood, neither shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth.” 12 God said, “***This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all successive generations; 13 I set My bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth.***”



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- Genesis 9:14 It shall come about, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow will 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; and never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 When the bow is in the cloud, then I will look upon 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.”**



In the Beginning

- The Noahic Covenant is unconditional – man has no responsibility at all to perform, and God will keep His promise to never again destroy the world with a flood.
- The covenant is to Noah, all of his descendants, and to all living things that came out of the ark. (not with sea life)
- There is a sign given that God made and will keep the covenant – the rainbow.



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- So when do we see a rainbow? After a rain, so that when it stops we are to be reminded that God stopped the rain.
- Can you imagine the first rain Noah and his family had after the flood?
- Surely they were relieved when it stopped – after all, the only rain they had seen before started and didn't stop until the world was destroyed.



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- Genesis 9:18 Now the sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem and Ham and Japheth; and Ham was the father of Canaan. 19 These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated. 20 Then Noah began farming and planted a vineyard. 21 He drank of the wine and became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent. 22 Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. 23 But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their shoulders and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were turned away, so that they did not see their father's nakedness. 24 When Noah awoke from his wine, he knew what his youngest son had done to him. 25 So he said, "Cursed be Canaan; A servant of servants He shall be to his brothers."



In the Beginning

- Genesis 9:18 Now the sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem and Ham and Japheth; and Ham was the father of Canaan. 19 These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated.
- In verse #18, God begins to identify a people who would be under His curse to such an extent that He called for their complete and utter destruction. (Canaan)
- More about Canaan later in this lesson.



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- Genesis 9:19 These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated.
- Here again, like a number of other topics in Genesis that repeated, we are told that from Noah and his sons the entire world will be populated.
- The genetic statistics that come from that statement are staggering – just look around at all of the variety in the population of the world and they all came from Adam and Eve through Noah and his family.



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- The genetic differences from one person to another is a paltry 0.2%. (2/10's of 1 percent, remember those 3,000,000 lines of genetic code?)
- What we call racial characteristics, skin color, facial features, eye shape is 6% of that 0.2% variation or 0.012. (12/100's of 1 percent)
- Said another way, what seems to divide us so much amounts to so little in terms of who and what we really are.



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- Genesis 9:20 Then Noah began farming and planted a vineyard. 21 He drank of the wine and became drunk, and uncovered himself inside his tent.
- Do you find this odd at all? That nakedness and drunkenness would be connected? 😊
- Of course not, a lot of dumb (and sinful) stuff is done when under the influence of alcohol.



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- We should not be shocked that sin and death walked onto the ark, and sin and death walked off as well.
- Remember this verse, Genesis 6:8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. NKJV
- Noah and his family were all O.T. Saints, but they like us, were still sinners who struggled.



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- We are not told how much time elapsed between their exit from the ark and Noah's sin of drunkenness.
- It could not have been immediate because he needed enough time to plant a vineyard, harvest grapes, and ferment the juice.
- My point is that this was surely not the first or the only sin in this family since their entry into ark.



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- I believe we can say with certainty that Noah and his family sinned on the ark as well as after exiting the ark.
- It is just the way sinners are!
- What becomes interesting is the reason behind why this particular sin of Noah's was recorded.



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- Genesis 9:22 Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside.
- A sidebar issue here is that we do not even know if Ham's son Canaan was born or even conceived at this point.
- Remember that Moses is writing looking back in time, and at the time he was writing he would have known the names of Noah's grandchildren.



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- When we get to chapter 10 next week, we will see the detailed genealogies of Noah and his sons.
- And of all the sons born to Noah's sons, only one, Canaan who was apparently Ham's 4th son is mentioned – none of the other sons of Ham or his brother's sons are mentioned.
- And yet, in Gen 9:22 Ham is identified as, “Ham, the father of Canaan” – and this seems odd at this point.



In the Beginning

- You are probably familiar with Israel's history enough to know that one day, hundreds of years in the future, God will send the children of Israel in to conquer the land of Canaan.
- We've mentioned at least twice before in our study "the sin of the Amorites".
- Gen 15:16 In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.



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- Genesis 10:15 Canaan became the father of Sidon, his firstborn, and Heth 16 and the Jebusite and the Amorite and the Girgashite.
- Canaan was the father of the Amorite people – so when we read of God waiting for the sin of the Amorites to become full, we are reading about Canaan’s descendants.
- Genesis 9:24 When Noah awoke from his wine, he knew what his youngest son had done to him. 25 So he said, “**Cursed be Canaan**; a servant of servants he shall be to his brothers.”



In the Beginning

- So Canaan is cursed by God – and of all the sons and grandsons born to Noah why is it that Canaan is cursed?
- In a certain sense we know why – because of what Ham did to Noah when he was in a drunken stupor in his tent.
- But why not Ham (who was the perpetrator) and why only Canaan and not others, or not all of Ham's descendants?



In the Beginning

- So what happened in the tent?
- We are not told all of the details, but despite what you may have been taught or been told, we have no reason to assume it was sexual.
- Ham found his father drunk, and naked, and did nothing to cover his father's sin, and everything to expose it.



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- While we are not told specifically, Ham's sin was probably taking in delight in the sin of his father, and then trying to engage his brothers in further exposing it.
- 1st Peter 4:8 Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, ***because love covers a multitude of sins.***
- Ham sought to make the fall of a godly man worse and seemed to take some delight in his father's fall.



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- Ham went way beyond what would one day appear in the 10 Commandments – instead of honoring his father he sought to spread Noah’s dishonorable behavior.
- As one commentator put it, “Ham desecrated a natural and sacred barrier. His going out of his way to tell his brothers about it without covering the old man”.
- When he could have sought to minimize Noah’s shame he sought instead to maximize it.



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- Shem and Japheth acted rightly – they put a covering on their shoulders and walked into the tent backwards so they could cover their father without seeing his nakedness.
- There is shame associated with being naked before others in a public way – that is why we wear clothes.
- In a general way, if you want to entice others to sin you can do so by wearing fewer clothes. (just ask Adam, Eve, and the fig leaves in the garden)



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- The bible does not tell us exactly how Noah knew that Ham had dishonored him, it just says that when he awoke, he knew.
- Noah's words at this point turn out to be the only words of Noah recorded in the bible – and it's not good words for Ham.
- Genesis 9:25 “Cursed be Canaan” – please note that he does not say, “Cursed be Ham”.



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- So why Canaan instead of Ham?
- Because Ham was a believer – he could not have escaped the judgment of the flood just on the basis of being Noah's son. (salvation does not work that way)
- Okay, so why not all of Ham's sons, or why not Ham's firstborn?



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- Again, we are not told, but it is probably a matter of God looking down through time and seeing that Canaan would be the first in Ham's line to reject God's offer of salvation.
- History shows us that Canaan was a wicked man who fathered a wicked nation.
- You could ask at this point – was Canaan predestined to reject God because of the curse?



In the Beginning

- The answer to that would be that Canaan was cursed because he was a rejector of God, and not the other way around.
- We know that because God would be unjust to initiate the rebellion of Canaan and God never violates His character.
- Canaan was cursed because he was the first of Ham's descendants to reject God.



In the Beginning

- In Leviticus 18 we find multiple mentions of prohibitions on the nakedness that characterized the people of Canaan.

⁶None of you shall approach any blood relative ^[d]of his to uncover nakedness; I am the LORD. ⁷You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, that is, the nakedness of your mother. She is your mother; you are not to uncover her nakedness. ⁸You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife; it is your father's nakedness. ⁹The nakedness of your sister, *either* your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether born at home or born outside, their nakedness you shall not uncover. ¹⁰The nakedness of your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter, their nakedness you shall not uncover; for ^[e]their nakedness is yours. ¹¹The nakedness of your father's wife's daughter, ^[f]born to your father, she is your sister, you shall not uncover her nakedness. ¹²You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's sister; she is your father's blood relative. ¹³You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for she is your mother's blood relative. ¹⁴You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's brother; you shall not approach his wife, she is your aunt. ¹⁵You shall not uncover the nakedness of your daughter-in-law; she is your son's wife, you shall not uncover her nakedness. ¹⁶You shall not uncover the nakedness of your brother's wife; it is your brother's nakedness. ¹⁷You shall not uncover the nakedness of a woman and



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- So did Noah really have the power to curse Ham?
- No, people do not have the power to curse others.
- Noah is either prophesying, or he is appealing to God to curse Ham –Canaan may not have even born yet, but by the time Moses writes he would have known of Noah's genealogy and would have know by hindsight the choices Canaan would make.



In the Beginning

- Perhaps you've heard talk of the "curse of Ham" and what it is – there is no such thing.
- Noah said, "cursed be Canaan", and not, "cursed be Ham".
- God never curses His people – He chastens us when we sin, but He will not curse us.



Questions

