

Subject: *Grace Greater than Our Sin*

Scripture: *Genesis 9:18-29*

In the first half of Genesis 9 we read about God's command to Noah (vs. 1-7) and God's covenant with Noah (vs. 8-17). In the second part of the chapter we see Noah's failure (vs. 20-23) and his final words (vs. 24-27).

The events recorded here almost seem out of place. It is a strange end to the life story of Noah. What we see here is not incidental or trivial, but it is fundamental to our understanding what would happen later in the Old Testament concerning God's people, the Jews, and their eventual home in Canaan. This part of Noah's story has prophetic significance and practical application. This story is important to our understanding of God's grace. When we began to study Noah's life we saw this in **Genesis 6:8** *But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.* And now we see that God's grace is greater than Noah's sin (and our sin).

1. NOAH'S FAILURE (vs. 20-23)

Having a story like this in the Bible is a strong proof that the Bible is inspired by God. This is not something that men would have written and recorded for all men to read. It is in Scripture because God inspired Moses to write it.

Noah began to be a farmer, and when you are a farmer you plant things. In this case Noah planted a vineyard. When you plant a vineyard, you get grapes and then you make wine. But then Noah drank some of the wine and he drank too much and got drunk. And when he got drunk he laid down inside his tent uncovered (exposed) and went to sleep.

Ham, one of Noah's sons, saw him and then told his two brothers. When the two brothers, Shem and Japheth, heard about their father, they did the right thing and went backward into the tent so they wouldn't see their father and they covered him with a garment.

A. Shem and Japheth did what the Lord does – they covered Noah's sin and shame

Genesis 3:6-8, 21

Noah could say what David later said in Psalm 23:6, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." In Hebrews 11, we read about Noah's faith and how he believed God and moved with fear and prepared an ark to the saving of his house. But there is no mention of Noah getting drunk and being uncovered in his tent. God remembered his faith, not his failures and his foolishness. What is true of Noah is true for all God's people.

B. Shem and Japheth did what we should do

Proverbs 10:12 *Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins.*

Proverbs 17:9 *He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.*

1 Peter 4:8 *And above all things have fervent love among yourselves: for love shall cover the multitude of sins.*

2. NOAH'S FINAL WORDS (vs. 24-27)

These are the final words of Noah recorded for us in Scripture.

A. When Noah spoke these words (vs. 24)

Proverbs 23:29-35 ²⁹ *Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?* ³⁰ *They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.* ³¹ *Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.* ³² *At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.* ³³ *Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.* ³⁴ *Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast.* ³⁵ *They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.*

This passage warns us about the dangers of drinking alcohol. It describes a drunkard who wakes up from a drunken stupor and looks for another drink. Noah was drunk on this one occasion, but he was not a drunkard. When he woke up he didn't say he wanted another drink of wine.

B. What Noah said (vs. 25-27)

Noah spoke as a prophet, first of all pronouncing a curse and then a blessing. The curse was not upon Ham. This was not an act of personal vengeance, but a prophecy of God's curse upon Canaan. Ham is mentioned twice as the father of Canaan (vs. 18, 22). Noah's curse is that Canaan will be servant of servants to his brothers. This refers to the descendants of Ham, the people of Canaan who lived in the area of modern day Israel. They lived in what would soon be known as the Promised Land. This curse is a prophecy that the Israelites would eventually conquer the Canaanites.

We need to understand that the Canaanites were cursed by God because He knew they would become a wicked people and He would use Israel to punish and conquer them.

Leviticus 18:1-3 ¹ *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,* ² *Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, I am the LORD your God.* ³ *After the doings of the land of Egypt, wherein ye dwelt, shall ye not do: and after the doings of the land of Canaan, whither I bring you, shall ye not do: neither shall ye walk in their ordinances.*

Leviticus 18:24-25 ²⁴ *Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you:* ²⁵ *And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants.*

Noah also spoke a blessing (vs. 26). From Genesis 6 through 9 we have seen the blessings of God upon Noah, and now in his final words we see Noah's blessing for the God who has blessed him and who would bless Shem. The Jews are descendants of Shem and therefore are called "Semites" or "Semitic people." You have heard the term "Anti-Semitism" which is hatred or racism against the Jewish people. The end of Genesis 9 lays the foundation for the rest of the Old Testament. God's grace is greater than all sin—Noah's sin and our sin.