

# Genesis

## Chapter 9



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**Theme:** New instructions and arrangements; the sin of Noah and his sons.

Now we come to a new beginning. It is difficult for us to realize what a revolutionary beginning it is. God is putting man under government—he is to govern himself. We will see something of this in the covenant, which God made with Noah. And let's keep in mind that, when God made the covenant with Noah, He made it with you and me, for He made it with all mankind.

**Articles of the Covenant:**

1. Be fruitful and multiply, replenish the earth
2. Dominion of man over all creatures
3. Man's new diet – to eat meat
4. Not to eat the blood
5. Capital punishment

**FFOZ:** The Noachide Torahs:

After God makes some promises to Noah He then delineates to Noah – and to the future generations which will come from him – some of their responsibilities. In fact, the rabbis see a total of seven stipulations from these verses. They call these torahs, the

Seven Commandments given to the descendants of Noah. They constitute what we might call Natural Religion, as they are vital to the existence of human society.

The Torah of Moshe, the rabbis assert, was given to rule Israel; obedience to these seven commandments alone was, in ancient times, also required of non-Jews living among Israelites, or attaching themselves to the Jewish community. These seven laws are:

1. The establishment of courts of justice
2. Prohibition of blasphemy
3. Prohibition of idolatry
4. Prohibition of incest
5. The prohibition of murder
6. The Prohibition of robbery
7. The eating of flesh cut from a living animal (eating of blood)

It is important to note the similarity between these seven laws and the four requirements the Jewish believers placed upon the non-Jewish believers who were coming into the believing community in Acts 15:20. The non-Jewish were, in essence, being asked to follow all the traditional guidelines any Jewish community would have asked of its non-Jewish members.

Interestingly enough, it says in the next verse, Moshe “is read in the synagogues every Shabbat.” In other words, they were telling the new non-Jewish believers that they had to follow these minimal guidelines as equal participants in their communities. If there was a

desire to learn and do more, the leadership told them how to do so – they just had to go to the synagogue where they would hear Moshe’s teachings!<sup>1</sup>

## **Genesis 9:1**

**And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.**

**[Be fruitful, and multiply]** Notice that the first thing God tells Noah to do is to “be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” There is to be the propagation of the race. Remember that God gave this command under special circumstances. Today we are in a time of population explosion, and there is overpopulation that could be dangerous. However, Noah stood in a unique position. He and his family were the only folks around. Can you imagine driving down the freeway, going to work in the morning, and there are cars in front of you, cars to the right of you, cars to the left of you, cars behind you, cars honking—you’re in a traffic snarl. Then about a year later you go out on the freeway and there is not another car there. Yours is the only one. You might as well take down all the traffic lights. You won’t need them because you are the only one driving through. This would be quite an unusual experience for us, would it not? Well, this was the experience of Noah in his day.<sup>2</sup>

**[replenish the earth]** Not just fill the earth but refill it, as Adam was commanded (Genesis 1:28). If this command shows an Adamite world prior to Noah's flood, the same command to Adam in Genesis 1:28 shows a pre-Adamite world.

*(Gen. 1:28) And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

The word *replenish* is meaningful here because we know that there was a civilization before the Flood, and now there is to be a civilization after the Flood. When Adam was told to replenish the earth, we assume that there had been living creatures. The strong probability is they were angels. They apparently were living creatures of God’s creation.

Marriage is regarded as a divine institution for procreation of the race...Gen 2:22; Mt 19:5.

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<sup>1</sup> First Fruits of Zion Torah Club, Volume One - Noah

2McGee, J. Vernon, *Thru the Bible with J. Vernon McGee*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers) 2000, c1981.

## **Genesis 9:2**

**And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.**

Another part of the covenant is man's protection and rulership over the animal world. This states the natural dominion of man over all creatures. If God had not put a fear of man in all animals, they would have destroyed mankind long ago.

Apparently man had not been a meat eater before. All the animals were tame, and one is not inclined to eat an animal that is a pet. Remember that the animals came to Noah when the Flood was impending; they seemed to have no fear of him at all.

Now the animals will fear and dread man. However, man is responsible for the animal world. Man's treatment of the animal world is a brutal story. Man has attempted to exterminate many of the animals. Man would have slaughtered all the whales around the Hawaiian Islands for the money they could get unless the government had intervened. At one time the buffalo were in great herds in the West, but they were killed by man. Today we must have places of refuge to protect animals and bird life. It is well that we do that. The animals of Africa are being exterminated. Man is a mighty brutal creature. We need a government to protect the animals from man.

**Torah Class:** The great changes in the governing dynamics of man's existence, in his relationship to his environment, and in his responsibilities before God are evident right away in V2: whereas animals were once fearless, trusting, and in willing subjection to man before the Flood, now God ordains that man's dominion over animals will be by force. The very same animals that so docilely appeared before Adam to be named, will now be terrified of man. V3 tells us that meat is no longer a prohibited food for man; animal flesh is now an approved food source. I've heard people ask how it was the Noah got all those "wild animals" to enter the Ark; simple: before the Flood man had a different relationship with animals than after.

Verse 2 also gives us an opportunity to put a little common sense back into reading the Bible. Do not ever think that the words written do not mean what they say. Yet, they mean what they mean in the common sense of the Hebrew culture of that day. It says here that ALL animals will fear and dread man. Now, the fact is, we know full well that not 100% of all animals fear men....never have. Many animals are quite comfortable with men, because they have been domesticated and raised for that purpose. Sheep learned their Shepherd's own voice. Without getting into too much detail, just think of common pets like dogs and cats that certainly don't fear men. The point is this: when the Bible says everything, or every, or all, it means it in a general sense. All or everything does not mean 100.00%; rather it means "it is the general rule but there are likely a handful of exceptions". We might say it means "the vast majority". Think of how we commonly talk; we say things like "everybody is against me"; or everything I do turns out bad; or I always take the same route home. It's a figure of speech. So, we have to be very careful not to read in some theological absolute into these sorts of statements when none was intended.<sup>3</sup>

### **Genesis 9:3**

**Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.**

**[Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you]** Man's new diet now included animals (1 Tim. 4:3-5; Col. 2:16; Acts 10:12-14; Romans 14). This is a general statement there still may things we would not want to eat. We would not want to eat poisonous plants for example. Often you find these generalities in the Bible with further guidance and exceptions given later in the bible.

**(1 Tim. 4:3-5)** <sup>3</sup>*Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.* <sup>4</sup>*For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:* <sup>5</sup>*For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.*

**(Col. 2:16)** *Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:*

**(Acts 10:12-14)** <sup>12</sup>*Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air.* <sup>13</sup>*And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.* <sup>14</sup>*But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean.*

Now God gives to man a new provision for food. Before the Flood God gave to man the green earth, the plant life, to eat. Now He tells Noah that he is able to eat animal life.

**[that liveth]** The phrase “that is alive” seems to exclude animals that have died a natural death from being used as food.

#### **Justin Martyr; There is No Unclean Herb or Plant:**

You object that Noah was ordered to make a distinction between the herbs, because we do not now eat every kind of herb. Such a conclusion is inadmissible. I could easily; prove, but we will not spend the time now in doing so, that every vegetable is an herb and may be eaten. Now, if we make a distinction between them and refuse to eat some of them, we do so not because they are common and unclean but because they are bitter, or poisonous or thorny.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Torahclass.com

<sup>4</sup> Ancient Christian commentary on Scripture, Vol 1, Genesis, Thomas C. Oden, Intersity Press

## **Genesis 9:4**

**But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.**

**[blood thereof, shall ye not eat]** When God gave man a vegetable diet He retained the tree of knowledge to attest His own lordship and to remind Adam of the conditions of his tenure. Now, with animal food permitted, He likewise retained a portion—the blood—to testify that He alone is the giver of all life (Leviticus 3:17; Leviticus 7:26; Leviticus 17:10-14; Leviticus 19:26; Deut. 12:16,23; 1 Samuel 14:34).

**Meat eating in ancient world.** Meat was not a common dish on ancient dinner tables. Animals were kept for their milk, hair and wool, not specifically for their meat. Thus meat was only available when an animal died or was killed as a sacrifice. While meat is now put on the list of acceptable foods, there is still a restriction on eating meat with the blood. In ancient times blood was considered a life force (Deut. 12:23). The prohibition does not require that no blood at all be consumed, but only that the blood must be drained. The draining of the blood before eating the meat was a way of returning the life force of the animal to the God who gave it life. This offers recognition that they have taken the life with permission and are partaking of God's bounty as his guests. Its function is not unlike that of the blessing said before a meal in modern practice. No comparable prohibition is known in the ancient world.

No longer vegetarians. Blood is prohibited (not just for Jews: Cf. Council of Jerusalem, Acts 15:20,29.)

**Torah Class:** Now, though every living creature was OK for food, there was a very strict prohibition placed on the eating of meat, and it was that man could not eat the blood from an animal. The reason? The blood is where the life is. Blood was only to be used for sacrifice, and never for human consumption. For blood, the seat of life, was simply too holy for man to be allowed to partake of it.

And, we see that the importance of blood is carried over from animals, to humans. For murder, the taking of human blood is specifically prohibited. Notice that in V5 that God hands the duty of meting out justice for the murder of a human, over to man. Up to now, God dealt with it Himself. And, He dealt with it very differently because now we see that a man who kills another man, is to be himself killed..... by other men. Remember the penalty for murder when Cain, Kayin, killed his brother Abel? It was banishment from the presence of God. God even went so far as to place a sign over Cain so that others would not be tempted to take matters into their own hands, and harm Cain. Mere separation from God was sufficient punishment.<sup>5</sup>

### **Ephrem the Syrian; The Blood of Animals Must Be Drained:**

“Only you shall not eat flesh with its life.” That means you shall eat no flesh that has not been slaughtered and whose blood which is its life, has not been drained.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Torahclass.com

<sup>6</sup> Ancient Christian commentary on Scripture, Vol 1, Genesis, Thomas C. Oden, Intervarsity Press

### **Chrysostom; Animal's Blood Is Its Soul:**

After permitting the consumption of all foods without hesitation, he says, "except you are not to eat flesh with its lifeblood in it." So what does this statement mean? It means "strangled," for an animal's blood is its soul. So since they were about to offer sacrifices in the form of animals, he is teaching them in these words that as long as the blood has been set aside for me, the flesh is for you. In doing so, however, he is intent upon resisting in advance any impulse toward homicide.<sup>7</sup>

### **Genesis 9:5**

**And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man.**

**Ramban:** This is not a form of monetary punishment for the owner since even an ownerless ox is subject to the death penalty, and the command applies alike to the sons of Noah and to the Israelites. The meaning of Who so *sheddeth man's blood* would thus be "all shedders" whether beast or man, their blood will be required by the Court on earth and by the hand of Heaven.<sup>8</sup>

### **Genesis 9:6**

**Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.**

**[Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed]** The death penalty for murder is commanded here. Language implies premeditation, and does not refer to accidental death. God's pledge to Cain was a sevenfold penalty (Genesis 4:15), perhaps referring to greater damnation in hell (Matthew 23:14).

### **Dake gives Five Reasons Why Murder Is a Great Crime**

1. It's a crime against God who created man in His own image (Genesis 1:26-28; Genesis 9:6).
2. It manifests hatred of God's image.
3. It's a crime against society, of which each man is an important part.
4. It's a crime against the family unit.
5. It's a crime against the one whose life is taken. It cuts him off from his duties to both God and man, and seals his eternal doom if he isn't saved. Murder is a serious crime (Genesis 9:5-6; Exodus 21:29-32; Numbers 35:16-31; Deut. 17:6; Deut. 21:1-9; Deut. 27:24-25; 1 Kings 21:19; 2 Chron. 24:22; Matthew 5:21-22; Matthew 15:19; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Tim. 1:9; James 2:11; 1 Peter 4:15; 1 John 3:15; Rev. 9:21; Rev. 21:8; Rev. 22:15).

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<sup>7</sup> Ancient Christian commentary on Scripture, Vol 1, Genesis, Thomas C. Oden, Intervarsity Press

<sup>8</sup> Ramban, Nachmanides, Commentary on the Torah, Genesis, by Rabbi C. Chavel

### **Dake Study Notes: Forty-two Death-Penalty Sins**

1. Murder (Genesis 9:6; Exodus 21:12-14,20,23; Leviticus 24:17,21; Numbers 35:16-34; Deut. 19)
2. Failing to circumcise (Genesis 17:14; Exodus 4:24-25)
3. Eating leavened bread during the feast of unleavened bread (Exodus 12:15,19)
4. Smiting parents (Exodus 21:15)
5. Kidnapping (Exodus 21:16; Deut. 24:7)
6. Cursing parents (Exodus 21:17; Leviticus 20:9)
7. Negligence with animals that kill (Exodus 21:28-32)
8. Witchcraft (Exodus 22:18)
9. Bestiality (Exodus 22:19; Leviticus 18:23-29; Leviticus 20:15-16)
10. Idolatry (Exodus 22:20)
11. Making holy anointing oil (Exodus 30:33)
12. Putting holy anointing oil on strangers (Exodus 30:33)
13. Making the holy perfume (Exodus 30:38)
14. Defiling the sabbath (Exodus 31:14)
15. Working on the sabbath (Exodus 35:2)
16. Eating the flesh of the peace offering in uncleanness (Leviticus 7:20-21)
17. Eating the fat of sacrifices (Leviticus 7:25)
18. Killing sacrifices other than at the door of the tabernacle (Leviticus 17:1-9)
19. Eating blood (Leviticus 17:10-14)
20. Incest (Leviticus 18:6-29; Leviticus 20:11-22)
21. Eating sacrifices at the wrong time (Leviticus 19:5-8)
22. Consecration of children to idols (Leviticus 20:1-5)
23. Spiritualism (Leviticus 20:6,27)
24. Adultery (Leviticus 20:10; Deut. 22:22-30)
25. Sodomy—homosexuality (Leviticus 20:13)
26. Relationship with a menstruous woman (Leviticus 20:18)
27. Whoredom (Leviticus 21:9; Deut. 22:21-22)
28. Sacrilege (Leviticus 22:3)
29. Refusing to fast on day of atonement (Leviticus 23:29)
30. Working on day of atonement (Leviticus 23:30)
31. Blasphemy (Leviticus 24:11-16)
32. Failure to keep the passover (Numbers 9:13)
33. Presumptuous sins (Numbers 15:30-31)
34. Gathering firewood on the sabbath (Numbers 15:32-36)
35. Failure to purify self before worship (Numbers 19:13,20)
36. False prophecy (Deut. 13:1-18; Deut. 18:20)
37. Leading men away from God (Deut. 13:6-18)
38. Backsliding (Deut. 17:2-7)
39. Stubbornness and rebellion (Deut. 21:18-23)
40. Gluttony (Deut. 21:20-23)
41. Drunkenness (Deut. 21:20-23)
42. False dreams and visions (Deut. 13:1-18)

The New Testament teaches the death penalty for certain crimes (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Tim. 1:8-10; James 2:10-13; James 4:11-12; 1 Peter 2:13-15). Both testaments list many sins that damn the soul and incur the eternal death penalty—the lake of fire (Jeremiah 23; Ezekiel 3:18,33; Mark 7:20-23; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19-21; Col. 3:5-10; 2 Peter 2; Jude 1:3-19). Though the Law of Moses has been abolished, the same sins it condemned (except Sabbath-breaking) are now condemned in New Testament scriptures.

**Capital punishment:** Human life, because of the image of God, remains under the protection of God. The accountability to God for preserving human life is put into humanity’s hands, thus instituting blood vengeance in the ancient world and capital punishment in modern societies. In Israelite society blood vengeance was in the hands of the family of the victim, “The kinsman redeemer”.

Here God lays down the principle for government and protection of man. He gives the government the right of capital punishment. We have seen that in this new covenant which God has given, man is to propagate the race, he is to have the protectorate and the rulership over animals, he is given a new provision for food and a prohibition against the eating of blood. Now we see that he is given the principle of government, which is the basis of capital punishment.

**Torah Class:** What the ancient Rabbis so brilliantly point out concerning these passages, is that here we find God establishing the principle of earthly government. Civil law was hereby created, with God delegating some of His authority to man. Later, in Leviticus, God would go to great lengths to define something that we constantly try to rewrite, with little success: what justice is. We tend to call God’s definition of justice, the LAW.

These same Rabbis and Scribes also came to the conclusion that if God turned over to man the terrible matter of determining capital punishment, the right to take human life, then certainly lesser matters of life such as authority over wives, children, servants, property, land, etc. was also now in man’s hands. From this came what was eventually called the 7 Noachide Laws. The Noachide Laws were essentially the most fundamental principles of civil justice as told by God to Noah, from which all other civil laws would be based. We don’t actually see these 7 laws specifically enumerated at this point in the Scriptures. Interestingly, though, thousands of years later, after Christ has come and gone, these Noachide Laws will play a role in the determination of the Jerusalem Council of 49 AD as to the minimum behavioral requirements for gentiles who want to fellowship with, and worship alongside of, Jews who have come to believe that Jesus was their Messiah.

These Noachide Laws are the following: 1) Men were prohibited from idol worship. 2) Man was not to commit blasphemy (taking God’s name in vain). 3) Man was not to murder. 4) There was to be no incest. 5) There was to be no robbing and stealing. 6) Man was not to eat blood nor was he to eat the meat of animals that had been strangled (and therefore, they had not been “bled”). 7) Man was to submit to the authority of a civil government.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Torahclass.com

**Chrysostom; The Murder of Human Beings Is Condemned by God:**

“Whoever sheds someone’s blood, his own will be shed in payment for that person’s blood, because I have made the human person in God’s image.” Consider, I ask you, how much fear he struck in them with that remark. He is saying even if you are not restrained from murderous hands by kinship or by a sense of fellowship of nature, and even if you thrust aside all brotherly feeling and become completely committed to a bloody murder, you must think twice. Consider the fact that the person has been created in God’s image. Mark the degree of honor accorded him by God! Think on the fact that he has received authority over all creation. Then you will give up your murderous intent. So what does he mean? If someone has committed countless murders and shed so much blood, how can he give adequate satisfaction simply by the shedding of his own blood? Do not have these thoughts, human being that you are. Instead you do well to consider in advance that you will receive an immortal body that will have the capacity to undergo constant and everlasting punishment.<sup>10</sup>

**Genesis 9:7**

**And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein.**

[**be ye fruitful, and multiply**] This is a repetition of God’s instructions in verse 1. See Genesis 1:22,28; Genesis 8:17; Genesis 9:1.

**Genesis 9:8**

**And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying,**

Very straight forward – God spoke to Noah. What a wonderful statement.

**Genesis 9:9**

**And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;**

[**And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you**] The 11th prophecy in Genesis (Genesis 9:9-17, fulfilled and being fulfilled). Next, prophecy is in Genesis 9:25. It contains the tenfold terms of the Noahic covenant. In the eighth prophecy (Genesis 6:17-18), given before the ark was begun, we had the first mention of this covenant.

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<sup>10</sup> Ancient Christian commentary on Scripture, Vol 1, Genesis, Thomas C. Oden, Intersity Press

**[covenant]** A covenant is a formal agreement between two parties. The principal section of a covenant is the stipulations section, which may include requirements for either party or both. In this covenant God takes stipulations upon himself, rather than imposing them on Noah and his family. Unlike the later covenant with Abraham, and those that build on the covenant with Abraham, this covenant does not entail election or a new phase of revelation. It is also made with every living creature, not just people.

**[with your seed after you]** includes all the human race.

**EDLS** starting with the first letter in the third word and counting every 144th letter from right to left spells *me'basair tov*, which means "bringing the good news", this phrase is also found in Is 52:7.

### **Genesis 9:10**

**And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.**

**[with every living creature that is with you]** There were four parties to the Noahic covenant: God (Genesis 9:8-17); Noah (Genesis 9:8,11-16); Noah's seed (Genesis 9:9); and all living creatures (Genesis 9:10,12-17).

All of God's creatures are included in this covenant. Isaiah predicts that someday the lion and the lamb will lie down together and that they will not hurt or destroy. In Paul's epistle to the Romans he mentions that the whole creation is groaning and travailing in pain in this present age.

### **Genesis 9:11**

**And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.**

**[by the waters of a flood]** Twice the earth has been cursed by a universal flood (Genesis 1:2; Genesis 6:8-8:22; 2 Peter 3:6). The earth will some day be renovated by fire.

God said he will not use a flood to destroy the earth again, however we have to read the small print. The earth will be destroyed again by fire.

**(2 Pet 3:5-7)** <sup>5</sup>For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: <sup>6</sup>Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: <sup>7</sup>But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

**(2 Pet. 3:10-13)** <sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

<sup>11</sup>*Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness, <sup>12</sup>Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

<sup>13</sup>Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

**[shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth]** This shows the flood was universal. There have been many local floods in all ages, but no universal flood since Noah's time, nor will there ever be (Genesis 8:21-22; Genesis 9:11,15).

This is God's promise. His purpose is that He will not again destroy the earth with a flood. The next time His judgment of the earth will be by fire.

#### **Chrysostom; God Makes His covenant with Noah Out of Love**

God's purpose, therefore, was to eliminate all apprehension from Noah's thinking and for him to be quite assured that this would not happen again. He said, remember, "just as I brought on the deluge out of Love so as to put a stop to their wickedness and prevent their going to further extremes, so in this case too it is out of my love that I promise never to do it again, so that you may live free of all dread and in this way see your present life to its close." Hence he said, "Behold, I make my covenant," that is, I form an agreement. Just as in human affairs when someone makes a promise he forms an agreement and gives a firm guarantee, so too the good Lord said, "Behold, I make my covenant." God did not say that this massive disaster might come again to those who sin. Rather he said, "Behold, I make my covenant with you and your offspring after you." See the Lord's loving kindness: not only with your generation, he says, do I form my agreement, but also in regard to all those coming after you I give this firm guarantee. <sup>11</sup>

#### **Ephrem the Syrian; God Will Never Bring a New Deluge Upon Earth:**

And his Lord spoke to [Noah], as he desired that Noah hear, "Because of your righteousness, a remnant was preserved and did not perish in that flood that took place. And because of your sacrifice that was from all flesh and on behalf of all flesh, I will never again bring a flood upon the earth." God thus bound himself beforehand by this promise so that even if mankind were constantly to follow the evil thoughts of their inclination, he would never again bring a flood upon them. <sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ancient Christian commentary on Scripture, Vol 1, Genesis, Thomas C. Oden, Intervarsity Press

<sup>12</sup> Ancient Christian commentary on Scripture, Vol 1, Genesis, Thomas C. Oden, Intervarsity Press

## **Genesis 9:12**

**And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:**

[**token**] *owth* (H226), token, sign.

[**for perpetual generations**] This verse expresses an eternal pledge between eternal parties of an eternal covenant (Genesis 9:12-16). "For perpetual generations" reveals the length of the covenant, plainly promising eternal generations of natural people.

## **Genesis 9:13**

**I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.**

[**set**] *nathan* (H5414), grant. This may not have been the first time a rainbow was seen, but the first time it became a reminder of the eternal covenant (cp. Ezekiel 1:28; Rev. 4:3; Rev. 10:1). The rainbow is a natural effect of a natural cause. It always has been and always will be seen where water falls and sunshine exists. The multicolored semicircle caused by rays of the sun on drops of water has no doubt been an enjoyable sight since the original creation of clouds, rain and sun. The importance of the statement here is, As surely as the rainbow is an eternal effect of sunshine and rain, so this earth and natural life shall be an eternal effect of God's covenant with all living creatures.

The designation of the rainbow as a sign of the covenant does not suggest that this was the first rainbow ever seen. The function of a sign is connected to the significance attached to it. In like manner, circumcision is designated as a sign of the covenant with Abraham, yet that was an ancient practice, not new with Abraham and his family.

[**bow**] *qesheth* (H7198), a bending. Used of a bow (weapon) fifty-two times (Genesis 27:3; Genesis 48:22, etc.).

Darts, arrows (Eph 6:6) vs. sword (Rev 19:15; Eph 6:16; Mt 10:34).

1) Symbol of Nimrod the hunter? (traditional symbol)

2) Same word as signified the promise to Noah (this seems to be missed by most commentators) A sign of the covenant between God and mankind.

Hebrew: *qesheth* (H7198); (LXX) Greek: *toxon* (G5115)

1) bow; 1a) bow (for hunting, battle); 1b) bowmen, archers; 1c) bow (figure of might); 1d) rainbow.

## Law of first mention:

**(Gen 9:13)** *I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.*

**(Rev 6:2)** *And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.*

[the earth] "Over the earth" - global flood, Cf Gen 9. Also a global flood because of the promise. God said he would not do that again - global flood. There have been local floods, if Noah flood was local then God didn't keep His promise. (Isa 50:9)

## Genesis 9:14

**And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:**

**Torah Class:** Next, God makes a covenant. As we meet Abraham in a couple more weeks, we'll talk a little more about the important nature of covenants. But, for now, just recognize that this covenant is a contract, a promise; in this case it is between God and Noah....BUT.....it is also promise from God to ALL living flesh. This particular covenant, or contract, is unilateral; the contract does NOT depend on man's response nor man's behavior.....its all on God. Other covenants we will eventually encounter have a mutual requirement....both God and man have roles to play. And, this is the first covenant between God and Man mentioned in the Torah. There is a theological belief that this covenant with Noah is actually the 2<sup>nd</sup> covenant with mankind; that the 1<sup>st</sup> was between God and Adam; and it was that if Adam didn't eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, man could stay in the Garden with God. Well, personally, I think that waters down the impact of the concept of covenant. Certainly God gave Adam an instruction not to eat of that tree, but just because the idea was that if he disobeyed there would be a penalty does NOT make that single instruction to attain the level of a covenant.

And, the covenant is this: God will never again destroy the world and everything in it..... by flood. Of course, God did leave the door open to destroy the world by just about any OTHER means, but that's another story. Anyway, the sign of this covenant is the Rainbow. Now, while I don't want to spend much time with this, the question often comes, was this the first Rainbow? And, my unequivocal answer to this is.....MAYBE! Here's the thing, God set many physical things in the heavens to be used as signs. He didn't necessarily come up with a new one each time He felt a sign was necessary. The physics of light, and refraction as it passes through moisture, is well understood. And, we know it is NOT necessary for actual rain to occur in order to have a Rainbow.....we just need a sufficient amount of water content in the atmosphere. However.....

almost universally, among the ancient and modern Biblical scholars, the conclusion is that this WAS the first Rainbow..... so, I see no reason to belabor the point, nor to dispute it.

But, I would like to point out this matter of God saying when He looked upon the Rainbow that HE would remember His covenant with all living things to not bring an end to things again with a flood. As we discussed a couple of weeks ago, statements of this sort are figurative. God is not a man, and He does not have human attributes. God is not some kind of Super Human...He is a wholly separate and different being than a man. Nor is man some type of lesser gods. God doesn't need to have His memory jogged. He doesn't need an enormous notepad to remember what He has promised. But, I also imagine that for many generations from Noach, as the flood was relatively fresh in people's minds, that each time it rained, there was a little bit of anxiousness as they waited for the rain to STOP! And, how reassuring it must have been to look up and see that Rainbow in the sky, and remember the promise that God had made. Maybe it would do us all good to remember that the beautiful Rainbow that is so common for us to see, and without much thought, is in fact a sign from God. That hasn't changed just because a few thousand years have passed from Noach to our day.<sup>13</sup>

**Ramban:** It would appear from this sign that the rainbow in the cloud was not part of creation and that now God created a new thing by making a rainbow in the heavens on a cloudy day. Now the commentators have said concerning the meaning of this sign that He has not made the rainbow with its feet bent upward because it might have appeared that arrows were being shot from heaven, as in the verse, And He sent out his arrows and scattered them (Psalms 18:P15) on the earth. Instead He made it the opposite of this – [with the feet bent downward] in order to show that they are not shooting at the earth from the heavens. It is indeed the way of warriors to invert the instruments of war which they hold in their hands when calling for peace from their opponents. Moreover, [with the feet of the bow being turned downward towards the earth, it can be seen] that the bow has no rope upon which to bend the arrows.<sup>14</sup>

**Ramban:** We must perforce believe the words of the Greek [philosophers who maintain] that the rainbow is a natural result of the heat of the sun falling upon damp air for even in a vessel containing water which stands in the sun there is the appearance of the rainbow. When contemplating the language of Scripture we will understand that it is so, for He said, I have set My bow in the cloud, [the use of the past tense indicating that He had already set it so from the beginning and it is not a new creation]. He did not say, "I set in the cloud," even as He said, this is the sign of the covenant which I make. Moreover, the word *kashti* (my bow) – [in the possessive form] – indicates that He possessed the bow previously. Therefore, we shall explain the verse thus: "The rainbow which I have set in the clouds from the day of creation will be from this day on a sign of covenant between Me and you; whenever I will see it I will remember that there is a covenant of peace between Me and you."

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<sup>13</sup> Torahclass.com

<sup>14</sup> Ramban, Nachmanides, Commentary on the Torah, Genesis, by Rabbi C. Chavel

### **Genesis 9:15**

**And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.**

[remember my covenant] Leviticus 26:42,45; Deut. 7:9; 1 Kings 8:23; Luke 1:72.

### **Genesis 9:16**

**And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.**

[everlasting covenant] Again confirming that the covenant was eternal, and that natural man and all living creatures are to continue on earth forever.

[bow] *qesheth*, when the Hebrew was translated into Greek the Hebrew word *qesheth* was replaced with the Greek word *toxon*. This is the same word used in Rev 6:2.

*(Rev. 6:2) And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.*

This is interesting because it may indicate the Antichrist may come on the white horse with a bow and it may not be a bow used as a weapon. It may be that he will enforce a covenant between Israel and Mideast countries as signified by the bow just as Gods covenant is here represented by a bow.

### **Genesis 9:17**

**And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth.**

The rainbow could be called a sacrament because a sacrament is a visible sign to which are annexed certain promises. The Passover feast, the brazen serpent, Gideon's fleece, and in our day baptism and the Lord's Supper are such signs.

Dr. Johann Peter Lange once made the statement, "God's eye of grace and our eye of faith meet in the sacraments." That is what happens when man looks at the rainbow. Faith lays hold of the promise attached to the sign. The merit is in what the sign speaks of. There is no faith in a promise and there is no assurance in a sign—the word and the sign go together. God makes a promise and attaches a sign to it. Now the rainbow is God's answer to Noah's altar. It is as if God says, "I'll remember, and I'll look upon it."

## **Genesis 9:18**

**And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan.**

[**Shem, and Ham, and Japheth**] listed in order of importance not their birth order.

[**Ham is the father of Canaan**] Why is Ham's son Canaan mentioned here? When Moses wrote this record, the people of Israel were traveling to the land of Canaan, and it was encouraging for them to have this information regarding God's judgment upon the people of Canaan. Stated so the curse of Genesis 9:25 can be understood.

**Ramban:** Rashi explains, "Because this section goes on to deal with Noah's family, relating that Ham sinned and through him Canaan was cursed, and since the generations of Ham have not yet been mentioned [to let us know that Canaan was his son], it was necessary to state here that Ham is the father of Canaan."<sup>15</sup>

## **Genesis 9:19**

**These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread.**

[**of them was the whole earth overspread**] All colors and types of men came into existence after the flood.

## **Genesis 9:20**

**And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard:**

[**husbandman**] 2 Kings 25:12; Amos 5:16; Zech. 13:5; Matthew 21:33-41; John 15:1; 2 Tim. 2:6; James 5:7.

[**vineyard**] The first vineyard mentioned in Scripture.

### **Wine**

- There is nothing wrong with wine (Deut 25:4; 1 Cor 9:7); fermentation is a natural process
- Can be beneficial (Judg 9:13; Ps 104:15; Prov 31:6; 1 Tim 5:23)
- Symbol of blessings (Gen 27:28:37; Prov 9:2; Isa 25:6; Mt 26:28,29)
- Blessed at Cana (Jn 2:9,10)
- Drunkenness condemned (Prov 23:20; Isa 5:11, 22; Lk 21:34; Rom 13:13; 1 Cor 5:11; 6:10; Gal 5:21; Eph 5:18; 1 Thess 5:8)

There are special seasons when abstinence from this as well as other gratifications of a physical kind is a duty (cf. Lev 10:9; Judg 13:4, 14; Ezek 44:21; Dan 1:5, 8, 16; Rom 14:21; 1 Cor 10:28), and it is competent to any Christian, for the sake of his weaker brethren, or as a means of advancing his own spiritual life, or for the glory of God, to

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<sup>15</sup> Ramban, Nachmanides, Commentary on the Torah, Genesis, by Rabbi C. Chavel

renounce his liberty in respect of drinks—no intelligent person will doubt this. But that total abstinence is imperatively required of everyone is neither asserted in Scripture nor was it taught by the example of Christ (Mt 11:19), and to enforce it upon Christian men as a term of communion is to impose on them a yoke of bondage which Christ has not sanctioned, and to supplant Christian liberty by bodily asceticism.

Wine: to cheer the heart (Judg 9:13; Ps 104:15) and alleviate the pain of the curse (Prov 31:6). [Grape juice arguments fail here...]

### **Genesis 9:21**

**And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent.**

**[was drunken]** First drunkenness on record.

**[uncovered within his tent]** Worded that he uncovered himself.

**[tent]** note from Genesis 4:20 Houses originated earlier than tents (cp. Genesis 4:17). Tents were a special invention for the cattle trade, which made it necessary to travel in search of the best grass.

### **Ephrem the Syrian; Noah's Drunkenness Is Magnified by Long Abstinence:**

Noah's drunkenness was not from an excess of wine but because it had been a long time since he had drunk any wine. In the ark he had drunk no wine. Although all flesh was going to perish, Noah was not permitted to bring any wine onto the ark. During the year after the flood Noah did not drink any wine. In that first year after he left the ark, he did not plant a vineyard, for he came out of the ark on the twenty-seventh of Iyôr, the time when the fruit should be starting to mature and not the time for planting a vineyard. Therefore, seeing that it was in the third year that he planted the vineyard from the grape stones that he brought with him on the ark and that it was three or even four years before they would have become a productive vineyard, there were then at least six years during which the just one had not tasted any wine.<sup>16</sup>

### **Chrysostom; Wine Is Not Evil in Itself:**

Perhaps, on the other hand, someone might say, "Why was vine dressing, source of such terrible wickedness, introduced into life?" Do not idly blurt out what comes into your head, O man: vine dressing is not wicked nor is wine evil – rather, it is use of them in excess. You see, dreadful sins arise not from wine as such but from intemperate attitudes of human depravity that undermine the benefit that should naturally come from it.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ancient Christian commentary on Scripture, Vol 1, Genesis, Thomas C. Oden, Intervarsity Press

<sup>17</sup> Ancient Christian commentary on Scripture, Vol 1, Genesis, Thomas C. Oden, Intervarsity Press

### **Leander of Seville; Wine Made Noah Vulnerable:**

“Woe to you that demand strong drink as soon as they rise in the morning, and linger into the night while wine inflames them!” Noah drank wine and fell into a drunken stupor and became naked in the more shameful part of his body so that you may know that the mind of man is so confounded by wine and the reason of the human mind is made so dull that it does not have concern even for itself, much less for God... When Lot was soused with wine, he committed incest with his daughters and did not know his mistake; from that passionate union came the Moabites and the Ammonites.<sup>18</sup>

### **Genesis 9:22**

**And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without.**

**[saw the nakedness of his father]** Because of the severity of Ham’s punishment and the note about what [Noah’s] youngest son had done to him some suggest a sexual assault. The text passes no judgment on Noah for this act. Later in the law, to look at one’s nakedness was indicative of a sexual encounter (Lev. 20:17).

It is not clear whether seeing his father’s nakedness was Ham’s chief offense. The following verses (especially v. 23) may imply that Ham made fun of his father, and that this news reached Noah after he awoke, or he may have tried to gain power from the incident.

Breaking the law of parental authority. Other laws in Genesis are: monogamy (Genesis 16:1); adultery (Genesis 20:3-9); priesthood (Genesis 14:20; Genesis 28:22); agreements (Genesis 21:27); circumcision (Genesis 17:10); hospitality (Genesis 18:1-8); fornication (Genesis 34:7); oaths (Genesis 21:23); birthright (Genesis 25:33); anointing oil (Genesis 28:18); vows (Genesis 28:20); idolatry (Genesis 31:32-35); a brother's widow (Genesis 38:8); dowry (Genesis 34:12); heirs (Genesis 15:1-6); concubines (Genesis 16:1-3); and robbery (Genesis 31:32).

**Ramban:** The sin committed was that Ham saw the nakedness of his father and did not act respectfully. He should have covered his nakedness and concealed his shame by not telling even his brothers, but he told the matter to his two brothers in the presence of many people in order to deride him [Noah]. This is the meaning of the word outside. And so did Onkelos translate it as “in the market-place.” The meaning of the verse, and [Noah] knew what he had done unto him, is that he knew that Ham had disclosed his disgrace to many, and he was ashamed of the matter. Our Rabbis have mentioned an additional sin that Ham committed.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Ancient Christian commentary on Scripture, Vol 1, Genesis, Thomas C. Oden, Intervarsity Press

<sup>19</sup> Ramban, Nachmanides, Commentary on the Torah, Genesis, by Rabbi C. Chavel

### **Genesis 9:23**

**And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness.**

Shem and Japheth took great pains to honor their father, not wanting even to glance at his nakedness.

### **Chumash; The Last Word; "They did not see their father's nakedness"**

When a person sees another stumble in an inappropriate act, there are two possible reactions: a) one is disgusted by the act, or b) one thinks what can be done to help the person.

Ham took the former approach, "he looked at his father's nakedness", he focused on the inappropriateness of the situation. Shem and Japheth, on the other hand, "did not see their father's nakedness," they did not become disgusted at what had occurred. They simply took action to correct the situation.

What leads people to react in these two different ways? The *Ba'al Shem Tov* taught that a person who is himself unclean sees and is frustrated by the uncleanliness of others. A pure person sees only that his fellow is in need of help.<sup>20</sup>

### **Genesis 9:24**

**And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him.**

[younger son] Referring to Ham.

[knew what his younger son had done unto him] suggest more than a casual glance.

God had a reason for recording the incident of Noah's sin. In Romans 15:4 we read these words: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." It was recorded to let you and me know something of the weakness of the flesh. The Lord Jesus said that the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. And in Galatians 2:16 it is made very clear that no flesh would be justified by keeping the law: "... for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." So God has given us here the story of a man who fell, revealing the weakness of the flesh.

### **Genesis 9:25**

**And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.**

[And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren] The 12th prophecy in Genesis (Genesis 9:25-27, fulfilled and being fulfilled). Next, Genesis 12:1-3. The three sons of Noah were to produce three distinct classes of

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<sup>20</sup> Chumash, The Gutnick Edition, Book of Genesis, Rabbi Chaim Millewr, 2003

people. Here we have the second distinct prophecy of Christ who was to come through Shem (Luke 3:36).

Prophecy of a servile posterity from Ham (Genesis 10:6).

**[Cursed be Canaan]** This doom has been fulfilled in the destruction of the Canaanites—in the degradation of Egypt and the slavery of the Africans, the descendants of Ham.

The three sons had been blessed with their father (see v. 1). Thus Noah cursed Ham indirectly by cursing his son Canaan (see 10:6). Some once believed that this verse justified the slavery of African peoples (who, it was alleged, were descended from Canaan), but those people misinterpreted the verse. Canaan was under the curse of his father. As the Hebrews stood on the banks of the Jordan River about to enter the land of Canaan (see Deut. 1:1), they would have been encouraged by this verse because it promised victory over the Canaanites.

This incident could scarcely have happened till twenty years after the flood; for Canaan, whose conduct was more offensive than that even of his father, was not born till after that event. It is probable that there is a long interval included between these verses and that this prophecy, like that of Jacob on his sons, was not uttered till near the close of Noah's life when the prophetic spirit came upon him; this presumption is strengthened by the mention of his death immediately after.<sup>21</sup>

### **Eighteen Curses of Scripture**

1. Upon the serpent (Genesis 3:14-15)
2. The woman (Genesis 3:15-16)
3. The man (Genesis 3:17-19)
4. The ground (Genesis 3:17-18; Genesis 5:29; Genesis 8:21)
5. Animals (Genesis 3:14; Romans 8:19-23)
6. Cain (Genesis 4:11)
7. Canaan (Genesis 9:25)
8. Simeon and Levi (Genesis 49:5-7)
9. Israel (Joshua 6:18)
10. Builder of Jericho (Joshua 6:26)
11. Gibeonites (Joshua 9:3,23)
12. Shechemites (Judges 9:57)
13. Meroz (Judges 5:23)
14. Young men (2 Kings 2:24-25)
15. Gehazi (2 Kings 5:27)
16. Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kings 21:17-24; 2 Kings 9:24-26,30-37)
17. Israelites (Isaiah 43:28; Daniel 9:11; Malachi 3:9)
18. All the wicked (Matthew 25:41; Galatians 3:10)

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<sup>21</sup> JFB Commentary

### **Ephrem the Syrian; Why Canaan Was Cursed:**

Noah cursed Canaan, saying, “Cursed be Canaan. A slave of slaves shall he be to his brothers.” But what sin could Canaan have committed even if he had been right behind his father when Ham observed the nakedness of Noah. Some say that because Ham had been blessed along with those who entered the ark and came out of it, Noah did not curse Ham himself, even though his son, who was cursed, grieved him greatly. Others, however, say from the fact that Scripture says, “Noah knew everything that his youngest son had done to him,” it is clear that it was not Ham who observed his nakedness, for Ham was the middle son and not the youngest. For this reason they say that Canaan, the youngest, told of the nakedness of the old man. Then Ham went out and jokingly told his brothers. For this reason then, even though it might be thought that Canaan was cursed unjustly in that he did what he did in his youth, still he was cursed justly for he was not cursed in the place of another. Noah knew that Canaan would deserve the curse in his old age, or else he would not have been cursed in his youth.<sup>22</sup>

### **Justin Martyr; Why the curse Began with the Son’s Son:**

In the blessings with which Noah blesses his two sons, he also curses his son’s son. For the prophetic Spirit would not curse that son himself, since he had already been blessed by God, together with the other sons of Noah. But, since the punishment of the sin was to be transmitted down to all the posterity of the son who laughed at his father’s nudity, he made the curse begin with the son’s son.<sup>23</sup>

### **Chrysostom; Both Canaan and Ham are Subjected to God’s Punishment:**

To be sure, some will say, this shows that the reason he did not curse Ham was that he had enjoyed blessing from God. Nevertheless, why is it that though Ham was the sinner, Canaan had to pay the penalty? This does not happen idly either. Ham did not endure less punishment than his son. He too felt its effects. You know well, of course, how in many cases fathers have begged to endure punishment in place of their children. Seeing their children bearing punishment proves a more grievous form of chastisement for the fathers than being subject to it themselves. Accordingly, this incident occurred so that Ham should endure greater anguish on account of his natural affection, so that God’s blessing should continue without impairment and so that his son in being the object of the curse should atone for his own sins.<sup>24</sup>

## **Genesis 9:26**

**And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.**

**[he said]** Prophecy that Shem would be a chosen race and have a peculiar relationship with God. All divine revelation since Shem has come through his line. Christ, after the flesh, descended from him (Genesis 10:21; Genesis 11:10; Luke 3:23-38).

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<sup>22</sup> Ancient Christian commentary on Scripture, Vol 1, Genesis, Thomas C. Oden, Intervarsity Press

<sup>23</sup> Ancient Christian commentary on Scripture, Vol 1, Genesis, Thomas C. Oden, Intervarsity Press

<sup>24</sup> Ancient Christian commentary on Scripture, Vol 1, Genesis, Thomas C. Oden, Intervarsity Press

### **Sixteen Examples of People Being Blessed**

1. Adam and Eve (Genesis 1:22,28; Genesis 5:2)
2. Noah and sons (Genesis 9:1)
3. Abraham (Genesis 14:19; Genesis 24:1,35)
4. Ishmael (Genesis 17:20)
5. Isaac (Genesis 25:11; Genesis 26:12)
6. Jacob (Genesis 30:27; Genesis 35:9)
7. Laban (Genesis 30:30)
8. Potiphar (Genesis 39:5)
9. Israel (Deut. 2:7; Deut. 7:14; Deut. 12:7; Deut. 14:24; Deut. 15:14; Deut. 16:10; 2 Chron. 31:10)
10. Samson (Judges 13:24)
11. Obed-edom (2 Samuel 6:11; 1 Chron. 13:14)
12. Peulthai (1 Chron. 26:5)
13. Job (Job 42:12)
14. Solomon (Psalm 45:2)
15. Simon Peter (Matthew 16:17)
16. Paul and others (Ephes. 1:3)

Others were blessed by God in various ways, but the word "blessed" isn't used as in the above examples. The whole human race is blessed by God with fruitful seasons, daily provision, continued preservation and help in innumerable things. Even the most ungodly are permitted to live and enjoy the blessings of life. God seeks constantly by His goodness to win them and bring them to repentance (Romans 2:4).

**[Blessed be the Lord God of Shem]** rather, "Blessed of Jehovah, my God, be Shem,"—an intimation that the descendants of Shem should be peculiarly honored in the service of the true God, His Church being for ages established among them (the Jews), and of them, concerning the flesh, Christ came. They got possession of Canaan, the people of that land being made their "servants" either by conquest, or, like the Gibeonites, by submission [Joshua 9:25].

### **Augustine; The Word Slave Used for the First Time:**

When subjection came, it was merely a condition deservedly imposed on sinful man. So, in Scripture, there is no mention of the word slave until holy Noah used it in connection with the curse on his son's wrongdoing."

### **Genesis 9:27**

**God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.**

**[God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.]** Prophecy that Japheth would be the father of the great and enlarged races. Government, science, and art are mainly Japhetic. His descendants constitute the leading nations of civilization. A prophecy being fulfilled at the present day, as in India British Government is established and the Anglo-Saxons being in the

ascendancy from Europe to India, from India over the American continent. What a wonderful prophecy in a few verses (Isaiah 46:10; 1 Peter 1:25)!

**[God shall enlarge Japheth]** pointing to a vast increase in posterity and possessions. Accordingly his descendants have been the most active and enterprising, spread over the best and largest portion of the world, all Europe and a considerable part of Asia.

### **Genesis 9:28**

**And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years.**

### **Genesis 9:29**

**And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.**

**[and he died]** Completing the history of Genesis 5. Cp. Genesis 5:28-32.

*(Gen. 5:25-32) <sup>25</sup>And Methuselah lived an hundred eighty and seven years, and begat Lamech: <sup>26</sup>And Methuselah lived after he begat Lamech seven hundred eighty and two years, and begat sons and daughters: <sup>27</sup>And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years: and he died.*

*<sup>28</sup>And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son: <sup>29</sup>And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the LORD hath cursed.*

*<sup>30</sup>And Lamech lived after he begat Noah five hundred ninety and five years, and begat sons and daughters: <sup>31</sup>And all the days of Lamech were seven hundred seventy and seven years: and he died. <sup>32</sup>And Noah was five hundred years old: and Noah begat Shem, Ham, and Japheth.*

Noah's death was the end of an era. Only he and his family spanned two worlds, that of the earth before and after the Flood. His long life (950 years) gave him opportunity to transmit to his many descendants the dramatic story that he had lived out with his family. Peoples in places and cultures the world over have memories and stories of a great Flood in antiquity. The details differ, but the stories remain.

### **Toras Menachem; Chumash; How Long did Noah Live?**

“Noah was six hundred years old, when the flood water came upon the earth” (7:6).

“It was in the six hundredth and first year, in the first month, on the first of the month, that the waters dried up” (8:13). At the end of the flood Noah was 601 years old.

Then, we learn that, “Noah lived three hundred and fifty years after the Flood” (9:28), which makes a total of 951 years. How then can the Torah state in the following verse that: “Noah lived a total of nine hundred and fifty years, and he died”?

The Midrash answers that the year of the flood is not included in the total of Noach's years, since it was a year of hardship (as Tzror Hamor explains).

However, Rashi, in his commentary to the Torah does not cite this Midrash, and it would be unfair to presume that the reader is left to come to this conclusion himself. Rather, there must be a simple explanation for the matter at the literal level – an explanation that is so obvious that Rashi saw no need to write it down.

Presumably, at the literal level, if the Torah states that a person was, for example, 40 years old when a particular event occurred, it does not mean to say that he was 40 years old on that very day. Rather, 40 years was the closest whole number of years to his actual age. He could have been anything between  $39\frac{1}{2}$  and  $40\frac{1}{2}$  years.

Thus, when the Torah stated that, "Noach was six hundred years old, when the flood water came upon the earth," he was actually a little over  $599\frac{1}{2}$  (but less than 600). The flood then lasted a year, bringing him to  $600\frac{1}{2}$  (but less than 601). The Torah then states that, "Noach lived three hundred and fifty years after the Flood," but again, he would actually have lived between  $349\frac{1}{2}$  and 350 years more, so that his total lifespan was 950 years plus a few months, but less than  $950\frac{1}{2}$  years. Therefore, the Torah states that, "Noach lived a total of nine hundred and fifty years."

- **Midrash:** The year of the flood is not included in the "total on nine hundred and fifty years" of his life (Bereishis Rabah 32:6)
- **Tzror Hamor:** this is because life in the ark was extremely taxing for Noach, as he had to feed and maintain so many animals almost singlehandedly. Since he had little of a "life" in that year, the Torah omits it in the summary of the "years of his life" (7:11)<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Chumash, The Gutnick Edition, Book of Genesis, Rabbi Chaim Millewr, 2003