

AFTER THE FLOOD

Genesis 8:1–9:28

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As we continue in this first book in the Word of God, we're now in the middle of the section that talks about God's salvation of Noah and his family from the Flood. We've already looked at Genesis 6 and 7.

It really intrigues me to look at Noah's life and to recognize the faithfulness of this man—his great patience in what must have been a very incredible situation. I was wondering what it would have felt like if, after 120 years of preaching, there were only seven others that were genuinely converted and changed as a result of the message God had given to me. Or, if after 120 years of pastoring a church, there were still only eight in Sunday School.

I think of Noah being in the ark for a little over a year's time. Most of that time is spent after the Flood has begun to recede. He is in the ark during the time the waters are drying up over the earth. What a temptation to impatience. Evidently, God is doing no miracles during this period of time other than the miracle of providing the means whereby they should be kept alive. He's faithful.

In reference to that, I think of the verse in the New Testament: "Don't be weary in well doing. In due season you will reap if you faint not" (Galatians 6:9). It is so easy sometimes in our walk with Christ to plod along and do the things that are right, but we're not necessarily seeing results. The word from Scripture is to go on. Keep on being faithful. In due season, there will be an outcome. There will be a reaping.

I. God remembers Noah.

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When we left off last time we were at the end of Genesis 7. The fountains of the deep had opened up their waters, and the waters above the earth had rained down. The waters were to prevail upon the earth for 150 days. Then the great phrase is used in Genesis 8:1: “But God remembered Noah” (NIV). Not that God had ever forgotten Noah and his family all during this period of time anymore than God forgets any one of us. But the temptation, certainly from Noah’s point of view, was to assume that in the midst of all of these months of loneliness, when havoc was being wreaked upon the earth, maybe God had forgotten him. That’s a characteristic of the saints of God throughout the pages of Scripture and our own experiences. We sometimes feel God has forgotten us.

For example, I think of the Old Testament prophet Habakkuk, who starts his prophecy with the words “O LORD, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear!” (Habakkuk 1:2, KJV). Have you ever felt that way? How many times must I bring this matter before You and Thou wilt not hear? Or in the words of the Psalmist when he says, “You kept my eyes from closing” (Psalm 77:4, NIV). He’s unable to sleep at night. People in Scripture had that experience also. The Psalmist goes on through verse 9: “I was too troubled to speak. I thought about the former days, the years of long ago; I remembered my songs in the night. My heart mused and my spirit inquired: ‘Will the LORD reject forever? Will he never show his favor again? Has his unfailing love vanished forever? Has his promise failed for all time? Has God forgotten to be merciful? Has he in anger withheld his compassion?’” (NIV).

But in Genesis 8:1, that beautiful phrase comes: “God remembered.” No doubt when the waters began to recede, it is that occasion which brings to Noah’s mind: Yes, God is remembering, God has never forgotten all the way.

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As the waters recede, Genesis 8:1–3 notes that God causes a wind to blow on the earth and also the fountains of the deep and the windows of heaven are closed. We indicated last time that we do not know what kind of climatic or geological changes are instituted by the Flood. I think there are hints to the idea that before the Flood there may have been a more universal temperature on the earth, and then we find in Genesis 8:22 that now there is cold and heat, summer and winter. The possibility exists that the waters receded on the earth was not only through evaporation but also perhaps through the creation of the great ocean basins, through the lifting up of great mountains on earth. It's conceivable that during this period of time tremendous configurations in the earth's structure and climate were changing.

Finally, however, after some period of time the ark comes to rest upon the mountains of Ararat. Notice it is not Mount Ararat, but the mountains—meaning the range in which these mountains were. Specifically, the writer of Scriptures notes the time the ark comes to rest. It is the seventh month on the seventeenth day of the month.

It's instructive to note that the ark rests up on the mountains of Ararat. You think back to Genesis 5:28,29 when Noah was named by his father: "His name shall be Noah, for he shall give us rest." The word *Noah* actually means "the person who brings rest or comfort." Now that is fulfilled. The prophecy his father had for him has come to pass.

There's also another interesting date noted here in Genesis 8:13. In the first month of the 601st year of Noah's life, on the first day of the month, the waters were dried from the earth and Noah removed the covering of the ark. Again, if you want to do any symbolism of numbers, this is the first day of the seventh century of Noah's life. The record of his first six centuries is a record of fertility in terms of God's ability to penetrate the hearts of man. But the beginning of the seventh

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century of Noah's life is a beginning of a new page in human history. In Revelation there is a great deal of thinking that seven is a time of completion. A possibility.

A raven and a dove are also sent forth from the ark. Here is the scientist Noah being very careful at this moment because he does not want to dump his cargo out on an earth that is not ready to sustain it. If he lets the animals go before there is sufficient vegetation, he'd cause destruction to befall the cargo he had on board—that God had caused him to save. So he has to remain in the ark for some months while the waters abate. Not being able to look out of the ark, he sends two birds. One is a raven, which does not return. Of course, a raven would feed on carrion or dead flesh. The other bird is a dove, which he sends out three times. Finally, the dove comes back bringing a freshly plucked olive leaf.

Some people see great significance in this. They say, "Here is a way we can look at God's dealings in our life. The flesh is represented as the raven, the unclean animal, the black thing that feeds on flesh. If you're going to go out on your own to feed on the flesh, you won't return to the safety of the ark and the fellowship of the people of God. But if you become like a dove, which only touches those things that are clean and upon whom the Holy Spirit comes as a dove, then this is suggestive of His work of cleanness.

Again, I'm not so sure I want to be that allegorical. But I think on a more realistic level it should be said that Noah recognizes the dove will bring back something that indicates there is vegetation growing of sufficient magnitude to support the cargo he has on board. So the plucking of an olive leaf to Noah's mind meant that substantive growth had occurred again. The earth was becoming green, and it was now safe to begin the embarking.

II. Replenishing the earth.

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Starting in Genesis 8:15, Noah is instructed by the Lord to go forth from the ark with his wife and children, followed by all of the animals that had been on board the ark. No doubt this was a process of time. Noah would not have wanted to bring these animals out in rapid fashion. Again, he exercised care over them. He would have been anxious to place them in the right kinds of habitats and with the appropriate distances from each other to protect them and cause them safety—to give them time to replenish the earth.

When, however, his work of bringing things out of the ark is done, something very significant occurs. Noah builds an altar. Upon the altar he makes a sacrifice. In Genesis 8:20 we find the phrase “He took of every clean animal and every clean bird.” Probably a more accurate translation of this is “He was choosing from every clean animal and every clean bird.” Not that he offered every clean animal and bird, but rather he chose which ones he would offer. He’s saying, “Thanks, God, for bringing us through.” He’s doing what one of the ten lepers does in the Gospels. When the Lord does a work, only one returns to say thanks. In our own lives too—when we’ve been through a great crisis and God has brought us safely through—it’s important to return and say thanks.

On a deeper level, Noah is saying something else. He is saying that he is spiritually secure only as he relates to God. It is not that he is the hero who has been responsible for the salvation of mankind through the Flood. But even he, Noah—the perfect man—is just man, the man who walks with God and stands in need of a substitute. Throughout the pages of Scripture, beginning with the covering God provided for Adam and Eve by giving them the garments of an animal that was slain and by the lesson he taught through Cain’s unacceptable sacrifice, God has been teaching mankind that the only way we can relate to Him is by the death of a substitute. Of course, God in Christ becomes the perfect substitute for us. He becomes acceptable to God on

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our behalf and makes atonement for us. He brings us into oneness with God, which is the real meaning of atonement. We're at one with God through the death of the innocent.

III. Noah's act of gratitude, his active response to the Lord, then sets in motion some provisions that God makes and that He is going to stick with as long as man exists on planet Earth.

Let's note these conditions that God now makes with man through His free and gracious covenant.

A. One condition that He makes is the preservation of the human race. "Never again will I curse the ground because of man, even though every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood.

And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done" (Genesis 8:21, NIV). This promise is amplified in Genesis 9:11: He will never again destroy the earth by means of flood.

The New Testament says at the end of the age He will destroy by means of fire.

What's the Lord saying here? He's saying, "Even though Noah and his three sons and their wives have come through the Flood safely, I still know what the heart of man is like." God has no illusions. He doesn't get caught away in euphoria and think that Noah and his sons are now the perfect representatives of man and never again will sin infect the earth. He said right at the outset that the imagination of man is evil from his youth. That is, he's going in a direction away from God. To make provision for this, He will not sever man physically from the earth. From the New Testament we realize there is a point He will cut us off spiritually from Him. But He will allow the race to be preserved on planet Earth.

This is a prophecy that has come true. We don't realize that at periods of human history, the life of man on planet Earth is hung by a thin thread. Go back to the Middle Ages and think of the great black plague that ravaged Europe. People wondered if it was going to take in all of

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civilization. Even living in our day, we have the threat of atomic holocaust. We sometimes wonder if some maniac somewhere won't push the wrong button and blow everybody up. Scriptures say no, that won't happen; there's a guarantee of man's presence on earth as long as God allows it. When that's over, God is the one who calls the shots.

B. The second thing God promises is regularity within nature. Genesis 8:22 says, "As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease" (NIV). There are natural disturbances sometimes, but the Lord is talking here about nature on a general level—that it is going to be somewhat reckonable.

A farmer knows that you can plant your seed at a certain time in the year and that at another time of the year you can look forward to a harvest. Nature is going to move on a life cycle to support the life on the planet. God promises this within nature. It will not again totally and completely turn against man as it had in the Flood.

C. A third thing God tells to Noah is to be fruitful and multiply. He's saying to replenish the earth. This was the original command that was given to Adam and Eve in the garden—"Let there be the earth filled with people."

Man has done an adequate job of that. I think the Lord, at this time in human history, is probably saying, "Subdue the earth." By the way, the phrase "subdue the earth" is found in the text in the Garden of Eden, but it is missing in God's words to Noah. Maybe for good reason.

Today there are factors loose in nature that are going to prove extremely difficult for man to cope with. Nature is not going to easily or willingly or ably yield to man's touch. For example, scientists made DDT thinking it would take care of insects and subdue the earth for better farming techniques, only to find that the chemical deposits of DDT were getting into our food supply and were possibly having the potential of poisoning us. All of this reflects the inability of

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man, even with all his scientific techniques, to adequately bring the world under subjection to him. There are still thorns and thistles.

D. The Lord also makes another provision. He indicates that man's relationship to the animal world is to be characterized by the animals' fear of man. He notes in Genesis 9:2: "The fear and dread of you will fall upon all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air, upon every creature that moves along the ground, and upon all the fish of the sea; they are given into your hands" (NIV). Instead of man being afraid of the animals, it's now the animals afraid of man. That's still an enduring part of animal relationship to man, even domesticated animals. They are trained through fear.

How in the world could Noah have gotten all the animals into the ark in the first place? How could the mean animals be kept from eating the tame animals like the rabbits? How could all this have been? God could have done as He did with the lions in Daniel's den and stopped their mouths. But possibly what we see here in Genesis 9 is the first time that real conflict is noted between the animal kingdom and men. It may be that even the nature of man's relationship to animals is now changing. Before, perhaps, there had been the lion lying down with the lamb, but now there is the antagonism that is still a part of the experience of nature on planet Earth.

E. Another provision that God makes in this moment is that physical life should be sustained through death. He says in Genesis 9:3: "Everything that lives and moves will be food for you" (NIV). Earlier, in the Garden, the Lord simply told man that he could eat of every green thing. Plants were both for food and for beauty. There had been no provision regarding the eating of animals. Now man is freely given the right to eat the animals. What happens on the physical level will become true on the spiritual level. If, through the death of an animal, I am kept physically alive through eating it, then on the spiritual level it is true that it is through death,

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namely the death of the Son of God, I can have life. The Lord is teaching this lesson—life comes through death.

One sanctity is kept, however: Blood should not be eaten. Maybe this was originally a provision of mercy, for in some savage atmospheres animals will be shot and the meat literally carved out of the animal while it is still alive. This is certainly not an act of mercy, so God is taking care of the animal world here. But beyond this, He's saying something about the uniqueness of blood. God has other purposes for blood than that it should be involved in our digestion. He has the purpose for blood as He'll later reveal: "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness for sin" (Hebrews 9:22). So this is kind of a prophecy of Christ, whose blood provides a covering for us. His blood substituted for ours gives us life.

In these provisions after the Flood God is also guaranteeing a sacredness to human life. Genesis 9:5,6 says, "And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each man, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of his fellow man. 'Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man'" (NIV). Here's a startling thing is being said again. It's being said only to Noah and his three sons, but God anticipates that the presence of sin is still so deeply within the human race that there will be murder. Even as there was murder before the Flood, so there will be murder after the Flood.

Initially, God had met murder with mercy. When Cain killed his brother, God was merciful to him. But that mercy was only stepped upon, so that at the end of Genesis 4, Lamech, the descendant of Cain, kills a man for the offense of striking him. Now the Lord is saying in respect to murder, "Here is the law. There will be no tribal vengeance. If someone in your family or clan

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is killed, you do not have the right to go and wipe out everybody else.” There’s a limitation of vengeance imposed through this command.

But there is also tit for tat being employed. Lamech is saying, “I killed somebody for striking me.” This is saying that’s no longer possible. The crime must meet the punishment and the punishment the crime. You do not kill a person for simply striking you. So the institution of this provision of capital punishment is an act of mercy in this instance.

It should also be said that God is really forming the foundations of human government here. The act of taking someone else’s life will not be left to the person himself as an act of vengeance.

Instead, it will be entrusted into what will eventually become government, which is how people operate together and keep law. It is the use of force given into the hands of people who will use the force to keep back that which is wrong.

It gets depressing, doesn’t it, to read through this and recognize the tension in nature and the tension there’s going to be in the human experience. It’s even depressing to look at the tension in your own life, in your own heart. But to meet our needs, God establishes a covenant with us.

F. That’s another provision after the Flood—the covenant that God makes. It is a covenant that is universal in its scope. It includes all. Look at Genesis 9:9,10: “I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature” (NIV). The covenant in this case was that God would not again destroy the world by flood.

When Christ makes a covenant with us, He invites anyone who will to live under His covenant.

His covenant that is established with Noah is a permanent one. This covenant is marked by a sign—the sign of the rainbow—as an indication that God indeed made a promise and He would keep it. If you wondered if God would keep His word, all you needed to do was to look at the rainbow. That, He says, is a sign of My covenant. Genesis is not claiming that rainbows first

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came into existence after the Flood. That's not said in the text. It simply says that the rainbow serves as a sign. It may have been or it may not have been in existence before the Flood. But now it has special significance. It is a reminder. When there are no clouds, when there is no threatening rain, there is no rainbow.

If you want to see the sign of God's preservation in your life, then the best time to look for Him—the best time to praise Him—is when you've gone through a storm, when you've gone through clouds. You can look back and say, "Blessed be God. He met me. His presence was upon me. Had I never had the cloud, I would have never seen the rainbow." God provides that beautiful rainbow. The same elements that produce the storm also produce the rainbow. God says, "This is a sign of my mercy."

IV. Noah, Ham, and Canaan

As we come to Genesis 9:17, I wish we could close our Bibles and go home. I wish that the record of Noah's life ended at this point. I wish the Bible didn't have anything more to say about Noah. But it has something more to say. The Bible will not be easy on any of its heroes. It will tell all. It will tell the good and it will tell the bad. It will give us an understanding of what human life is really all about. The Bible never tries to protect somebody's reputation by glossing over the fact that he erred.

Noah erred. It's like later in the Old Testament when Hezekiah prays for fifteen more years. Those fifteen years become the worst fifteen years of pride in his life. He would have been better off if he'd been taken before those fifteen years took place. Noah would have been better off disappearing when we talked about the rainbow. Wouldn't it have been nice seeing Noah kind of walking in the distance, kind of following the rainbow to the end and walking out of sight with God? But instead we find in verse 20 the following: "Noah was the first tiller of the soil. He

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planted a vineyard” (RSV). The RSV has a poor translation. It gives the idea that Noah was the first tiller of the soil. Grammatically, it’s incorrect as well.

As you look closely, you realize that Adam tilled the soil and also Cain. The better translation of this particular phrase is “Noah, the man of the earth, began and he planted a vineyard.” Not that he was even the first vineyard keeper. After all, Jesus said in the days of Noah they were eating and drinking and giving in marriage. But Noah now begins and plants a vineyard. It takes him some years to get his vineyard going, but we’re hardly conscious of the time elapsing as we read the text. He gets the product from his vineyard and gets drunk. In the process of getting drunk, evidently his clothes are heavy on him and he takes off his clothes and lay down drunk and naked in his tent.

What are we to make of this? How are we to apply this to our own lives? I think several things could be said.

A. One is that past spiritual successes are no guarantee that we are going to automatically live for the Lord from there on without any watchfulness or diligence on our part. We can sometimes look to the past and say, “God met me there.” But God must also meet me here and now. Not only is it important that I be filled with the Spirit at some point in the past, but also that I am filled in the present. Here is what happens to the people of God who begin to coast on how God met them in the past. They begin to slough off in personal spiritual responsibilities and become paralyzed in the present to meet a temptation. Noah is the man who saved the world but endangered his own soul.

When you’re in a place of spiritual ministry, it’s easy to live off the experiences of the past—to feel that what you are doing is still OK, even though the personal life has begun to deteriorate.

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God has met me in the past; it doesn't matter what I do now. Over a period of time, coasting occurs and the great reverses begin to set in.

B. I think also, in reference to Noah, it could be said that the worst defects often come in blind areas of our lives—in an area we really haven't given much concern. After all, Noah could say, I'm the man God used to save the world. As long as the pressure of an ungodly generation was upon him, as long as cynics were persecuting him and examining his faith, he could stand up to the test. But when he's alone and he's done his job, when he goes into his tent and is alone, he begins to be despondent, fretful, and maybe worried. While he can win the world, he can't win the battle within himself. Little temptations begin to come in and unsettle him. He's the first drunk in the Bible.

Isn't it amazing that the first drunk in the Bible is a man of God. He's not the only man of God who got drunk. It seems that after a great spiritual victory comes one of the worst setbacks. Lot is delivered from Sodom and the next time you see him he's drunk and having incestuous relationships with his two daughters. Samson can conquer the world, he can conquer the Philistines, but he can't conquer Delilah because he slips in an emotional area of his life where he's not prepared to meet the temptation. He can win when the pressure's on him, but when the pressure is off and when seduction sets in—capitulation occurs. Often we are tempted in areas where we seem to others to be the least susceptible. Maybe Noah was just plain tired of being heroic. Maybe he's plain tired of people saying, "Noah isn't tempted like the rest of us. He's godly, spiritual." He's not the big hero everyone thinks he is. He began to pour a lot of pity on himself.

I understand why Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9:27: "Lest having preached to others, I myself should become a castaway." I think he's thinking about people like Noah and Lot and others.

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Lest having preached to others, in a moment of carelessness I allow something into my life that will deteriorate my soul and my relationship with the Lord.

The instance of Noah's drunkenness is compounded by the situation that follows. His son Ham comes in and sees the nakedness of his father and tells his two brothers about it. Then when Noah awakens he learns what has happened—that Shem and Japheth come in and don't see their father's nakedness but instead put a garment on him while their faces are turned. Noah wakes up and says, "Cursed be Canaan. A slave of slaves shall he be to his brothers."

But it was Ham that saw his nakedness. And besides, what was so serious that it would merit that kind of a punishment? And if it was Ham that committed the sin, why is Canaan being cursed?

Whenever Ham is seen in Scripture, in most cases he's identified immediately as the father of Canaan. Why would the son be cursed? He is one of four sons as seen in Genesis 10:6 and following. But if it is Ham who looks upon his father's nakedness and if that's such a serious thing, why is Canaan the one who is cursed? Why does Scripture frown so upon a son seeing his father naked and lying in a drunken stupor?

One view is that these three sons had been brought up in an atmosphere before the Flood, which was very licentious. Some have seen a deeper significance in this phrase "saw the nakedness of."

For example, in Matthew 5:28, Christ uses this thought in reference to a man committing adultery with a woman in his mind: "Whoever looks upon a woman to lust after her." The meaning there is to look, not in a glancing way, but to look and keep looking until one acts out in his mind what has originally been suggested. This phrase in Genesis suggests of latent homosexuality within Noah's own son—incestuous homosexuality of a most perverted kind.

This may help explain some of the severity of the curse.

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But I would prefer this point of view: What is reflected in Ham's treatment of his father is a cruel condemnatory spirit, a casualness and possible indifference to the plight of his father. When he first saw his father, rather than pouncing on him with judgment his response should have been one of mercy—as the other two sons showed in covering up their father. But evidently Ham sees the nakedness of his father, and instead of waiting until his father is awake and talking to him, he immediately goes out and tells his two brothers. Also, the inference is that he does it in a condemnatory kind of way. He's letting the news out: "Old dad has sinned. Dad, the man of God. I knew he was a hypocrite all along."

Ham is the first critic to emerge after the Flood. If we looked deep enough in every one of our lives, we'd find things from the past that may have been covered by the blood of Christ and forgiven—but we still wouldn't like somebody to uncover them and bring them out in the open.

There are those dark spots within human life that, if someone like a Ham were to come along and uncover us and expose us with judgment, that's all we'd have. There is no grace, no mercy.

There's simply condemnation.

I see this judgmental level with children, particularly teenage children toward their parents. Sure, your parents aren't perfect; sure, you're not perfect; sure, Noah wasn't perfect. Instead of responding in love and consideration and compassion and mercy and kindness, Ham pounces with the finger of judgment at his father. God has a different attitude toward us. It's reflected in Paul's letter to the Galatians: "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness, looking to yourselves lest you too should be tempted" (6:1,2).

If we're looking to one another to find our faults, they'll be found. They can be discovered; they can be exploited; they can be talked about. But the key to solving the problems and the trouble is

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not to condemn, nor is it simply to do nothing. Matthew 18:15–17 provides us with the answer: Go to your brother individually and talk with him. If he's reluctant to repent or if he shows rebellion against God, take another with you. If that is not sufficient, then finally bring it out so it can be seen and dealt with.

Kindness in life, kindness in the church, kindness in the home, kindness in work, generosity toward other people—all of these qualities Ham does not show. He is quick to pronounce judgment. He cannot find words of mercy and salvation; he can only condemn. He cannot save. When Noah arises, he says, “Cursed be Canaan.” How shall we understand this? We know Canaan was the son of Ham, and I think we need to understand the historical context in which this was written. Moses wrote it at a time when the Children of Israel were coming into the Promised Land. And who was in the Promised Land? The Canaanites. We know from records outside Scripture as well as within the Scriptures that these kinds of people were depraved in their relationships to the extent of offering child sacrifice, to the extent of practicing all kinds of gross immorality in association with worship. These were the descendants of Canaan. It would be Canaan who was to become the Children of Israel's slave. Israel would come in under Joshua and take the land, and Canaan would serve them.

So when Noah first pronounced this word, it was a prophecy of something to come. Very significantly what begins to happen is, as he looks at Ham, he says, “The perverse tendencies in you are going to be expanded, amplified, and brought out in your son Canaan. If you have a judging and condemnatory spirit, then your son Canaan is going to be infinitely worse. Cursed is he.”

How could this happen? I point you to the example in Genesis 4—the story of Cain who killed his brother. We go down his descendants and all of a sudden, at the end of the chapter, we run

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across a guy by the name of Lamech. He's a hundred times worse than Cain. All the things that were in seed form in Cain's life are amplified and magnified in his son Lamech, who is far more evil than Cain. But the propensity to evil is there. As Noah looks at Ham, he sees through prophecy that all of those wrong qualities in Ham are going to come out in his son Canaan. Canaan will be infinitely worse. Therefore, cursed be Canaan.

I get to the end of Genesis 9 and I feel discouraged. I look at a godly man like Noah, and I see that even somebody like him failed. Then I look at the way most of the human race is going—like Ham and his son Canaan—and I feel “What is the hope?” When I get to the end of Genesis 9, I'm ready to look for a person who is perfect. I'm ready to look for a person I can depend upon. I'm ready to look for a person who isn't one thing today and another thing tomorrow. I'm willing to look for a person who is yesterday, today, and forever the same. When I get done with the record of God's heroes and I'm finished with that, I want something more. I want to see Jesus. I need someone I could look at as the perfect representative of what God intended life to be like. I need someone who never fails. I need someone who walks with God and goes through the storm and comes out triumphant and resurrected. I need a perfect man. I need a God who reveals himself in the form of flesh to show me not only what I need to be as a human being, but also what I need to be as a divine son of God myself. I need Jesus.

Noah is not enough. I would never trust in Noah for my salvation. I wouldn't trust Ham, Canaan, Adam, anybody. There's only one I can trust—Jesus, the Christ. He is the perfect man and the divine Son of God.

Closing Prayer

Lord, You have so many ways of taking these portions of Your Word and applying them to our lives. In so many ways You'll be breaking the bread of life to our hearts now as we wait in

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prayer. Maybe through Your Word this morning, You're speaking intimately and deeply into the thought life of an individual who has walked with You. But now in their emotional life they feel they're in a drunken stupor, lying naked—one who has done all for You but now in this personal moment feels very cut off and despondent and alone. Lord Jesus, come in Your great mercy and Your great comfort and restore to that brother or sister the joy of their salvation. Pick them up. Lift them up. I pray especially for all of us, because it is very easy to be judgmental of others. Lord, keep us from being judges. Keep us so sensitive and in tune with You, Lord, that we can understand the meaning of the word "restore."