

NOON BIBLE STUDY: GENESIS 9

THE FLOOD WATERS HAVE LOWERED AND DRY LAND HAS APPEARED. NOAH AND HIS FAMILY LEAVE THEIR ARK HOME OF THE LAST MONTHS AND STEP OUT ON THE EARTH AGAIN. WE WILL DISCOVER IN GENESIS 9 THAT A NUMBER OF THINGS IN THE WORLD HAVE CHANGED SINCE THIS FLOOD AND SADLY THAT SOME THINGS HAVE NOT.

GENESIS 9:1-7 - NEW CHARGE TO HUMANITY

THIS IS VERY REMINISCENT OF GOD'S CHARGE TO ADAM IN THE BEGINNING OF GENESIS. NOAH IS FULFILLING THE ROLE OF THE NEW ADAM - GOD'S MAN ON THE EARTH ENTRUSTED WITH ITS STEWARDSHIP AND MANAGEMENT. GOD BLESSES NOAH AND GIVES CERTAIN CHARGES TO HIM AND HIS FAMILY WHICH ARE THE SAME AS THEY WERE TO ADAM, AND SOME THINGS HAVE CHANGED.

SAME: BE FRUITFUL
 MULTIPLY
 FILL THE EARTH

DIFFERENT: ANIMALS WILL FEAR HUMANS
 "EVERY MOVING THING THAT IS ALIVE" SHALL BE FOOD (AS OPPOSED TO JUST PLANTS/TREES)
 DO NOT EAT FLESH WITH ITS BLOOD
 WHOEVER TAKES ANOTHER HUMAN'S WILL HAVE THEIR OWN LIFE TAKEN

Q - WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THESE CHANGES?

GENESIS 9:8-17 - GOD'S COVENANT WITH HUMANITY

WHEN GOD FIRST CALLED NOAH TO BUILD THE ARK, HE HAD PROMISED TO MAKE COVENANT WITH HIM (GENESIS 6:18). THIS IS THE MOMENT WHEN THAT HAPPENS. LET'S REMEMBER WHAT WE HAVE ALREADY LEARNED ABOUT "COVENANTS"

"A COVENANT IS A SOLEMN AND BINDING AGREEMENT BETWEEN TWO OR MORE PARTIES TO DO OR NOT DO CERTAIN THINGS. COVENANT (HEBREW: *BERIT*) IS THE PRIMARY WAY THAT THE LORD WILL WORK AND INTERACT WITH HUMANS IN SCRIPTURE AND HIS COVENANT WITH NOAH, HIS FAMILY AND THE CREATION ITSELF IS THE FIRST OF ITS KIND AFTER THE DOWNFALL OF HUMANITY.

THE BASIC PATTERN OF A BIBLICAL COVENANT IS THIS: I (THE LORD) WILL DO (THIS) FOR YOU IF YOU, (HUMAN), AGREE TO DO/NOT DO (THIS). THINGS WILL BE GOOD IF YOU OBEY, AND THINGS WILL NOT GO WELL IF YOU BREAK THE TERMS. A UNIQUE ELEMENT TO MAKING A COVENANT WITH GOD IS THAT HE IS ALWAYS ABLE TO KEEP HIS END OF THE AGREEMENT!"

THIS FIRST COVENANT IS UNIQUE BECAUSE IT DOES NOT INCLUDE A BINDING TERM FOR HUMANS TO KEEP. IT IS AS IF NOAH'S FAITHFULNESS HAS ALREADY IMPRESSED THIS COVENANT MAKING GOD. GOD PROMISES TO NOAH (AND ALL HUMANS AFTER HIM) AND

THE ANIMALS THAT HE WILL NEVER SEND A EARTH-DESTROYING FLOOD AGAIN. FOR US LIVING TODAY WE HAVE LIKELY BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THIS PROMISE AND DON'T THINK ABOUT IT MUCH - BUT THINK ABOUT NOAH AND HIS FAMILY AS THEY BEGIN THEIR NEW LIVES IN THIS NEW WORLD.

CAN'T YOU JUST IMAGINE THEIR CONCERN OR ANXIETY BEING SOOTHED AS GOD MAKES THIS PROMISE? THEY HAD JUST LIVED THROUGH THIS FLOOD AND EXPERIENCED FIRST HAND ITS DEVASTATION AND POWER. PERHAPS THEY WERE FEARFUL THAT IF THEY OR THEIR DESCENDANTS SINNED, GOD WOULD SEND ANOTHER FLOOD. DID THEY WORRY THAT THIS WAS GOING TO BECOME A NORMAL OCCURRENCE? DID THEY DREAD THAT THE GOD OF CREATION WAS GOING TO MAKE THIS A COMMON EVENT?

THOSE QUESTIONS AND FEARS ARE ANSWERED WITH THIS COVENANT PROMISE.

NOAH'S FAMILY STEPS INTO THIS NEW WORLD AND GOD PROMISES TO NEVER FLOOD THE EARTH LIKE THIS AGAIN. AND HE SETS THE RAINBOW IN THE SKY AS AN ETERNAL REMINDER OF THIS PROMISE. THE NEXT TIME THE SKIES GREW DARK AND RAIN CLOUDS FORMED, HUMANS HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING WHEN THE RAIN WOULD STOP - YET IT WOULD AND THE COLORS IN THE SKY WOULD REMIND THEM THAT IT WAS ONLY A PASSING SHOWER - GOD IS FAITHFUL. EVENTUALLY THEY WOULD LEARN THE NEW RHYTHMS OF THE WEATHER PATTERNS AND THEIR ANXIETY WOULD BE WASHED AWAY.

DON'T YOU JUST LOVE HOW GRACIOUS GOD IS TO DO THIS? RATHER THAN HAVING THE CREATION LIVE IN FEAR OF HIS NEXT UNKNOWN OUTBURST OF ANGER OR JUDGMENT, THE GOD OF THE RAINBOW WANTS HIS CREATION TO LIVE IN PEACE, KNOWING HE IS NOT FICKLE, BUT FAITHFUL. WHEN WE SEE THE RAINBOW IN THE SKY GET EXCITED AND WE MAY EVEN RECITE THESE VERSES, REMEMBERING THIS CHAPTER BUT WE HAVE NO WAY OF UNDERSTANDING HOW MUCH THESE BOWS OF COLOR STRETCHED OUT IN THE HEAVENS MUST HAVE MEANT TO NOAH AND HIS FAMILY.

GENESIS 9:18-19 - NOAH'S DESCENDANTS

AS WE MENTIONED ABOVE, NOAH IS A NEW ADAM IN SOME SENSE AND HIS CHILDREN, SHEM, HAM, AND JAPHETH WILL BE THE FAMILIES THAT WILL REPOPULATE AND FILL THE EARTH. EVERY SINGLE HUMAN THAT HAS LIVED AFTER THE FLOOD IS RELATED TO NOAH AND WOULD TRACE THEIR FAMILY LINE BACK TO ONE OF HIS SONS.

GENESIS 9:20-24 - BOYS WILL BE BOYS? SINNERS WILL SIN!

YOU CAN TAKE THE SIN OUT OF THE WORLD BUT YOU CANT TAKE SIN OUT OF THE HEART OF MAN.

NOAH GOT DRUNK, SOMETHING THAT WAS LIKELY NOT GOOD - BUT THE TEXT DOESN'T HAVE TIME TO ADDRESS THIS SIN BECAUSE OF THE EGREGIOUS NATURE OF WHAT HAPPENED NEXT. NOAH, WORKING HIS VINEYARD, DRINKS TOO MUCH AND LAYS IN HIS TENT AND "UNCOVERS HIMSELF" TO COOL OFF.

HIS SON HAM WALKS BY, SEES HIS FATHER NAKED AND THEN LIKELY DIDN'T TURN AWAY IN EMBARRASSMENT OR DISGUSTED BY AN ACCIDENTAL GLANCE. INSTEAD HE GOES AND TELLS HIS BROTHERS OUTSIDE WHAT HE SAW AND PERHAPS EVEN INVITED THEM TO TAKE A LOOK. RATHER THAN DISHONORING THEIR FATHER LIKE HAM DID, SHEM AND JAPHETH "WALKED BACKWARDS" AND COVERED THEIR FATHER UP WITH A GARMENT, "SO THEY DID NOT SEE THEIR FATHER'S NAKEDNESS". EVEN IN NOAH'S FOOLISHNESS, HIS TWO OLDER SONS HONORED THEIR FATHER.

NET BIBLE NOTE: "IT IS HARD FOR MODERN PEOPLE TO APPRECIATE WHY SEEING ANOTHER'S NAKEDNESS WAS SUCH AN ABOMINATION, BECAUSE NAKEDNESS IS SO PREVALENT TODAY. IN THE ANCIENT WORLD, ESPECIALLY IN A PATRIARCHAL SOCIETY, SEEING ANOTHER'S NAKEDNESS WAS A MAJOR OFFENSE. BESIDES, HAM WAS NOT A LITTLE BOY WANDERING INTO HIS FATHER'S BEDROOM; HE WAS OVER A HUNDRED YEARS OLD BY THIS TIME."

HAM SINNED BY LOOKING INAPPROPRIATELY AT HIS FATHER. HAM ALSO SINNED BY DISHONORING HIM IN HIS THOUGHTS/HEART AND INVITING HIS BROTHERS TO DO THE SAME. NOAH WASN'T PERFECT, BUT HIS SON ACTED IN A DELIBERATELY EVIL WAY.

HERE WE GO AGAIN.

(SIDE NOTE: SOME HAVE SUGGESTED HAM ACTUALLY COMMITTED A HOMOSEXUAL ACT ON HIS FATHER BUT THE TEXT TELLS US HE "SAW" THE NAKEDNESS OF HIS FATHER AND TOLD HIS BROTHERS. THIS IS NOT THE SAME PHRASE AS THE "UNCOVERING OF NAKEDNESS" FORBIDDEN IN LEVITICUS 18.)

GENESIS 9:24-29 - THE CURSING OF CANAAN BECAUSE OF HAM

THE CONSEQUENCE UPON HAM IS THAT HIS SON, CANAAN, WILL BE CURSED. AT THE SAME TIME OF THIS CURSING, NOAH "BLESSES" HIS TWO OLDER SONS SHEM AND JAPHETH. BECAUSE OF THE SIN OF HAM HIS CHILD CANAAN AND CANAAN'S DESCENDANTS WILL BE CURSED AND SHALL BE THE "SERVANT OF SERVANTS" (A VERY LOW POSITION). SHEM WILL BE "BLESSED OF THE LORD" AND WILL RULE OVER CANAAN. JAPHETH IS ALSO BLESSED AND NOAH ASKS THAT GOD WOULD "ENLARGE" JAPHETH (GIVE HIM MUCH LAND AND DESCENDANTS) AND ALSO WILL RULE OVER CANAAN.

THIS INSTANCE OF BLESSING AND CURSING WILL BE MODELED ELSEWHERE IN GENESIS BY THE PATRIARCHS WE WILL MEET. THERE WAS A SERIOUSNESS AND POWER TO THE WORDS OF THE FATHERS ON BEHALF OF GOD OVER THEIR CHILDREN. THESE "BLESSINGS" AND "CURSES" WEREN'T HOPES OR WISHES, THEY WOULD BECOME PROPHETIC PRONOUNCEMENTS OVER THEIR LIVES AND FUTURES.

ILLUSTRATING THIS, WE WILL LEARN IN GENESIS AND IN EXODUS AND BEYOND THAT ABRAHAM AND HIS DESCENDANTS, THE CHILDREN/NATION OF ISRAEL ARE FROM THE LINE OF SHEM AND WILL INHERIT, INVADERS AND RULE OVER THE LAND OF THE "CANAANITES" - THE VERY DESCENDANTS OF HAM THAT ARE CURSED BY NOAH HERE IN GENESIS 9. THE CANAANITES WILL BECOME IDOL WORSHIPPERS AND THOUGH IT WOULD TAKE MANY YEARS AND GENERATIONS, SHEM'S PEOPLE WILL RULE OVER THEM. THIS ENTIRE STORY GOES BACK TO THIS MOMENT.

GOD WANTS THE MODERN HUMAN READER TO BE CLEAR - THERE WON'T BE ANOTHER FLOOD OF WATER TO WIPE OUT ALL LIVING THINGS - BUT THERE IS STILL A CONSEQUENCE TO SIN. THOUGH HE MADE A GENERAL AND FULL CLEARING OF EVIL INTENTIONS AND SIN WITH THE FLOOD, EVIL STILL RESIDES IN THE HEART OF HUMANS.

YOU CAN TAKE THE SIN OUT OF THE WORLD BUT YOU CANT TAKE SIN OUT OF THE HEART OF MAN.

SO ULTIMATELY GOD WILL BE AT WORK, NOT TO CREATE A WORLD WITHOUT ANY FLAWS BUT INSTEAD CRAFT A PLAN TO SAVE HUMANS FROM WHAT REALLY ILLS THEM - THEIR OWN INNER DESIRE AND PROPENSITY TO EVIL AND REBELLION TOWARDS GOD. THE HUMAN RACE NEEDS HELP - THE HUMAN RACE NEEDS SAVING - AND GOD'S PLAN DOESN'T INVOLVED ANOTHER ARK THAT WE NEED TO BUILD TO BRING SALVATION - INSTEAD GOD IS GOING TO SEND A SAVIOR. WE DON'T NEED TO START CUTTING DOWN TREES TO BUILD A BOAT, WE NEED TO LOOK TO THE ONE WHO DIED ON THE TREE WHO ONLY IS OUR HOPE.