

THE SONS OF NOAH (II)

"NOAH'S THREE PROPHECIES"

By Arlen L. Chirwood

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

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

And he said, Blessed be the Lord God 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" (Gen. 9:24-27).

Noah's three prophecies concerning His sons (Ham, Shem, and Japheth) in Genesis chapter nine are prophecies having to do with *the nations of the earth*. These prophecies, as evident by their contextual setting and content — dealing with *a new beginning in the human race, necessitating all-inclusiveness* — have to do with *federal headship and the prophetic destinies of races comprising nations, with the prophecies in this respect not limited to the three individuals in the prophecies but to their descendants as well* (Gen. 9:18, 19; 10:1-32).

These are *not* prophecies which lend themselves after any fashion to *racism, to racist-type teachings*, as some attempt to deal with them. And because these prophecies have been used in a perverted manner to teach and foster racism, people often either shy away from them or make them to be something

completely alien to that seen in the text.

The prophecy that is often singled out and made to be *a racist issue* rather than *a national issue* is the first of the three prophecies — having to do with Noah's curse of Ham's son (Canaan), who, since Noah cursed this son alone, was apparently *the only son* that Ham had at this time, a time shortly after the Flood (v. 22). And Noah cursing Ham's only son (cursing Ham's seed) provided *the necessary headship and all-inclusiveness to the matter*.

(Sons shown in a list in Genesis chapters five through eleven are listed in the reverse order of their birth [*e.g.*, see Gen. 5:32; 11:26, where this can be shown from other Scriptures (*cf.* Gen. 5:32; 7:11; 10:21; 11:10, 26, 32; 12:4)]; Canaan is listed *last* among the four sons of Ham in Gen. 10:6, showing that he was *Ham's firstborn*.)

Beginning at the proper place with the introductory prophecy — which is the prophecy forming the problem area for many — the remaining two prophecies can be easily and naturally dealt with, for the first prophecy is referred to in each of the succeeding two prophecies, with all three forming *an inseparable unit*.

In the first prophecy, How long was the curse to last? Does the curse involve only one of Ham's sons? Is the curse still in effect today? Questions of this nature are what people attempt to deal with (or, in many cases, attempt to avoid), often committing mayhem in Biblical interpretation in the process.

There is a solution though: Simply *allow Scripture to address the issue* rather than follow the usually inserted humanistic reasoning.

Does Scripture really address the issue in this type completeness? Certainly it does! Do you think that God, through Noah, would pronounce a

curse upon an individual where the federal headship and prophetic destinies of the nations are in view and not let man know the extent of and how long this curse would last, or not let man know the extent of and how long other things in the prophecies concerning Shem and Japheth would last?

Answers to questions pertaining to the matter are very simple to ascertain.

The curse is seen in verse twenty-five.

"Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren" (v. 25).

The curse is then referenced in verse twenty-six in connection with something said about Shem, and it is referenced again in verse twenty-seven in connection with two things said about Japheth.

Now, some questions:

How long will that stated about Shem in the first part of verse twenty-six (which is immediately followed by a reference to the curse from v. 25) remain in effect?

"Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant" (v. 26).

As well, how long will that stated about Japheth in the first part of verse twenty-seven (which is immediately followed by a reference to the curse from v. 25) remain in effect?

"God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant" (v. 27).

The answers to both questions would be the same. If a person brings matters from the time that these prophecies were given down into modern times, he will see that both prophecies have remained

in effect since Noah's day, with God continuing to work matters out relative to these prophecies today.

The descendants of Shem (in the line later revealed to go through Abraham's lineage through Isaac and Jacob) continue today as *the only nation with a God* (e.g., Ex. 3:6; Ps. 72:18; 96:5; Eph. 2:11, 12). Japheth is still being *enlarged*, with his descendants presently covering a large part of the globe. And the descendants of Japheth (and Ham as well) have had to *dwell in the tents of Shem* — i.e., go to the descendants of the only son with a God — throughout this time if they were to receive spiritual blessings.

All of these things are *established, undeniable facts*.

Now, what about the length of the servitude of Ham's descendants within Noah's prophecies concerning all three sons? The Spirit of God, through Moses, was very careful to place a statement concerning the servitude of Ham's progeny alongside both of Noah's prophecies concerning his other two sons, Shem and Japheth, forming *an inseparable connection* between the things stated about all three of these sons.

The prophecies concerning both Shem and Japheth extend into modern times through their lineages. By what rule of Scriptural interpretation could something different be said about the prophecy pertaining to the lineage of Noah's other son, Ham? *Seeing something different in this respect would be impossible*.

That stated about all three sons *must exist together and extend throughout the same time during Man's Day*. If one part of the three prophecies is still being worked out, then *all things* within the three prophecies must be included, with *all things* still being worked out. Because of the manner in

which the prophecies were given and are structured, *there is no way to get around this and say or think anything different*.

If *all of Ham's seed* is not seen in the preceding continuing respect, then Scripture has three connected prophecies dealing with the federal headship and destinies of nations in the human race throughout Man's Day in which any continuing reference to a part of the human race is absent. *That, as well, would be impossible*.

Then, to understand the all-inclusive nature of the curse pronounced upon Ham's lineage, note that all three prophecies begin in an all-inclusive manner — *with Ham, Shem, Japheth, and their progenies*. And though the prophecy in Shem's case was later revealed to narrow to only part of his seed (Abraham, through Isaac and Jacob), that is not seen within the lineages of Ham and Japheth.

These are prophecies pertaining to *the whole of mankind from the time that they were uttered throughout the remainder of Man's Day*.

(Note also why Noah cursed Canaan instead of Ham, though Ham's act had brought about the curse. Ham was among those whom God had previously blessed [Gen. 9:1]. Thus, Noah couldn't curse Ham. He did the only thing that he could have done — curse Ham's son [Ham's seed], where the curse would end up anyway.)

People are afraid to deal with this prophecy in the preceding respect though because they are afraid of being linked with racism. However, racism is not even remotely connected with issues emanating from any of these prophecies. This is something which man has brought over into the matter.

If an individual sees these prophecies for ex-

actly what they are — *prophecies concerning federal headship and the prophetic destinies of the nations* — problems won't exist. But if an individual begins misusing this section of Scripture, along with attempting to understand matters from the standpoint of humanistic reasoning, that individual will invariably fail to even begin to understand the prophecies, often causing major problems, along with leading others astray.

The thought that God would pronounce a curse through Noah on a segment of the human race which would last for millenniums is objectionable to the modern mind, mainly because of issues emanating out of man bringing *racism* into the matter, along with the associated *political correctness* of the day.

But are God's previous curses in Genesis chapter three — resulting from Satan's actions and Adam's sin — objectionable? After all, they have been around much longer and are far more extensive. The entire human race, along with the earth and Satan, are involved in these curses; and these curses still exist today and are still presently being worked out.

As God is presently working out matters pertaining to the curses which He established in Genesis chapter three, He, as well, is presently working out matters pertaining to the curse which He established in Genesis chapter nine. And God needs no help from man in either instance.

Simply leave the whole of the matter in His hands, and He will work out the whole of that which He has established in His way, in His time (cf. Zech. 14:21; Acts 3:20, 21).

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