

98-08-02b

Okay, we're ready now to resume in Genesis chapter 9, verse 20. Again, Noah began to be a farmer, and he planted a vineyard. Then he drank of the wine, and was drunk, and became uncovered in his tent.

And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. But Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness.

This is the heart of the story. We know already that Ham has been mentioned as the father of Canaan in verse 18. He's mentioned here again in verse 22 as the father of Canaan.

We know that after this episode, Noah's first words, verse 25, cursed be Canaan. Why is Canaan so involved in this story when it appears to be Shem, Ham, and Japheth who are the primary actors in this episode? Well, we've already seen that Noah was a man of the soil here, Ish Adama in Hebrew, which indicates that he was a farmer, he planted a vineyard, nothing wrong with that. He drank of the wine, nothing wrong with that.

He became drunk, that's not a good idea. If you look at the concept of wine throughout Scripture, it is not inherently a bad thing. It's what you do with it that decides whether it's a good or a bad thing.

Everybody's familiar with the passage where Paul tells Timothy, take a little wine for your stomach's sake and your occasional afflictions. Of course, that's right in the middle of the passage where he's talking about all the people that are giving Timothy a hard time and you get the idea that Timothy's under stress, giving himself an ulcer perhaps. But wine is said to be a gift to man.

If you look at Psalm 104, verse 15, one of the blessings from God to man is said to be wine. God is a list of all the things that God does. He sends the springs into the valleys to give the animals the opportunity to quench their thirst.

In verse 12, the birds of the heavens have their home and sing among the branches. God waters the hills from his upper chambers. The earth is satisfied with the fruit of your works.

He causes the grass to grow for cattle and vegetation for the service of man, that he may bring forth food from the earth and wine that makes glad the heart of man, oil to make his face shine and bread which strengthens man's heart. So in the midst of everything that God provides for man by way of blessing and productive value, wine is included here. So it's not an inherently evil substance.

In fact, it was included as a part of worship. If you look at Numbers chapter 15, verse 5, we find that wine is prescribed as a part of sacrifice. The one who presents an offering to the Lord shall bring a grain offering of one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with one-fourth of a hen of oil.

That's Numbers 15, verse 4. And one-fourth of a hen of wine as a drink offering you shall prepare with the burnt offering or the sacrifice for each lamb. So wine was to be brought, the drink offering was composed of wine. You go on down through, the drink offering is offered to the Lord.

When you prepare a young bull as a burnt offering, it shall be offered with fine flour. And in verse 10, you shall bring as a drink offering half a hen of wine as an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord. So we've just seen Noah offer a sacrifice to the Lord, which the sweet aroma pleases God and God states His intention to never again destroy the earth.

Now Noah has planted a vineyard, has harvested the grapes, has stomped them out, made wine and it has, what is it that wine does? It ferments, cures. And he partakes of this fermented beverage, which is not in and of itself a bad thing. The purchase of wine in Deuteronomy 14.26 was encouraged at festivals.

The 26th verse of Deuteronomy 14 says that in connection with these celebrations, you shall spend the money for whatever your heart desires, for oxen or sheep, for wine or similar drink, for whatever your heart desires, you shall eat there before the Lord your God and you shall rejoice, you and your household. So as a part of the visit to the place where the Lord your God chooses, the place of worship, you spend money, you buy wine, you go there with your family and rejoice before the Lord. So obviously there's nothing the matter with what Noah has done thus far.

We've already seen in our last hour that the vine was a national symbol for Israel. You find this in Isaiah 5, verses 1-7. You find it again in Mark 12, the parable I alluded to earlier of the vineyard that's hedged about.

However, with all of the positive things we can find in the Bible about wine, there are also warnings about wine, there are cautions. For example, in Numbers 6, where you have the Nazarite status, wine is prohibited. In Numbers 6, speak to the children of Israel, say to them, when either a man or a woman consecrates an offering, to take the vow of a Nazarite.

We don't often think of women as being Nazarites, but it says a man or a woman could take the Nazarite vow. To separate himself to the Lord, he shall separate himself from wine and similar drink. He shall drink neither vinegar made from wine, nor vinegar made from similar drink.

Neither shall he drink any grape juice, nor eat fresh grapes or raisins. No contact with the vine whatsoever. No raisins, no grapes, no wine, no grape juice for a Nazarite.

All of the days of his separation, he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grape vine, from seed to skin. Why is that? It's not our subject for this morning, which is a fancy way of saying, I don't know. I'll have to look that up and get back to you.

But it is prohibited. There's a reason why the Nazarites are prohibited, not only from wine, but from anything that even gets close to wine, anything that could turn into wine, anything that's a part of something that could become wine. And I do know the reason for that.

It's the same reason that priests before worship were to abstain from wine. You find this in Leviticus chapter 10 and verse 9. We need to turn there because there is quite a potent penalty for failing to heed this injunction. Leviticus chapter 10, verse 6. Moses said to Aaron and to Eleazar and Ithamar his sons, Do not uncover your heads, nor tear your clothes, lest you die, and wrath come upon all the people.

But let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the Lord has kindled. This is right after the big Nadab and Abihu fiasco where God had to send fire down and incinerate some people. You shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die, for the anointing oil of the Lord is upon you.

And they did according to the word of Moses. Then, in verse 8, the Lord spoke to Aaron, saying, Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations that you may distinguish between holy and unholy and between unclean and clean, and that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them by the hand of Moses.

Isn't that interesting? Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink when you go to the tabernacle of meeting, so that you may distinguish between holy and unholy, between clean and unclean. Partaking of wine, partaking of intoxicating drink defiles a priest. He can't go to the tabernacle of meeting, and it inhibits his ability to discern.

How is he going to function as a priest discerning good and evil, discerning holy and unholy, clean and unclean, if his judgment is impaired by intoxicating drink? It's a statute forever in Israel, and it is designed to enable their discernment and their teaching function, so that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them. You can't teach, you can't be an example, you can't communicate this truth under the influence. And this sheds light on the prohibition for Nazarites.

A Nazarite vow was a vow of separation to holiness. It was a vow of separation from that which defiles. Even the normal healthy things of life, like sexual intercourse, childbirth,

the woman's monthly cycle, these things defiled in Israel, and required cleansing, required a period of purification and so forth.

And so those who function as priests, those who function as Nazarites, are to abstain from this potentially defiling substance. Isaiah tells us in chapter 5 verse 22 that too much wine causes confusion. Not a difficult idea to believe.

We observe this. Some of us, unfortunately, have experienced this. Isaiah chapter 5 and verse 22.

Woe to men mighty at drinking wine! Woe to men valiant for mixing intoxicating drink! They justify the wicked for a bribe. They take away justice from the righteous man. Loss of discernment.

They are confused. They can't adhere to a righteous standard when they're intoxicated. And for that reason, even though all things are permissible, not all things are edifying, and there are many of us in the body of Christ who figure it is better to just leave that particular category of beverage alone.

It doesn't mean you have to. It doesn't mean your righteousness is based on it. But when you see the warning passages in Scripture, why put yourself at risk? Drunkenness is deprecated.

You remember in 1 Samuel chapter 1 when Hannah comes down to pray for a son, Eli looks at her and sees her praying and crying and her lips are moving, but he can't hear her saying anything and he thinks she's drunk. And he comes and rebukes her for being drunk in public until he finds out that she's not drunk. She is in the grip of great emotion.

Interestingly, drunkenness is also linked to self-exposure, to being uncovered. If you look at Habakkuk chapter 2, this is great. We don't get to go to Habakkuk very often, so I think everybody ought to turn there just to get those pages unstuck in your Bible and to figure out where it is.

Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk. It's about four or five books before the end of the Old Testament. But Habakkuk chapter 2 verse 15, Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbor, pressing him to your bottle, even to make him drunk, that you may look on his nakedness.

This is something that happens and has happened all down through human history. It's an old sort of a ploy, and it's a well-known thing that happens where if somebody is anxious for physical gratification with a member of the opposite sex, I guess anymore, it doesn't even have to be the opposite sex, one of the things that they will do is to ply them with intoxicating beverage because, again, inhibitions, judgment, discernment, ability to adhere to a righteous standard is diminished when these things are present. But, woe to the one who does that.

We've had these people that now have these little date rape pills or whatever they are. They drop something in somebody's beverage and it's an intoxicant that knocks them out. They recently convicted a man who had employed this on several different women.

They wake up with no memory of what had happened and the thing that hung him was that he had made videotapes of all of this and they played these in court and that, of course, sealed his fate. He's going to be locked away forever. But, woe to him who gives drink to his neighbor, pressing him to your bottle even to make him drunk that you may look on his nakedness.

You are filled with shame instead of glory. You also drink and be exposed as uncircumcised. The cup of the Lord's right hand will be turned against you and utter shame will be on your glory.

The application of this, obviously, we are not limited to the actual plying of someone with wine to reduce their judgment. But if you carry someone away on a wave of emotion, we saw with Hannah that it can produce a similar effect to be emotionally distraught, to be carried away on emotion. People who use emotional stimulation, whether it's their worship service of music and frenetic activity and shouting and carrying on to impair the judgment, to intoxicate someone with emotion, to reduce their ability to think and to adhere to a righteous standard and then take advantage of them, take something from them while they're in that state, like pass the plate or plant ideas in their minds and pass it off as Christianity, God says this will come back on your own head.

The cup of God's judgment will be poured out on you and your shame and your nakedness will be exposed. There are many in the Christian realm today who are going to find the fulfillment of this prophecy in their own case. We do not distract or impair intentionally someone else's judgment, either with lofty convincing words or with mass hysteria or mass hypnosis or whatever you want to call it where you carry people away.

People do this with shock in some cases. If they're trying to raise money for missions, they'll show grotesque pictures of what's going on and they will use an emotional basis for their plea. Now, it may be a worthy thing to go and help starving people.

It can be a very productive area of ministry for someone who's doing it as unto the Lord. But if you're doing it because you've been shocked by pictures of bony children or you're doing it because you've been emotionally convicted by someone who is intentionally using your emotions to open your wallet, that is abomination in the sight of God. We do right things for right reasons.

If you recognize that you have the means and the motive and the opportunity to do something as unto the Lord to benefit someone who's in need, that's one thing. But you can send money to those very same people and come under this category because you're doing it out of emotional guilt. You're doing it out of some ploy that someone has

foisted upon you rather than having a sound biblical basis.

And we have to know as stewards of what God gives us when to dispense it and when not to. And it's a challenge to not be intoxicated or to allow oneself to be plied with something that impairs our judgment in that regard. So, it confuses us.

It can lead to self-exposure as we see here in Habakkuk. Also, Lamentations chapter 4 and verse 21. Jeremiah writes Lamentations.

He's the weeping prophet. And in chapter 4, verse 21, he says, Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of Edom, you who dwell in the land of Uz. The cup shall also pass over to you, and you shall become drunk and make yourself naked.

In the act of rejoicing, the daughter of Edom is going to become drunk and make herself naked. So, these things are linked. And there is a danger in partaking of the cup, even in joy, and making oneself vulnerable in this way.

If you carry on in that passage, you find out that this is a part of God's judgment on Edom. There are other passages we won't turn to, such as Isaiah 63.6 and Jeremiah 51.57 where the wine is a picture of God's judgment. You will drink that cup of God's wrath.

Again, that's Isaiah 63.6 and Jeremiah 51.57. It is considered demeaning to be uncovered. This goes all the way back to Genesis chapter 3, when Adam and Eve have partaken of the fruit, they knew that they were naked. In Genesis chapter 10, this is our second encounter with nakedness.

Nakedness is a problem for Adam and Eve. They recognize it. They try to remedy it with the fig leaves.

It doesn't work. God remedies it with animal skins. God makes a covering for their nakedness.

To remove that covering is to expose the problem, once again, to be disqualified from approach to God. You remember also that as a part of worship, in Exodus chapter 20, remember God told the Israelites and the priests specifically, don't build a stairway, don't build steps to go up and officiate at the altar, don't do sacrifices up on a platform. He says, thou shalt not go up by steps to my altar, because in doing so, you will expose your nakedness.

And this shamefulness disqualifies them. Their nakedness being exposed disqualifies them to officiate at worship. This is Exodus 20, 26, Deuteronomy 23, 13.

This is another reason they were to wear the long robes. And they were actually to wear trousers. I believe it's in Deuteronomy where God says, you'll make short pants for

yourself to wear under your robe, so that there's no chance of your nakedness being exposed as you officiate on behalf of Israel.

You're sort of the mediator between the people of Israel and God. You're not to expose nakedness in that regard. So they actually have to make trousers to wear under their robes, as well as not building steps up to the altar, so that there's absolutely no chance of them being uncovered.

They're wearing the garments that God prescribed as priests, and they're never to approach without those garments doing their job of covering them up. But this is a little bit different here in Genesis 9, verse 20, because when Noah is drunk and uncovered, where is he? He's in his tent. He's not in Ham's tent.

He's not out in the field. He's not out in the common area of the camp there. It doesn't say he was out there and fell down in front of the grandkids or anything.

He's in his tent. This is the place where you change your raiment. This is the place where you bathe.

This is your private boudoir. And he's uncovered in his tent. Again, there's nothing inherently wrong with that, but because he is drunk, he's vulnerable.

His judgment is impaired. Therefore, he may or may not be conscious at this point. The problem occurs in verse 22.

Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside. You have two verbs there. He saw the nakedness and he told his brothers outside.

We're not sure what the outcome would have been if he had seen it and kept quiet. Probably nothing. But he sees the nakedness of his father and he goes and tells his two brothers outside.

Now, again, we don't understand what is the crime constituted here. You go in the tent and say, Hey, Dad. Oh, wow.

You come back out and say, Hey, Shem, Japheth. Dad's knocked out there in the tent. There doesn't have to be anything wrong with that, but we know from the context here that what Ham does is exceedingly wrong.

It calls forth a curse from the lips of his father that is going to persist through the generations. Generations that descend from Ham are going to be cursed and are going to be slaves and servants to other people as a result of this act. So there's more going on than a look and a comment.

There is something very bad that happens here. What does it mean to be uncovered?

Well, obviously, nakedness to be exposed. We also know that this was a euphemism.

Look at Leviticus 18. Verse 6. God has said in verse 5, You shall keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them. I am the Lord.

None of you shall approach anyone who is near of kin to Him to uncover his nakedness. I am the Lord. The nakedness of your father or the nakedness of your mother you shall not uncover.

She is your mother. You shall not uncover her nakedness. The nakedness of your father's wife you shall not uncover.

It is your father's nakedness. So the question we have to ask ourselves here, and you go on through the chapter of the nakedness of your sister and so forth, uncovering nakedness here is not just running up and raising somebody's dress. This is a euphemism for sexual intercourse.

So the question we have to ask ourselves is, is it possible that this is what is being referred to in Genesis chapter 9? When Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father. Is this in fact a euphemism for incest with his mother? It is attractive as a solution to a couple of problems. First of all, when Noah finds out what has been done, what does he say in verse 24 and 25? Cursed be Canaan.

If you turn over to chapter 10 and look at the descendants of Ham, in verse 6, the sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. Canaan is Ham's fourth son. You would think, well, if it's going to be the line of Ham that is being cursed, he would have cursed Cush.

First of all, we say, why doesn't he just curse Ham? Cursed be Ham. A servant shall he be to his brethren. Ham is not cursed.

Cush is not cursed. Put is not cursed. Mizraim is not cursed.

Who is cursed? Canaan, the fourth son. Why? Well, my suggestion to you is, as a possibility, that Canaan is the offspring of this incestuous encounter that takes place during a period of drunkenness. It is possible that... and this is based on a couple of things.

You think, well, but it says Noah was drunk. It says Noah was uncovered. But here's the thing that strikes me.

It says Noah was uncovered in his tent. And these things take place. At different times, you have all three sons coming into the tent.

Ham comes in and leaves. Later you have Shem and Japheth coming in. Where is Mrs. Noah? Is she outside the tent turning a piece of meat on a spit saying, boy, we've got

this new meat-eating diet here.

I'm going to try it out. Where is she in all this? She's not mentioned, which is suspicious to me, especially since Noah is in the tent. Where is Mrs. Noah? There's no indication that she saw or was aware or spoke up.

I mean, she's not even mentioned. And it is not uncommon for there to be a euphemistic way of referring to some of these things where the husband basically takes responsibility for something that happens with the wife. Secondly, we have... And I'm offering these as suggestions.

I would not die for this. I don't know what happened in the tent. And I'm not really sure.

When I get to eternity, I'm going to say, God, could you please run that particular section of history back for me so I can watch. But something greater than just the catching sight of Noah in an uncovered state. I mean, you have to know that when these guys are out farming and in the fields and cutting down timber and whatever it is they do, it is not that unusual.

Men especially in groups are not all that bashful about their physical selves. I mean, we have communal showers. We have squad bays.

I mean, there just isn't that big a deal. What is it that is so horrific that it produces this curse that affects the entire human race? It's more than just sight. There's no way you can figure out that this was just a glance, an unintended action of some sort.

We also have to ask ourselves, why is Canaan the one who is cursed? But first of all, this happens in the tent. This is going to be the place where Mrs. Noah also lives. And if Noah is having a fine old time with the first batch of wine, it's very likely that Mrs. Noah is there also.

And it is very easy to imagine the two of them having a little private party there in the tent, getting knocked out as it were. Noah, after all, he's 600 plus years old. His ability to hold his wine may not be all that it was when he was younger.

So it's possible that he is unconscious and Mrs. Noah, whether conscious or unconscious, receives this unwarranted physical attention from Ham. There is a problem with this theory, and it is a theory, because it does not say that Ham went in and uncovered Noah's nakedness or that he uncovered the nakedness of his mother. It says he saw it.

And your language over in Leviticus 18, the euphemism, the strict term is if you uncover the nakedness, that's the euphemism for having sex. It doesn't say that Ham uncovered his father's nakedness. It says he saw it.

So what this suggests to me is that this, again, if our guess is correct, and if this is

something that involves Mrs. Noah, that she may have in an inebriated state actually initiated or been a willing participant in whatever this was, and that Ham happens in, Noah's passed out, and Mrs. Noah says, Ham, you've always been my favorite son, and who knows how it went from there. But it indicates that this was not an action that was necessarily initiated by Ham, but something into which he may have been drawn or in which he was a willing co-conspirator. So I don't think that that is a fatal objection, the fact that the language is different, and it says he saw the nakedness rather than he uncovered it.

If he went in, both of them were passed out, and he does violence to his mother physically, that's the uncovered the nakedness language. But you had some pretty libidinous people back in the early days of the Bible, and you find this sort of thing happening other places in Scripture. For example, turn over to Genesis chapter 19.

Genesis chapter 19, verse 30. After the Sodom and Gomorrah, fire and brimstone, Mrs. Lot, pillar of salt episode, Lot went up out of Zoar and dwelt in the mountains, and his two daughters were with him, for he was afraid to dwell in Zoar. He and his two daughters dwelt in a cave.

The firstborn said to the younger, Our father is old, and there is no man on the earth to come into us, as is the custom of all the earth, i.e. there is nobody to come in and be the father of our children. Come, let us make our father drink wine, and we will lie with him that we may preserve the lineage of our father. So they made their father drink wine that night, and the firstborn went in and lay with her father, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose.

It happened on the next day that the firstborn said to the younger, Indeed, I lay with my father last night. Let us make him drink wine tonight also, and you go in and lie with him that we may preserve the lineage of our father. Then they made their father drink wine that night also, and the younger arose and lay with him, and he did not know when she lay down or when she arose.

Thus both the daughters of Lot were with child by their father. The firstborn bore a son and called his name Moab. He is the father of the Moabites to this day.

The younger, she also bore a son and called his name Ben-Ami. He is the father of the people of Ammon, the Ammonites to this day. Ben-Ami, Ben of course means son, you know the movie Ben-Hur, Judah Ben-Hur, he's Judah the son of Her.

Well, Ben-Ami, Am is father, and the I on the end means my, so son of my father. She literally named her child son of my father, Ben-Ami. And that's where you get the Ammonites and the Moabites, two traditional thorns in the side of Israel all the way through their national history.

Well, here you have Canaan. We know what the Canaanites are going to represent in the later history of Israel. We know at the time that Moses is preparing these books for the nation of Israel, where they're headed and who awaits them in the land.

And so we have the link here in the Scriptures of three of the traditional enemies and opponents of national Israel. And certainly the Moabites and the Ammonites are the result of incest. It does not seem all that far-fetched that the Canaanites are likewise the results of an incestuous relationship.

Furthermore, remember the parallel that we went to some length last week and even this morning to note between Noah and Adam. Noah emerges from the ark. God says to him what He says to Adam.

Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth. It's a new beginning. It's a new creation.

Think about what happened with Adam after the first new creation. Adam partakes of fruit and the human race falls as a result. There is cursing that takes place from the mouth of God as a result of this partaking of fruit.

Here we have Noah partaking of fruit. There is a curse that follows. How did that first partaking of fruit come about? Well, you have Mrs. Adam reaching out, partaking of the fruit, and she is involved in this partaking and fall which results in cursing.

Here you have perhaps Mrs. Noah involved in the partaking of fruit which leads to a bad action and cursing to follow. There are some differences that you could explore but because this is somewhat tenuous to begin with I'm not going to lay a lot of weight on that. But it is interesting that you have a parallel to creation with Adam and the animals emerging from the ark and going out to be fruitful and multiply and you seem to have something of a parallel in the fall here where the righteous man is made vulnerable and perhaps along with his wife engages in something that results in a curse.

So it's interesting to speculate on at least. Thirdly, when you look at the language and you see the parallel with Lot you can also think about Reuben. Reuben, the son of Jacob, is cursed.

Why? Why is it Reuben, the firstborn of Jacob, is not the inheritor? He does not receive the double portion and all the other things that belong to the firstborn. He doesn't get the rulership and so on. Why is that? What did Reuben do so that he loses the family priesthood and the rulership and the double portion? You turn over to Genesis 35, verse 22.

It happened when Israel dwelt in the land that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah, his father's concubine, and Israel heard about it. Strong parallel to Noah. His son copulates with his concubine, one of his four wives by whom one of the four mothers of his children.

And you find out later on that this comes back on Reuben. If you look at Genesis 49, verses 3 and 4, you have the dying blessing of Jacob. He says, Reuben, you are my firstborn.

This is Genesis 49, verse 3. Reuben, you are my firstborn, my might and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power. Unstable as water, you shall not excel because you went up to your father's bed, then you defiled it. He went up to my couch, Jacob says.

And so, you find the blessings that Reuben should have inherited as the firstborn devolving to other brothers. Judah gets the rulership. Levi gets the priesthood.

Joseph gets the double portion, and so forth. So, you have the parallel of Lot. You have the parallel of Reuben.

You also find the parallel of Absalom. If you go all the way down to the days of David, in 2 Samuel 16, verse 20 and following, remember when Absalom drives his father out of the town, he takes his father's concubines and puts them up on the roof of the palace and has sex with them in the sight of all Israel. What does all of this represent? Why is it such a heinous crime? It is a violation of the structure of the family.

It is a flaunting of the authority of the father and the dominion of the father in the family. It is a wrecking, an entire turning on its head of the divine design in the family. And it always produces severe consequences.

Every time you find this happening, you find a curse. Moab and Ammon are under a curse. Reuben is under a curse.

Absalom is under a curse. Canaan is under a curse. And so you get the idea here that this is perhaps what happened.

It explains why it is not Ham and all of Ham's children who are cursed, but Canaan who is the fruit of that union. And you say, well, but this seems like it was right after the flood. Obviously it was not because the sons are in existence.

Noah's grandsons are around because when Noah knew what his younger son had done to him, he says, curse it be Canaan. So Ham has already had Cush and Put and Mitzrayim as sons before this happens. And you get the idea that maybe Ham's wife was no longer bearing children.

You get the idea that Mrs. Noah is no longer bearing children. It is very interesting that verse 28 and 29, Noah lived after the flood 350 years, goes back to the earlier genealogies before the flood when all of Noah's ancestors, after they begot their firstborn, they lived so many years and begot sons and daughters. But it doesn't say that about Noah.

Noah and his wife don't have any children after the flood. So it is possible that Mrs. Noah is barren, Mrs. Ham is barren, and so there is some sort of a get-together here with Ham and Mrs. Noah, and it does in fact produce offspring. And that is Canaan, and that is where the curse lies.

It of course is prophetic as well because of the later relationship that the line of Canaan is going to represent to Israel. And that is something that we will explore next week when we continue into chapter 10 and look at the genealogies of each of Noah's sons. But it is fascinating to me, you know how every time in the New Testament, virtually every time you see Judas mentioned, he is stained with his betrayal of the Lord.

It is linked to his name. Here, after the flood, every time you have Ham mentioned, What is his great crime? It seems to be that he is the father of Canaan. And this again is another suggestion that this is in fact what took place in the tent.

We are left with the question, what did Shem and Japheth do when they took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father? If we are correct, the nakedness of Noah is in fact this disarray inside the tent, inside the private living quarters of Mr. and Mrs. Noah. They would have taken this cloak, lifted it up to their shoulders and walked backwards. If they are walking backwards, they can't see where they are going and they can't see their mother or their father in the tent, what are they going to do? They are going to watch for somebody's toes and feet to appear as they walk backward under the edge of the cloak as they are looking down at the ground and when they walk backward and they see these feet, then they are going to throw the cloak backward and cover this shameful disarray inside the tent.

And in that sense, they are not even so much as looking much less looking in the way that Ham did which goes beyond looking into an actual relationship. But that, I would say, is the strongest argument against this view is that it is pointed out twice that Shem and Japheth went backward and covered the nakedness, their faces were turned away and they did not see their father's nakedness. And if seeing the nakedness is the equivalent of having physical relations with Mrs. Noah, you have to say that they did not, somehow it is making a remark that they did not avail themselves of whatever opportunities seem to be there.

But it is a very difficult passage. If you are uncomfortable with the incest approach, like I say, this is not something I would die for. I do think the passage suggests it.

I think the language elsewhere in Scripture suggests it. What does this all mean? If we do understand it this way, so what? This language especially reminds us that Noah is responsible for his wife. It is called Noah's nakedness.

It is Noah's drunkenness. It is Noah's being uncovered in his tent that creates the possibility for this to take place. This is where the vulnerability comes in because Noah

planted the vineyard, Noah made the wine, Noah got drunk, Noah is uncovered in his tent.

One or both of them have left themselves vulnerable. We can do things to leave ourselves open to sin that are not sinful in and of themselves. The classic illustration of this is someone in a position of responsibility in a company and they have a secretary.

Here is a man, he has a secretary working for him who is a woman. He is married. She may or may not be married.

And you say, well, I really sort of find this girl attractive. I want to spend time around her, but I don't want to have an affair or anything. So he says, well, I'll just find an excuse to work late or just enjoy her company.

So he says, well, I've got this project. Miss so and so, can you stay late and work? And you say, there's no sin in that. That's not a sin to work late.

I really do need to get this project done. I really could use her help. And we justify things in our mind.

And it can be in any area of life. We say, well, there's no sin in this. And we approach the edge of propriety and the edge of what's proper thinking, well, this is not actually wrong.

This is not actually bad. This can be what we take in by way of entertainment. This can be activities that we engage in, people that we spend time with, whatever area of life it may be.

And they say, well, there's nothing inherently sinful or wrong in what I am doing. But if it creates the opportunity, if it opens up the possibility, if it makes us vulnerable to being carried away or having someone else take advantage, that is the problem. And that's something we have to watch for.

Planting a vineyard is not sinful. Making wine is not sinful. Drinking wine is not sinful.

Getting drunk makes him vulnerable. And the result is being uncovered in the tent. And however you want to view this episode, if Noah had not been drunk, if there had not been this uncovered situation in the tent, the opportunity for Ham to do what he did would not have been there.

But the curse falls on the one who takes advantage, just like we saw over in Habakkuk. If you ply someone with wine, you take advantage of their vulnerable state, you are going to suffer shame. Your glory is going to be removed.

And so we want to be careful both not to leave ourselves vulnerable and also not to take advantage where someone else has let their guard down or someone else is not acting in the strict proprieties of life. And I will leave you to make your own applications of that.

There are many and varied.