

GENESIS –Lesson 24

Learn: Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil.
I Thessalonians 5: 21, 22

Read: Genesis 9:18-29

The so-called race question has certainly been one of the most important issues of our time. The same is true for the issue of nationalism versus internationalism. The existence of distinctive races and nations and languages is obviously a fact of modern life, in spite of the efforts of many modern sociologists and politicians to break down all racial and national barriers. The problems created by these issues often seem almost insurmountable.

The true origin of the world's races and nations, and the events associated with it, must be clearly understood and placed in right perspective before these problems can ever be adequately resolved. The Genesis record gives us the only fully reliable account of these matters, and it is urgently important that we understand and believe what it says.

In the world today there seem to be several major “races,” perhaps 150 or so nations of some significance, and well over 3,000 tribal languages and dialects. Yet this diversity of peoples and tongues must have come from a common ancestor, because all of these are true men, capable of physical interrelationships, capable of learning and education, and even capable of spiritual fellowship with the Creator, through faith in Christ. The reason that the origin of races and nations is still a mystery to most scientists, is that they are determined to explain man and his cultures in an evolutionary framework.

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1. Who did all people now living in the world come from? vv 18,19
2. Where then did all the physical characteristics of the different nations and tribes come from?
3. It is interesting that Canaan the son of Ham is mentioned, as he was not the only son of Ham, and the other sons of Noah also had sons. What do we learn about the future descendants of Canaan?
Genesis 12:5-7; Exodus 34:11-16

4. Using the following passages concerning Noah and his sons, we can determine that the incident of Genesis 9:20-24 took place quite some time after the Flood. Give the chronology of events.

Genesis 5:32- What was Noah's age when he had his sons?

Genesis 7: 6, 7- Where were his sons in time of life at the Flood, and what was the age of Noah?

Genesis 8:16- Who got off of the Ark?

Genesis 10:6- What position, age wise, in the sons of Ham did Canaan hold?

We see that no children had not yet been born when Noah's family left the Ark, so some time would elapse between leaving the Ark and Canaan being old enough to do what he did. Although God cleansed the corrupt earth of all its evil people, the sinful nature possessed by each person, which they had inherited from Adam, and Satanic temptation, were still a constant threat to Noah and his family.

5. What two incidents revealed this problem? vv 21-24

The first time "wine" is mentioned in the Bible occurs here in connection with the drunkenness and shame of Noah. Undoubtedly the nature of wine was well known to the antediluvians, and there is no indication in Scripture that Noah was not fully aware of what he was doing when he made and drank his wine. Scripture does not fail to call attention to the failures of even the most saintly of men. Noah, having stood strong against the attacks of evil men for hundreds of years, remaining steadfast in the face of such opposition and discouragement as few men have ever faced, now let down his guard. It seemed that all would be peace and victory from now on. After everything he had been through, what harm could there be in a little relaxation and a little provision for the comforts of the flesh?

6. What is the warning of the scripture to this type of thinking? I Peter 5:8

Satan had been unable to corrupt Noah's family before the Flood, although he had succeeded with all other families; but now he seized this opportunity. The formation of intoxicating wine from the pure, healthful juice of grapes is a perfect symbol of corruption and decay. The process of fermentation is a decay process and the effect of drinking the alcoholic product of this decay is likewise, in several respects, a "breaking down," both physically and morally. It is essentially the same process as that of "leavening," which is everywhere in Scripture symbolic of corruption.

Noah doubtless had no intention of drinking to excess, but he did. This seems to have been his only significant moral lapse in a long life of faithful obedience to God under the most difficult of circumstances.

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NOTE: The problem of drinking alcoholic beverages is clear- it causes people (especially leaders) to be deceived (they don't think clearly). The words "strong drink" are from the Hebrew shekar which is used 24 times. The word for "wine" is the Hebrew yayim which is used 139 times. – Dr. David Hocking

7. According to the following verses, who was not allowed to drink any alcohol, and when, and why?

Leviticus 10:1-11

Numbers 6:2-4

Proverbs 31:4-7

I Timothy 3:2,3; 3:8

8. What is presented to us in Proverbs 23:29-35

NOTE: The phrase “moving in the cup” refers to fermentation. There are two mentions of wine as being used for medicinal purposes in the Bible. In the case of Timothy wine was to be used for his stomach problems. This is speaking of pure grape juice and is still done by the Orthodox Jews to replace vitamins when one is sick.

Also, when one is getting ready to die, wine was to be used as a sedative.

- Dr. David Hocking

9. It used to be that believers in Jesus Christ would abstain completely from any alcohol, but in these last years the “church” has become more “enlightened”, sighting their freedom in Christ to do what they please. How might the following verses help us to make the appropriate decision concerning the use of alcohol as a believer?

Ephesians 5:17-19

Romans 14:21-22

I Corinthians 6:12

I Thessalonians 5:21-22

10. What attitude by Ham and Canaan towards Noah and God became evident when they were confronted with Noah’s failure?

NOTE: The word “saw,” in this context implies “gazed at”- evidently with satisfaction. This showed a long- hidden resentment of his father’s authority and moral rectitude.

11. What did Ham quickly do? v 22

NOTE: The literal text means “told with delight.” Ham thought that his brothers would respond as he did to their father’s moral failure.

12. How did Shem and Japheth react to Noah’s condition? v 23

13. When Noah awoke and realized all that had been done. He gave a “curse” and a “blessing.” What curse did he give and to whom did he give it? vv 25-27

14. What were the “blessings” given? vv 26, 27

15. What is Shem’s connection that is his blessing? v 26

The Semites (from Shem-the Jews, the Moslems, the Zoroastrians, etc.) have been predominant in theology, the Japhethites (from Japheth-includes the Greeks, Romans, and later the other Europeans and the Americans) in science and philosophy, the Hamites (from Ham- Egyptians, Phoenicians, Sumerians, Orientals, Africans, etc.) in technology.

Note that these three streams of nations are not “races.” The Bible does not use the word “race” nor does it acknowledge such a concept.

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