

10-1-1946

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### Recommended Citation

Shufelt, J. Ernest (1946) "Noah's Curse and Blessing, Gen. 9:18-27," *Concordia Theological Monthly*: Vol. 17 , Article 58.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol17/iss1/58>

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family tables and conducted home services, thus holding to the faith of their forefathers. Indeed Trzanowski's spirit has remained alive among these people up to the present day. His literary heritage, in the original and in translations, continues to act here as a leaven and confirms the simple peasant folk in faith.

The Slavonic Luther has not yet been silenced among the Slavonic people. This indeed is the hope for the future.  
London, England

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## Noah's Curse and Blessing Gen. 9:18-27\*

By J. ERNEST SHUFELT

This paper has been prepared with particular reference to the modern implications of Noah's curse upon Canaan. With this purpose in mind a rather critical study of the verses noted above has been undertaken. The following notes and conclusions are the result of this study.

Verse 18 begins, "And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem and Ham and Japheth." These three sons are mentioned together six times in the Bible (Gen. 5:32; 6:10; 7:13; 9:18; 10:1; 1 Chron. 1:4), and always in the same order. This would seem, then, to be the order of their ages: Shem being the first-born, Ham next, and Japheth the youngest.

However, in Gen. 10:21 we read, "Unto Shem also . . . the brother of Japheth the elder, even to him were children born." Now, if this translation is correct, then we must consider Japheth the elder brother of Shem. But going into this matter just a little further, we seem to find good grounds for questioning the correctness of the translation. The Hebrew word *gadol*, here translated "elder," literally means "great." When applied to persons, it means the elder (of two) or the eldest. But some Hebrew scholars tell us that it is correct Hebrew usage to treat this word, not as a modifier of the possessive Japheth, but as a modifier of the whole expression

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\* This paper takes issue with the exegesis of Gen. 9:18-27 current in our circles. Several brethren who are competent scholars agree with the essayist. Let the paper be given the impartial, objective consideration to which it is entitled. — Ed.

"brother of Japheth." On the basis of this criticism the verse would read, "Shem, the elder brother of Japheth," instead of "Shem, the brother of Japheth the elder." And this would tend to verify the order of ages suggested above. (See Leupold's *Exposition of Genesis*, page 375.)

Verse 18 continues: "and Ham is the father of Canaan." This is the first time the name Canaan occurs in Genesis, and it introduces him also as a character in the story that is being told. It tells his relationship to Ham and, by inference, his relationship to Noah.

Verse 19 reads: "These are the three sons of Noah; and of them was the whole earth overspread." This simply tells us that Noah had only these three sons of his own and that they were the fathers of the whole human race.

Verses 20-21a read: "And Noah began to be a husbandman, and he planted a vineyard. And he drank the wine and was drunken." This is Scripture's first reference to a vineyard and wine and drunkenness. Scripture speaks of wine as one of God's gifts to men (Ps. 104:15) but also warns against its use whenever temptations and excesses are involved (Prov. 9:2, 5; 23:30-31 *et al.*); and it condemns drunkenness as a soul-destroying work of the flesh (1 Cor. 6:10; Gal. 5:21). And yet it should be said in extenuation of Noah's guilt, in this instance, that he may not have known the intoxicating effect of wine prior to this experience. Moreover, there is not the slightest hint that Noah was ever drunk again.

But even drunkenness that is the result of ignorance and innocence may and sometimes does lead to other very shameful sins. Verse 21 continues, "And he was uncovered within his tent." This shameful exposure of his person was disgustingly vile. It is in full keeping with the Eighth Commandment, however, to presume that this sin was committed unintentionally so far as Noah was concerned; for Scripture tells us that Noah was a God-fearing man, who "became an heir of the righteousness that is by faith" (Heb. 11:7).

Verse 22 reads, "And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brethren without." We notice a tendency here to read into the text more than it says. The Eighth Commandment demands that we "put the best construction on everything" also here. Let us

note, then, that Ham saw his father's nakedness, but under what circumstances the text does not say. Was it accidental and without previous knowledge? Or had he learned of his father's condition from another, for instance, Canaan, and gone to verify what he had heard? The text simply says that Ham saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers without. The fact that he himself did not cover his father's shame and hide the secret of it in his own heart suggests a breaking of the Fourth, and perhaps also of the Sixth, Commandment, but here, too, we should exercise charity in judgment.

Verse 23, however, sets the conduct of Ham's two brothers in sharp contrast to Ham's: "And Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and they went backward, and they saw not the nakedness of their father." We shall note the implications of this contrast in commenting on Noah's blessing (vv. 26-27).

Verse 24 reads, "And Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his younger son had done unto him." This "younger son" is commonly understood to be Ham, the second son of Noah; but there are at least two considerations that militate against the correctness of this understanding.

In the first place, the Hebrew word *qatan*, here translated "younger," literally means "little, small, insignificant"; and when used in reference to persons, it is always used of the least, the youngest of the group, except here. When used of the two sons of Isaac and Rebecca, it is applied to Jacob and properly translated "younger" (Gen. 27:15, 42). It is similarly used of Rachel, the younger of the two daughters of Laban (Gen. 29:16, 18). But when used of the twelve sons of Jacob, it is used only of Benjamin, the youngest (Gen. 42:13 *et al.*). The same may be said of the eight sons of Jesse. Only in reference to David, the youngest, is this word used (1 Sam. 16:11; 17:14). Now, if the same rule is to be applied to the passage before us, the translation "younger" must be ruled out; for there are more than two sons in the picture. And its application to Ham must be ruled out, too; for Ham was the middle son, not the youngest. Efforts to make it appear that Ham is the youngest son have been made, but they are certainly not conclusive.

In the second place, verse 24 says that Noah "knew what his 'younger' son had done unto him." Something dishonorable was done to Noah while he lay drunk within his tent, something so vile that it called forth a curse—not simply the curse of a man, but as we believe on account of Noah's relation to Jehovah, the curse of God. Moreover, verse 22 says of Ham that he "saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brethren without." This is the part that Ham took in this narrative. But it does not even suggest that Ham did anything to his father; for seeing him and telling others about it, is not doing anything unto him.

We must conclude, then, that verse 24 makes no reference to Ham; for Ham was not Noah's youngest son (the little one). Neither was he the one of whom it was said that Noah "knew what his 'younger' son had done unto him." And verse 23 precludes the possibility that the reference is to Japheth, the youngest of the three sons of Noah. Who then was this youngest son of whom we read that Noah knew what he had done unto him?

Let us note that the Hebrew word *ben*, translated "son," is also properly used of grandson. (Note, for instance, Gen. 29:5, and compare it with Gen. 24:47 and 28:5.) Noah was the patriarch, and his sons included his sons' sons. And we noted in verse 18 that Canaan, the youngest son of Ham (Gen. 10:6), was also introduced as a character in this story. He may also be called, according to Hebrew usage, the youngest son of Noah. And this understanding is further supported by the continuity of thought when we read verse 24 and 25 together: "And Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his younger (rather, youngest) son (literally, "his son, the little one") had done unto him. And he said, 'Cursed be Canaan.'" It was Canaan who did something dishonorable, something vile to Noah. What it was, we are not told, unless it be disclosed in the statement concerning Noah (verse 21) "and he was uncovered within his tent." But this much is certain: when Noah awoke from his wine, he knew what was done and who did it. "And he said, 'Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.'"

"And he said (verses 26 and 27; following the marginal readings): "Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan shall be servant to them. God shall persuade Japheth, and

he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be servant to them." Praise is to the Lord, the Lord God of Shem, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. The praise was not upon all the descendants of Shem; for most of them turned from the true God to join the nations, the Gentile nations of the world. Shem lived to see his descendants to the ninth generation and died when Abraham was a mature man. The knowledge and fellowship of the true God was undoubtedly transmitted to Abraham through Shem. And it was soon after the death of Shem that God called Abraham to go out from his home and from his father's house into a strange land, and there He promised to bless him and make him a blessing to all nations.

The land in which Abraham sojourned was the Land of Canaan. God promised this land to Abraham and to his seed. But he did not fulfill this promise until many years later, when Canaan's cup of iniquity was full. It was nearly a thousand years after the pronouncing of the curse upon Canaan, before the promise was fulfilled in respect to the Israelites, the descendants of Shem.

"God shall enlarge (the marginal reading is "persuade") Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem." The Hebrew word here translated "enlarge" is more often translated "persuade." When the word "enlarge" is used, it suggests material blessings; while the word "persuade" suggests spiritual blessings. And while the children of Japheth have enjoyed great material prosperity and influence, it is nearer the truth to consider those blessings as by-products of the great spiritual leadership that came to the Japhetic people than to reverse the emphasis. The Japhethites, too, early joined the Gentile nations that departed from the true God. But beginning with the New Testament era, God the Holy Ghost persuaded very many of them to dwell in the tents of Shem, the tabernacles of the true Israel, the Christian Church.

"And Canaan shall be servant unto them." Just how and when and where this was fulfilled in respect to Japheth is not so certain; for it is not recorded in Scripture. But one thing is certain: There is no justification for the teaching that it was fulfilled in the enslavement of African Negroes during the four or five centuries recently past; for there is no ground

for saying that the Canaanites ever settled in Africa, except possibly the Phoenicians who settled Carthage and were conquered by the Romans.

Only Shem and Japheth are mentioned in Noah's blessing; and it came to them as a reward for the high esteem in which they held their father as shown by their deed of covering their father's shame without permitting themselves to look upon it. They received the promise of the Fourth Commandment. Ham was careless in this matter, and he was not included in the blessing. But this does not justify the position that Ham was cursed. Neither Ham nor his three older sons were cursed. They and their descendants also joined the nations that forsook the true God. But they are comforted, too, by the promise of the Psalmist: "Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God" (Ps. 68:31).

We must conclude, then, that no one is justified in teaching that the curse upon Canaan is a curse upon Ham and his African descendants, or that "history has marked the African races as the descendants of Canaan" (*On Sandals of Peace*, page 7).

High Point, N. C.

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## The Communist Manifesto\*

By PAUL M. BRETSCHER

In June of this year, Jacques Duclos, secretary of the Communist party of France, wrote the following:

In a general fashion, the war with which the world has just been afflicted has led to profound disturbances in our ancient Europe. The ruling classes which appeared in the past as highly — not to say exclusively — representative of national feeling presented the sad spectacle of a group defending their selfish class interests and betraying, in the main, the cause of their country.

On the other hand, it was in the working class that those patriotic and progressive traditions were found which, at the great moments of history, are always expressed by the rising class in society.

In this way, the brilliant prediction of Marx, in his immortal "*Communist Manifesto*" of 1848, was proved to be true. After

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\* This essay was read and discussed in a small study group. It is here submitted in the hope that, in view of present-day trends and debates, our readers will welcome the historical material it contains. — Ed.