

# (Genesis) - Part 11

by Zac Poonen

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*Zac Poonen's sermon explores God's covenant with Noah, the importance of self-control, and the dangers of comfort in the Christian life.*

**Duration:** 58:56

**Scripture:** Genesis 9:21, Luke 5:16

**Topics:** "Genesis"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the importance of self-control and discipline in our lives, using biblical examples. He emphasizes that even though we may have the likeness of God within us, sin can detach us from that image. However, the presence of conscience in both believers and non-believers serves as a reminder of our connection to God. The preacher warns against using this as an excuse to sin, but rather encourages believers to resist temptation and find encouragement in their struggles. The sermon concludes by highlighting the example of Jesus, who maintained self-control and sought solitude in prayer despite gaining fame and popularity.

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## Transcript

This is chapter nine. We concluded our last study in the last verse of chapter eight, where God promised that as long as the earth remained, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night would never cease. And then after Noah came out of the ark, we read here, God blessed Noah and his son.

It says in chapter eight, verse twenty-one, that the Lord smelled a sweet aroma. He thought of who were healed. The first thing he thought of, like that one thankful leper, was that first of all, he needs to give thanks.

He thought of the long period he'd been through the ark, in the ark, and it says God remembered Noah. And how easy it is, after we've been through a period of testing, that when we come out of it, for us to forget to thank God for his care over us. It says, God blessed him and said, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth, and the fear of you and the terror of you shall be on every beast of the earth, and on every bird of the sky, with everything that creeps on the ground, and all of the fish of the sea into your hand they are given.

Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you. I give all to you as I gave the green plant. From Adam up to Noah, a man was called by God to be a vegetarian.

God gave Adam only the plants to eat. Of course, it's quite likely that the sons of Cain and others who disobeyed God in other things probably disobeyed God and ate meat as well. But that wasn't God's will.

But now, from this time onward, we read that God gave to Noah animals also to be eaten. And when we see that it was God who gave that, not just a command. It says in verse 1, he blessed him and said that he could eat.

We see, therefore, that the idea that you can be more spiritual by being a vegetarian is actually a heathen idea, quite contrary to God's word. Because it says, God blessed Noah and told him, you can eat meat. And we read that Jesus ate fish even after the resurrection.

I just mention that in passing because that's one of the doctrines of demons that Paul refers to, will be found in the last days, 1 Timothy 4. It says two of the doctrines of demons mentioned there are that marriage is wrong. You can't be spiritual if you get married. And the other thing is that you can't be spiritual if you eat meat.

Well, these are some of the crazy ideas that even some Christians sometimes have. Verse 4, only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. There was only one restriction, that the blood of the animal should be poured out because the life of the flesh is in the blood.

And interestingly, that's something that God has forbidden in Old Testament times. And when the apostles gathered together to give instructions to the Gentiles in Acts 15, we read that there were three things that they encouraged the Gentiles to abstain from in Acts 15, verse 20. Food offered to idols, from fornication, and from meat which has the blood in it.

It's a very simple restriction that God has made, and it's good for us to obey it. And further in verse 5, And surely I will require your lifeblood from every beast I will require it, and from every man. From every man's brother I will require the life of man.

Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed. For in the image of God he made man. Now there we see that it was God who instituted the death penalty for murder.

God says, I, I who have created all men, I who have made man on the face of the earth, require the blood of every man from whoever has killed him. And therefore if a man sheds another's blood, he must be killed. A murderer must be hanged or killed in some way.

That's not a lack of mercy. There are, when we use our human ideas of mercy, we can go off on crazy tangents. But God, who is more merciful than the best of us and a million times more merciful, said that a murderer must be killed, must be given the death penalty.

And we can see that the world has drifted away from God by that death penalty being abolished in so many countries today. This is another indication of man drifting away from God. And that is the reason why there is so much more violence and terrorism, I believe, because the death penalty for murder is not given quickly.

If the death penalty were given more quickly for murder, there would have been less violence on the earth. That is a simple law, but man rejects God's word and therefore he suffers with a wrong understanding of mercy. And just in passing I want to say that our understanding of mercy, like our understanding of humility, must come from God's word, not from the dictionary.

If we get our understanding of mercy from the dictionary and not from God's word, then that's how so many people have got these human ideas of mercy which are not divine. God is rich in mercy, but His mercy is as different from man's idea of mercy as the heaven is from the earth. And there is wisdom in God's mercy, whereas man's mercy is utterly foolish.

That can apply even in our dealing with our children and so many other relationships. Our mercy must be divine, not human. Verse 7. Now, the reason, he says, is because in the image of God he made man.

Now, one would think that that image had been completely defaced when Adam sinned, and yet God Himself says that the reason why a murderer must be hanged or killed is because man was made in the image of God. This man whom He has killed is a man made in the image of God, which means there is something of the image of God left still even in unconverted man. That's even found in the New Testament.

We read in James, Chapter 3, that therewith we bless God, James 3.9, and curse men, not believers, but ordinary men, who have been made in the likeness of God. And that refers primarily to the conscience when it says that in James 3.9, that all human beings, even unconverted, have something left of the likeness of God. We can say it's like a wall poster that's been stuck on a wall with somebody's face on it, and then many parts of it is torn, and you can see bits and pieces of that face on that wall poster still.

It's something like that. That there are bits of that image of God still. Of course, man defaces it more by sin till there's almost nothing left.

He begins to live like the animal. But as long as there is... the voice of conscience is able to speak to a man, and even unconverted people have a conscience, there is still something of that image of God. It's not converted, but that thing which can lead him to salvation.

And that is why even unconverted people are religious, unlike animals, for example, who don't have any conscience at all. So that's just in passing that God Himself recognizes that even in fallen man there is still something of that image of God, and we have no right to take that life. And that is... then we understand also the reason why God's word says in 1 Peter 2, Honor all men.

Have you seen that verse in 1 Peter and chapter 2? It says in verse 17, Honor all men. And it also says in the last part, Honor the king. Of course, we must honor the authorities in the land.

That is said in the last part of that verse. But the verse begins with, Honor all men. Love the brotherhood, of course.

But honor all men because there is something of that image of God in that person. When you see the damage that sin has done in so many people who are mad and beggars, it should really speak to our hearts what a work the devil has done in defacing that image. And still there's a little bit of it.

We are to honor all men. And that is why it is right to speak with respect to all human beings because there's something of the image of God in the most degraded, the most uneducated, the poorest, filthiest,

dirtiest person because he's a human being. When we love the brotherhood, that's good.

We also need to partake more of the divine nature, that we respect a human being because he's a human being, particularly to look at those who are beneath us in the social level and to see them as those who have something of the image of God. God has created them, made them in his image. That conscience is there.

Therefore we are to respect in all our dealings with other human beings. As for you, be fruitful and multiply. Populate the earth abundantly and multiply in it.

Similar command as he gave to Adam. Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying, Now behold, I myself do establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you. This is the first time, or the first person rather, with whom God made a covenant.

We saw that earlier in chapter 6, verse 18. A covenant means an agreement that God made with Noah, a picture of the other covenants he made later on. He made a covenant with Israel, we know.

He made a covenant with Abraham, we read in chapter 17. He made a covenant with Israel in the book of Exodus. And then we come into the New Testament, our new covenant, and we know the covenant that Jesus has made with us.

And this word covenant is something that comes through in God's dealings with these individuals first, Noah and Abraham, and then with Israel, and then with us in the church in the new covenant. It's a very beautiful word. It's like a personal agreement, which means my relationship with God is on the basis of an agreement that God has made.

He won't go back on it. Think how people who are upright on the earth will stand by their signed statements, and that is an assurance that God gives us if we understand the covenant, that he will not go back on the covenant that he has made with us. He didn't go back on the covenant he made with Noah.

He told him there'll never again be a flood, and we know that for 4,000 years there's never been a flood, even though man has been terribly wicked. In fact, about 150 years after Noah, man's wickedness again blossomed out when God kept his word. And when God says something, he will keep it, and that's why if we try to understand the promise in the new covenant, we can see that God, who kept his covenant with Noah, with Abraham, with Israel, will surely keep it with us, and that's why we need to understand the terms of the new covenant very clearly.

We need to take some time, for example, to read Hebrews chapter 8. That is the one chapter in the New Testament which describes the covenant, particularly the last seven or eight verses in Hebrews chapter 8. And you notice one thing there. God says, I will do this, and I will do this, and I will do this. And to say, Lord, you have promised you will do it.

You kept your covenant with Noah, Abraham, and others. You'll certainly keep your covenant with me. But without faith, it is impossible to receive anything from God.

So much for the covenant. God made a covenant here with Noah, with your descendants after you. That means with all humanity, because all humanity are Noah's descendants.

And with every living creature that is with you, the birds, cattle, beasts, and all that comes out of the ark, every beast of the earth. And I established my covenant with you, and all flesh shall never again be cut off by the water of the flood. That was the covenant.

And God has kept it with mankind, with all of Noah's descendants, for 4,000 years. Neither shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth. Never has there been a flood since Noah's day that destroyed the whole earth.

And God said, this is the sign of the covenant which I am making between me and you. There was usually a sign of the covenant when God made a covenant with Abraham. The sign was circumcision.

And God made a covenant with Noah. The sign we read here was the rainbow. Every living creature that's with you for all successive generations.

Verse 13, I set my bow. We call it a rainbow, but the word of God calls it a bow. And it is the same word which is used elsewhere in the word of God for the bow which is used with the arrow.

Exactly the same word. And God called it a bow. The same word.

I set my bow in the cloud. It shall be a sign of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come about when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud.

And I will remember my covenant which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And never again shall the water become a flood to destroy all flesh. When the bow is in the cloud, then I will look upon it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth.

And God said to Noah, This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth. God is light. And when that light comes through the mists of the rain, we see the colors of the rainbow reminding us of God's grace.

There's a verse in 1 Peter 4 which says, His multi-colored grace. His manifold grace, or as the literal translation there is, His multi-colored grace. And that's what the bow is a picture of.

And all the covenants have one thing common about it, about the sign of the covenant. And that's interesting to see right from the beginning that the sign of the covenant was always something that symbolized death. We know that when Jesus established the new covenant, he broke the bread and the cup.

And we know that that is a symbol of participating with Jesus in death. We know that in Genesis 15, when God made a covenant with Abraham, he asked him to divide a calf and separate it into two. And we'll come to that later on when we study that chapter.

And the meaning there was that God was going to, just like that calf was killed and divided in two and Abraham had to walk in the middle. The Lord was saying to Abraham, I lay down my life for you. And Jesus said the same thing when he broke bread.

And the same thing in the bow, in the cloud. It's like a bow which doesn't have an arrow that's being fired upward towards the heavens. It was, I believe, one of the earliest indications that someone in the heavens would receive the arrow from that bow and die for the sins of the world.

There was always a symbol of death in the sign of the covenant. And that's what we need to see, that in a covenant, there has to be a faithfulness unto death. Otherwise, there is no covenant.

And when we get into a covenant with Jesus, if we take it seriously, it means that I say, Lord, as I drink this cup with you, I drink the cup which indicates that blood which is shed in resisting sin unto death. And I want to do that. And it's those who have taken that covenant seriously who enjoy all that God will do for them under the new covenant.

And now, the sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem and Ham and Japheth. And Ham was the father of Canaan. As far as we know, when they came out of the ark, they were all equally blessed by God, as we read in the beginning of the chapter, because it says, God blessed Noah and his son.

Chapter 9, verse 1. But before the chapter finishes, there is a curse on one of those sons. How quickly a person who has received the blessing of God can move away from that blessing to the place of a curse. That's what we see in chapter 9. These were the three sons of Noah, verse 19, and from these the whole earth was populated.

All of us are descendants of Noah. And then Noah began farming and planted a vineyard, and he drank of the wine and became drunk and uncovered himself inside the tent. It's a very wonderful thing that the word of God does not cover up the weaknesses of its great men.

If somebody were writing a biography of Noah today, they would have left out that incident. If somebody were writing a biography of David, they would have left out his incident of his with Bathsheba. If somebody were writing a biography of Elijah, they would have left out that part where he was depressed, sitting under a juniper tree.

If somebody were writing a biography of Paul, they would have left out the fact that he yelled at the high priest once, or that he made a mistake and shaved his head and circumcised Timothy and did a few things like that and quarreled with Barnabas. But the word of God is very honest, and I want to say it's very difficult to find a biography like that. It's almost impossible to find anywhere outside Scripture a biography that is so ruthlessly honest about even any great thing.

All the biographies that are there will only tell us all the good things, and that can sometimes discourage many Christians because they think that this man never made any mistakes, whereas the thing that encourages us about the New Testament biographies is that they were not marveled saints without any flaws in them, but people who slipped up, who had the same flesh, the same passion, who made mistakes, and we can learn from them, but they were not perfect. And with all their limitations and weaknesses, God could still work through them. Some persons can take that as an encouragement to sin.

Those who don't love the truth, God will allow such people to take that as an encouragement to sin and go astray. But for those of us who have quite a different attitude towards sin, who enter into a covenant to resist sin unto blood, we can receive encouragement from these things. Not to sin, but encouragement when we are tempted to feel depressed, when we see the wretchedness in our own flesh.

And so we see here that Noah got drunk. A lack of self-control, that was his problem. Paul said these tremendous words in 1 Corinthians 9.27. He said that if I don't keep control over my body, if I don't buffet my body and make it my slave, then I can preach to others and be disqualified myself.

You can say, well, I'll never get drunk with wine. Maybe that's not your weakness. Maybe your weakness is your temper.

That is also lack of self-control. In Noah's case it was drunkenness, in your case it's anger, just the same. In another person's case it's sexual lust.

It doesn't matter which area the self-control is. It's lack of self-control, whether it's drunkenness or sexual lust or food, inordinate desire to be a glutton, to be so crazy after food, good tasty food and anger, these are all areas of lack of self-control. And Paul says, if I don't keep a control over my eyes, my tongue, the desires of my stomach, sexual desires, desire to just sleep and sleep and sleep and be lazy, then it can go badly, no matter what mighty things God has accomplished to us.

He says, I can preach to others and be disqualified myself. What do we learn from Noah? This man who stood for 120 years, he never got drunk in those years, when everybody else around him was drunk. He stood faithful as long as there was battle.

People were mocking him, opposing him. He was faithful. But then he accomplished a great mighty thing for God and he came out of that ark, the great man of God, the great prophet who has proved true finally.

And then, that must have worked in his heart, what a man of God I am. And he fell. A warning.

As long as there is opposition, persecution, difficulties, trials, my brothers and sisters, we are safe. We are safe. Some of us are praying, Lord, remove all this pressure, remove all these trials, remove all these problems.

Do you know what will happen? Do you know what will happen when your life becomes comfortable and easy like Noah's? The same thing that happened to Noah. He fell. He fell when his life became comfortable and he never fell for 120 years when he had trial and persecution and opposition and mocking and all those things.

A tremendous warning for us. That's why God doesn't answer some of those prayers that he should remove those pressures. Those pressures are our salvation.

Those difficulties, that opposition, that persecution is the thing that keeps us from sinning. And when we become famous and accepted, particularly after God has done something through us, then we are really in danger. Maybe God has used you to bless somebody and then you relax and then you begin to take it easy.

That's, I think, what must have happened to Noah because his flesh was the same as ours and we can understand when God has done something through us that we can begin to think that God has really done something through me. And in Noah's case, it was a fantastic thing that God did. What a fantastic thing.

After 120 years, he stood true to God. Then he came out and God was really able to do one of the greatest works through a human being. That teaches us that it is after a mighty triumph in our life that we have to be more careful to watch and pray.

You know that Elijah went up to Mount Carmel and he brought fire down from heaven and finished off 850 false prophets and got the whole of Israel to worship Jehovah. And then at the end of that, this man, who wasn't afraid of 850 prophets, got afraid of one woman, Jezebel, and ran for his life, depressed, saying,

Lord, take away my life. It is after a mighty triumph like he had on Mount Carmel that the danger comes of falling.

Elijah's depression is not an encouragement to us. It is a warning. I have heard people encouraging themselves in their depression, saying, Elijah was also depressed.

That is like encouraging yourself when you have a quarrel with somebody, saying, Paul also quarreled with Barnabas. That is not an encouragement. That is a warning.

Elijah was depressed is a warning. Moses lost his temper and broke the tablets of stone is a warning. So, Noah getting drunk is a warning.

After a mighty triumph, after God has blessed you, that is what God told Israelites through Moses, after you have got into the land, after you have possessed the land, and after you have become rich, that is the time you have got to be careful. See the example of Jesus in Luke chapter 5? Luke's gospel, chapter 5, says about Jesus in Luke 5, 15 and 16, The news about Jesus was spreading even further, and great multitudes were gathering to hear Him and to be healed of their sicknesses. This unknown carpenter of Nazareth was suddenly become, got nationwide fame.

People were being healed. Multitudes came from distances. The news about Him spread.

And what would Jesus do? Verse 16, He would often slip away into the wilderness to pray because He needed to protect Himself. He had read about Noah and Elijah, and He knew that He had to be careful because He had our flesh, that He would not sin even once, that that fame, that blessing that came would not go to His head. And that is an example for us to follow.

So Noah's lack of self-control is a warning for us to be self-controlled and disciplined in our life. Genesis 9, verse 22, And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside. Something that we all have to take a great warning from.

There was no command in those days which said, honor your father and mother. That came with the law. Maybe five, six hundred years later.

But yet it was understood that one must respect one's parents. And Ham's sin was that when he saw the nakedness of his father, he told others about it. Of course, his father was wrong.

But that didn't make a difference. It was still wrong for Ham to talk about it. Your father may be wrong in something that he does.

It may be evil. And you have seen the nakedness because you have lived at home with your father and to talk about it, whether it's your father or your mother. I believe that all of us need to learn to honor our father and mother in this way, that we do not reveal the nakedness that we have seen of our parents to anyone else.

Have you seen your father and mother quarrel and fight? Yeah, let it die with you. What do you gain by talking about it? All right, they didn't have victory, they didn't have life, but we must not talk about that. We can repent of our past failures, but in the days to come we can at least have this testimony that we will not uncover the nakedness of our father and mother.

That was why Ham was cursed. There is a blessing on those who honor their father and mother in this way. But Shem and Japheth, and this is the example for us to follow, took a garment and laid it on both their shoulders.

They probably had a flesh, not probably, they had a flesh just like ours, and one wretched sin in the flesh is curiosity, curiosity that makes us peek through cracks in the door and makes us listen in at the windows of other people's houses, that makes us read postcards that are not addressed to us. All types of things, wretched evil called curiosity, being a busy body in other people's matters in these subtle ways. What is it to sit, to stand outside another person's window and listen to what they are talking inside the house? That is an evil, whatever.

Even if the husband and wife are quarreling inside that house, I believe that your evil is greater to stand outside and listen to it. I don't have a shadow of doubt about that. I believe the man who stands outside and listens is far more evil.

He still has none of my business. No. This curiosity, and Shem and Japheth could have said, well, we want to go and cover our father, and they could have gone facing forwards, but no, they would go backwards.

Learn a lesson from that. To turn our eyes and our ears away so that we don't pollute ourselves by judging. Why expose ourselves to the temptation to judge? Lot of judging others comes out of this curiosity to know what is going on in somebody else's life and home and all that.

Some people have the evil habit of asking other people's children and finding out what happens in their home. Evil, evil, evil. Ungodly.

There we can learn a lesson from people who lived before the old covenant. To go backwards, eyes shut, ears shut, and say my duty is only to cover. That's none of my business.

And they walked backwards. What a fantastic sense of respect they had for their father. Nobody taught them that.

What an attitude of heart. And their faces were turned away. There was no curiosity.

There was curiosity, but they put it to death so that they did not see their father's nakedness. There can be a curiosity in the flesh to see even the physical nakedness of others. Evil, evil, filthy, demonic.

Put it to death. It's there in the flesh to see the nakedness of another, even physically. Put it to death.

It is a polluted, filthy, evil thing. An evil thing that resides in our flesh. There we can learn a wonderful example from Shem and Japheth.

To go backwards and turn their faces were turned away long before the new covenant. Turn your faces away from that physical and any other type of nakedness that we know there is somewhere. What an example, particularly in these days when there's so much of evil in this area of people exposing their bodies.

That we learn to turn our faces away and we put to death this evil curiosity that wants to see the nakedness of another, that wants to see the nakedness of another in a newspaper or a magazine. Is this anything? To turn our faces away that we don't want to see the nakedness of another in some filthy

newspaper or magazine. Turn our faces away.

And when Noah awoke from his wine, he knew. I wonder how he knew. There was some way, any way in which he knew there was a sheet on top of him.

He knew that somebody had put it and he discovered. We may think that there is no harm in this curiosity and in this revealing the nakedness of another, but see what happens. Noah said concerning Ham, Cursed be Canaan.

Canaan, we read in verse 22, was the son of Ham. The curse came not only on the father, but also on all his descendants. Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants, the lowest of servants, the margin says, he shall be to his brothers.

He also said, Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant. I just want to mention here that it was through Shem, if you read in chapter 10 and 11, that Abraham came. And through Abraham came Jacob and the tribes of Israel.

And here was a prophecy that the Canaanites would finally become servants to the descendants of Shem. Think on a small incident like that. There's a saying in English that big doors turn on small hinges.

And mighty events turned on that small hinge that day in Noah's tent that lasted for many centuries. The Canaanites, the descendants of Ham, became the slaves of the descendants of Shem. The God of Shem, blessed be the Lord, here was an indication that the Messiah, Jesus, would finally come through Shem.

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant and may God enlarge Japheth and let him dwell in the tents of Shem and let Canaan be his servant. I just want to say here, it says in John chapter 8, a somewhat similar incident, almost a similar incident, verse 3, John 8, 3, And the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery. And having set her in the midst, they said to him, that each of these women has been caught in adultery in the very act.

Think of the attitude of these Pharisees. Out to expose the sin of another. That's their only interest, to expose it, make it known to the whole town that this woman, publicly, I think, Jesus was in the temple, verse 2, and there must have been lots of other people in the temple, and to publicly speak this woman, a lot of people must have known this woman, and to speak about her publicly in the presence of all these people in the temple.

You can see something of the delight there was in the evil hearts of these Pharisees to expose the sin of this woman. And in contrast, you see how the New Testament begins. It's a very beautiful picture to me in Matthew chapter 1. Matthew chapter 1, it says that when Mary had become the pregnant with the body of Jesus, and Joseph heard about it, verse 18.

It says, verse 19, it's Matthew 1, verse 19, Joseph, her husband, being a righteous man. Notice in the New Testament the first description of a righteous man in the New Testament. Very important.

Take note of it. He was a righteous man, and therefore he did not want to disgrace her. Think of that.

Desired to put her away secretly. Think he could have said, Oh, this woman, she claims to be pure and all that, and engaged in marriage to me, and look how she has behaved now. Thank God he didn't say that, he would have regretted it all his life when he discovered the truth.

Think if he had gone around saying that, and one day the angel comes and tells him, Joseph, that is not by any evil man, that is by the Holy Spirit. Oh, what regret. And think of the regret that will come upon us one day when we discover the truth about so many people about whom we have spoken so lightly.

It is far safer to follow Joseph than the Pharisees. That is Shem and Japheth rather than Ham. There was a curse on Ham and his children.

We read later on that Ham was the father of, verse 6 of chapter 10, Genesis 10, 6, Ham was the father of Cush and Mizraim and Put and Canaan. These are all nations that through the centuries have been depressed and enslaved. It is true.

It is a fact. These are what is today in Arabia and Africa. Think how, what a great mighty door swung around that small hinge.

And it was just this matter of not minding your own business. This matter of this pharisaical attitude of going and exposing the nakedness of another instead of covering it as 1 Peter 4 says, love covers a multitude of sins. In other words, we can say that love has always got a sheet in its hand.

And love is always going backwards to cover. It is one thing to go forward and to see carefully and cover. It is one degree of love.

A higher degree of love is that I don't even want to see. I want to go backwards and cover it. I'm not interested in knowing what all evil that person has done.

Unless I can help that person out, otherwise I'm not interested. Have fervent love among yourselves, it says, for love covers a multitude of sins. Going backwards, not forwards.

And may God give us all that fervent love that is willing to go backwards to cover what we see in another. And I just want to say it is very easy for Ham to criticize somebody like Noah, not only as his father. We can think of Noah as a man of God, a servant of God, a prophet of God, a preacher of righteousness.

And one can imagine how the devil must have been after him for years. Year after year after year. The devil was after him and God saw that.

Ham didn't see that. Ham was like a lot of believers who are quick to catch a fellow when he slipped up once. God doesn't see it like that.

God saw how Noah had resisted the devil for year after year in all those 120 years and then he slipped up once. What was Ham? Ham would have been buried under that flood if it were not for his father Noah. And I thought it's so easy sometimes to look at a servant of God and who has sought to resist the devil here, there year after year which nobody bothers to see and then if he slips up in some small place there are so many people quick to point the finger ah, there he slipped up just like Ham.

And we can ask these fellows who point their finger where would they have been today if they had not received the ministry of such servants of God. They would have been in the flood of Babylon. But they forget that and they are so quick to point out something so small.

And there Ham we can say is the father not only of Canaan but the father of all such people that have lived throughout the centuries including all such people who live in the so called church who have that attitude. Ham is the father of all such people. Like he says Abraham is the father of the faithful.

Ham is also the father of many people today who are quick to find out something. Yeah, I can imagine that the devil was delighted when he finally managed to trip Noah up in a small thing after he didn't succeed with him for 120 years to make him compromise on his standards of righteousness. Brothers and sisters that teaches us it's not a safe thing to criticize an anointed servant of God when he slips up and falls.

We can say that we have the ministry of exposing evil. I just want to give you a warning here for those who are humble enough to have ears to hear. I believe that God gives that ministry to very few people.

Jesus had it. He stripped the Pharisees and said you generation of vipers but I want to say that less than 1% of believers are given that ministry. But a lot of people try to take it up.

If God gives that ministry to a person God will give grace to that person to do it in the right way. But I have seen a lot of young people trying to imitate this ministry of Jesus denouncing the Pharisees. And in every case I have seen it has damaged that own young brother's life.

He has had high thoughts about himself. I have seen young brothers like that. Year after year after year after year.

They never seem to progress spiritually. And you can put this reason down at this one thing. They have got such high thoughts that they think that they are there to expose the false ministries of others.

I would encourage you my dear brothers particularly young brothers just humble yourself. Have small thoughts about yourself. It is most unlikely that God has given you that ministry.

And particularly if you think you have it it is almost certain you don't have it. I don't think most of us are in that danger here but there are some of us even sitting here who are in that danger. And therefore if a cat fits where it take it seriously.

Because you can be a descendant of Ham and end up with a ruined life in your own case. So it is good example we can follow here in Shem that we are blessed and that our children are also blessed. Why do you want a curse to come upon your children and your family by taking upon yourself a ministry that God has not given you? Humble yourself.

Let the blessing of God come upon your family. So let me say that to everybody. And we read here verse 27 May God enlarge Japheth and let him dwell in the tent of Shem.

That is a wonderful thing that God can enlarge us that we can dwell in the tents of our brothers. Today we would stay in the same house. Those days it was tents, today it's house.

Do you know that when you live in the same house as your brother or your sister and that means when you are married first of all. When you live in the same house with another fellow believer what is the thing that comes forth immediately? When you begin say who is the one you live with in the same house? Usually your marriage partner. Let's look at Shem and Japheth living in the same tent as a husband and wife living together.

What do they see in each other? Nakedness. By that I mean spiritually. That means some failure.

Every one of us can say that you have seen that we have seen more failures in our own marriage partners than in anybody else in the assembly. Isn't that right? What is that proof? Does that prove you got the worst husband or the worst wife in the whole world? And yet you know so many things about your

marriage partner which bad things. And you if you compare him or her with all the others in the assembly they all look so good.

Why? Because you are dwelling in the same tent. That's why you see the nakedness. The problem is not with the other person.

If you dwelt in the same tent with somebody else you would see just as many weaknesses in other people. But you are not dwelling in the same tent. You see them only in the meeting so you don't know.

But when you dwell in the same tent you see the nakedness. And then it says God has to enlarge you. It says here may God enlarge Jackson so that he can dwell in the tent of Sharon.

It is impossible to dwell in the same house as another brother or sister without an enlarged heart. You really have to have an enlarged heart to have the sheath and to go backwards. Think of a husband who had a sheath always and was wanting to go backwards.

And the wife had a sheath and was wanting to go backwards. That really requires an enlarged heart. Paul wrote to the Corinthians in 1 2 Corinthians 6 he said you fellows are so narrow.

Our hearts are wide open to you. The mark of a mature man like Paul is that his heart is enlarged. He can bear with the weaknesses of another.

He can even see a person caught in adultery in the very act and have a sheath. That really requires a fantastically enlarged heart. It is not easy unless a person has really gone into the dying of Jesus and got revelation on the sin in his own flesh.

It is not easy to have that enlarged heart. We usually are like the Pharisees. Oh this woman was caught in the very act.

This is no story Lord. I saw it with my own eyes. It is not a second hand story that somebody else came and told me.

With my own eyes. With my own ears. I heard it.

And we read about Jesus in Isaiah chapter 11 that in the days when he had our flesh because he knew how deceptive this flesh is like we heard in the conference. There is a magnet. The flesh is like a magnet by the side of the compass needle always deflecting that compass needle from the true north so that I sincerely think true north is here.

I say I saw it with my own eyes the magnet pointing in this direction. I didn't see it reported. I saw it with my own eyes the magnet pointing in this direction.

The only thing is you were so stupid that you did not see the magnet on the side of that compass needle. He didn't make allowance for your flesh. We read that Jesus did make allowance for his flesh.

It says in Isaiah 11 3 he will not judge he will delight in the fear of the Lord. And one mark of his being so delighted in the fear of God was that he would not judge by what his eyes see and he would not make a decision by what his ears hear. Why? Because he says there is this magnet of the flesh that works.

You can see Christ manifest in the flesh from that verse. If as people say that Jesus had a perfect flesh then why can't he judge by what his eyes see and his ears hear. There was only one reason why Jesus could not judge by what his eyes saw or his ears heard.

That is because he had a flesh like ours with lust in it that was deflecting that compass needle. And that is why Jesus did not sin. I just want to encourage you my brothers and sisters and encourage myself if we can follow Jesus in this one area that I will not judge by what my eyes see in future.

I will not judge by what my ears hear because I have a flesh. If I were perfect without this flesh then of course I can judge by what my eyes see in heaven. I can do that.

When I have a glorified body I see, I say yeah, that's right. I don't have a flesh to deflect my compass needle. But if we are humble on this earth even when we see with our own eyes and hear with our own ears we will say yes, maybe there is some explanation for that which I don't know.

I can't understand. Maybe there is some good explanation why that brother or sister did that or said that or went here or spent his money like that or did that to his child or said that to the other person. I don't know.

Maybe there is some very good reason that is not within my boundary to pass a judgment on that so I don't do it. Think if you had that attitude that is to spread a sheet. Maybe there is some very good reason why my wife said that or did that or my husband said that or did that.

I can't know. We have to die my brothers and sisters to being specialists in analyzing the motives of others. We have to die to this because flesh is a specialist.

He is a post-graduate. He has done post-doctoral examinations and passed in analyzing the motives of others and he is completely wrong. He is being trained by Satan.

The flesh has been trained by Satan to analyze the motives. It is sold into bondage to sin. The Bible says in Romans 7 if we believe it if all that we say about the old wretched man that I am is more than just a lot of hot air coming out of our mouth if we really believe it it will be no problem to do what Jesus did not judged by what our I.C.O. years here.

That in practical terms is to do what Shem and Japheth did to go backwards to say I don't know and I am not really interested in knowing the details also. When people come to us with all types of tales and stories do you know what it means to go backwards? Somebody comes to your house with a tale and a story about some other brother or sister do you know what it means to go backwards? It means to say yes I am really not interested in knowing all that unless I can help in some way if I can help if you think I can help then please tell me all the details so that I can help that person or let us go together to one of the elders in the church and let's talk to him straight away about this particular matter because we are concerned that is the right thing and when somebody comes to you with a tale to say I think that good that you have a concern about that person let's go now itself or tomorrow to see the elders of the church and you also tell him what you said to me just now you will find many of them are not interested they are not interested because they are not interested in helping that person do you think the Pharisees were interested in saving this woman from an adulterous life? No they did not come to seek and to save they came to judge and to condemn Jesus came to seek and Jesus came to save so we need to have a sheet and go backwards and we need to have an enlarged heart towards all with whom we live together in the same tent may God enlarge our hearts as it says here Genesis 9, 28 and Noah lived 350 years after the flood so

all the days of Noah but 950 years and he died may God enlarge Japheth so that he can dwell in the tents of Shem means may there always be fellowship between those who have learned to cover the sins of others who were Shem and Japheth? Shem and Japheth were the ones who covered the nakedness of others may there always be good fellowship enlarged heart fellowship between those who have learned to cover the sins of others

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