

Genesis 041

One Race

Genesis 9:27-29

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Well, good morning, everybody. Happy Father's Day to you. If you have ever had a father, please raise your hand. Fatherhood must be pretty important. Amen?

Let's take our Bibles, if we could, and open them to the Book of Genesis 9:27. Lord willing, we are going to try to finish the chapter today. How long can this be? There are only three verses here.

The title of our message this morning is 'One Race.' That is which race? The human race. We are in the Book of Genesis, as you know: Genesis 1-11, dealing with four major events — Creation, what the world was like before sin entered the picture in Genesis 1-2; then the Fall, Genesis 3-5.

Yet there is hope of a coming redeemer. Keep your eye on that verse. We are going to come back to it there: Genesis 3:15.

Then came the Flood. You can take the Flood chapters and divide them up as follows: events before the Flood, Genesis 6; the Flood itself, Genesis 7; the receding of the waters, Genesis 8; and then we have been looking at, as of late, events following the Flood. I am hoping to finish that today.

There are two major events that the Bible calls our attention to after the Flood. The first is God's covenant with Noah. Following that comes post-Flood sin. We saw last time in Genesis 9:18-21: Noah's sin, his drunkenness in his tent.

Why tell us about that? Well, you might think, as you are moving through the Book of Genesis, that Noah in his obedience is so exemplary up to this point that he is the Messiah. Noah was a wonderful man of God, but he was no Messiah. He was not the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15, a prophecy of a coming Messiah. To make things right, we must look beyond Noah to Someone future and that future One, of course, is Jesus Christ.

Then after Noah's sin we have Ham's, in Genesis 9:22-27. Ham, who was Noah's middle son, showed disrespect to Noah, and called his brothers' attention to it.

Not all the descendants of Ham, but on Ham's fourth son came a curse. Ham's fourth son was a man named Canaan; his descendants were put under a curse. Why is that? Well, it has to do with the fact that the apple does not fall too far from the tree and the Canaanites who went into the land of Canaan—that the Israelites are going to evict from that land in the Book of Joshua—imitated some of the godless, despicable behavior found in Noah's middle son. So Canaan's descendants are placed under a curse.

What is interesting is that you move into Genesis 9:26 and God begins to deal with Shem, the oldest son. Noah makes a statement in Genesis 9:26.

It says,

"...Blessed be the LORD, The God of Shem..." (Genesis 9:26).

This is where we have a clue that this Messiah who is coming is going to come through the lineage of Shem. He will be a Semite. He will come from the Semitic people groups of the earth. As you move through the Book of Genesis, this genealogy leading to Christ is carefully traced. By the time we get to the end of the Book of Genesis, we even know what tribe within the tribes of Israel He will come from.

We pick up here with Japheth as Noah awakes from what had happened to him, and he begins to make prophecies concerning his three sons. Shem, we have dealt with; Ham, we have dealt with a little bit. Then there is this youngest son named Shem (Japheth).

Notice what it says in Genesis 9:27, as Noah is speaking,

"May God enlarge Japheth,..." (Genesis 9:27).

So, there is actually a blessing coming upon Japheth. Now from Japheth came Europe, Asia, and North America. Each of these sons, as we have talked about, repopulated the earth following the deluge. The Hamites we know from Africa and Canaan. From the Semites, the Semitic people groups of the earth, came the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Persians, ultimately the Hebrews. The Messiah, we know, is coming from that group.

Then there is Japheth, from whom we get Asia, Europe, and North America. You will notice that God here pronounces a blessing on Japheth.

It says,

"May God enlarge Japheth,..." (Genesis 9:27).

Noah is giving these prophecies as he awakens from his slumber, as we have studied. He pronounces here a blessing on Japheth.

"May God enlarge Japheth,..." (Genesis 9:27).

The largest number of descendants from the earth would come from Japheth, including those territories that I described. But notice, as we continue on in Genesis 9:27, it says,

"...And let him dwell in the tents of Shem;..." (Genesis 9:27).

'Dwell' relates to fellowship. The Shemites are going to have fellowship with the Japhethites. Here is how it has worked out in history. (As we have studied, this is so interesting because Noah is giving prophecies concerning the development of the world and the development of human history.)

While the Japhethites conquered the Jews politically, the Jews conquered the Japhethites spiritually. The Japhethites more than the Hamites adopted the God of Shem. From Shem is going to come the Messiah. It is an interesting thing to look at where Christianity has flourished in Europe—the Protestant Reformation occurring there; it is a very Christian part of the world—and ultimately North America, how Christianity has flourished in our land.

I think a lot of it has to do with this prophecy that Noah gives concerning the Japhethites. There is something called the Septuagint, which is a Greek translation of the Old Testament. Who brought that to the world? It was the Japhethites, the Greeks, that did that.

It is interesting to look at all of these and to see Noah in advance, giving these prophecies concerning the general direction of human history.

But then Noah, as he is speaking of the Japhethites, gives a curse there in Genesis 9:27. It says,

"...And let Canaan be his servant." (Genesis 9:27).

Canaan, the fourth son of Ham, would become the servant or the slave of the two sons of Noah, Shem and Japheth. The Phoenicians, it is believed, became the slaves of the Greeks and the Romans, fulfilling this prophecy. It is very interesting to note here that Canaan enslaved the two brothers of Ham: Shem and Japheth.

What is so interesting as you study the Bible is that God reverses what is normal. God takes issues happening in a culture, and He transcends those issues to show His sovereignty. In the ancient Near East, which is the area that we are reading about here, the rights always went to the firstborn, every single time.

You will notice as you move through the Book of Genesis that God reverses that constantly. For example, we have already studied Abel, chosen over Cain; Seth would be chosen over Cain—do you see what God is doing? He is reversing what is normal. He is reversing the rights that went to the firstborn. Here we are seeing another example, of Japheth over Ham.

As we continue through the Book of Genesis, Isaac will be over Ishmael; Jacob will be over Esau; Judah and Joseph will be over their brothers; and finally, the book will conclude with Ephraim being chosen for Messianic purposes over Manasseh.

Why does the Book of Genesis keep doing this? It is showing us who is in charge here. Man has fallen, but the devil is not running everything. God is allowing, through human history, His purposes to be accomplished on the earth, even when it means reversing normal cultural issues.

All of that to say this: if you are a child of God and you find yourself today in the person of Jesus Christ by way of faith and life has collapsed in on you and you may feel like you are drowning, one thing to keep in mind is that God is completely and totally

sovereign over your circumstances. God, in a nanosecond, can and will reverse what is normal in a culture. He does this over and over again in the Book of Genesis.

So, Canaan, according to these prophecies, is enslaved to the two brothers of Ham. This is very interesting because Japheth is the third child and it is Japheth over Ham, the second child, even though in the normal cultural way of thinking, the rights went to the older child. God has reversed that here.

Too bad I did not have a chance to cover some of this last time, because that bled into the sermon from last week. If that went over your head, try to put it together with last week's sermon.

But I do want to comment on this here, this issue of racism. Because many, many people will take this curse that is pronounced on Ham's fourth son and make it sound as if everyone in Ham's lineage—those coming from Africa—are under a curse. That is a distortion of what the Bible teaches.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum writes this. He says,

"In some circles in preceding times, it was taught that the curse of Canaan was upon the Negro or the Black race, which is simply not true to the text. While it is true that Blacks are descendants of Ham, not all descendants of Ham were black-skinned people."¹

Look at this very carefully.

"Only one of Ham's sons was cursed,..."²

The curse did not fall on all of the Hamites. The curse fell on the descendants of Ham that settled in the land of Canaan, which is the land of Israel—not yet Israel as far as the outworking of God's purposes is concerned, because the nation of Israel has not been born yet. But that curse that is spoken of here is not speaking of all of the Hamites. It is speaking only of a narrow group of people that descended from Ham, Noah's fourth son, that settled in the land of Canaan.

Arnold Fruchtenbaum goes on and he says,

"Only one of Ham's sons was cursed, and that was Canaan. As is known from the Egyptian portrayals of the Canaanites, the Canaanites were not black-skinned; they were white, or it would be more correct to say, olive-skinned. Therefore, black skin has nothing to do with this curse, and the curse of Canaan is not biblical grounds for the enslavement of Blacks."³

If you are going to use this verse to argue that the black race is inferior, or the black race should have been enslaved or subjugated, and you are going to quote the Bible to

¹ Fruchtenbaum, A. *The Book of Genesis*, 200.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

communicate that point, you have two big problems. Number one, you have the wrong skin color; and number two, you are on the wrong continent. Now, those little problems notwithstanding, you could try to make that work—but it does not work. That is a distortion of what the Bible actually teaches.

Since this issue of race has become so dominant in our society and culture, I want to step back just for a minute as we are looking at these misapplied passages and speak to you just for a moment on the subject of race, because we are living in a country today where everybody's talking about race: racial tension, racial issues, this race, that race. The truth of the matter is, folks, we have the greatest book that has ever been written on the subject, and so few pulpits are willing to take it out and apply it to the issues or the issue of the day, in this case, the issue of race.

Was this a curse upon the black race? I am embarrassed to say that as you go back into some of the earlier Bible commentaries that are very good on a number of subjects, they will make that point: that the black race in America should have been subjugated, because, after all, God cursed the Hamites and the Hamites came from Africa.

The Bible was used as an example or as a proof text, if you will, for the purpose of arguing for racism. Racism, of course, is an issue that was very, very tense in the United States of America.

In fact, I was just talking to a brother here on the front row who is visiting all the way from Shreveport, Louisiana. He was talking about how he knew a pastor who had led a young person to Christ who happened to be black. (This goes back several decades.) When this pastor wanted to baptize this particular new convert in his church, the deacons told him he could not do it, and it ended up in a church split.

This particular pastor left that church and now presides over another church of, if I have the story right, 6,000 people. That shows you how God can work with somebody who wants to take a stand for truth. But many, many people in the past have used the Bible as some sort of proof text to justify racism, slavery, segregation.

In fact, if you watch the movie 'Mississippi Burning' with Willem Dafoe, you will see in that particular movie how the Jim Crow South used this particular Bible passage as a justification for segregation. Was there a curse placed upon the black race justifying segregation and slavery? Our answer is 100% categorically no.

First of all, there is, biblically speaking, no such thing as races. When we say the Asian race, the Hispanic race, the black race, the Caucasian race, we are automatically using language the Bible does not use. As far as the Bible is concerned, there was only one race. And what race would that be? The human race. If the Bible is not clear on that, then it is not clear on anything.

All human beings, regardless of pigmentation and skin color, are equal by virtue of creation. How do we know that? We know that because all human beings bear God's image. It does not matter what skin color each of us are. The fact is, when you are looking at a fellow human being, you are not looking at a skin color. You are looking at a

being who bears the image of God and therefore is entitled to a certain degree of respect on that grounds alone.

This goes all the way back to Genesis 1:26-27, which says,

"Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;...' (Genesis 1:26).

"God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (Genesis 1:27).

Now the Fall of man never erased man's image-bearing status, because as we have studied the Book of Genesis, we have moved away from Genesis 1-2 to Genesis 3-5, where we have seen the Fall of man. You would think that with the Fall of mankind somehow our image-bearing status would disappear.

Biblically speaking, it has not disappeared. It has been damaged. It has been effaced to some extent, but it is never been erased because in Genesis 9:6, the very chapter that we are working on here, it reads as follows,

"Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man" (Genesis 9:6).

You will notice that the image-bearing status of human beings, which makes them valuable regardless of skin color, is something that is not just a pre-Fall reality, but it is a post-Fall reality.

In fact, here it is even a post-Flood reality. In fact, it is a New Testament reality. James 3:9 uses this as a basis for us not to verbally slander or attack other people. James talks about controlling that two-by-two slab of mucous membrane between our gums called the tongue, and we should not unleash that tongue on other human beings by way of slander, destruction, or gossip.

Why is that? Because human beings are made in God's image, and you are slandering or verbally attacking someone that has value as far as God is concerned.

James 3:9 says concerning the tongue,

"With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people, who have been made in the likeness of God" (James 3:9).

That then becomes the foundation by which we should control the tongue, or aim to do it as we walk with Christ, because we do not want to be used in such a way, verbally, that we are destroying somebody else because the person that we are upset with or the person that we are angry with is a fellow image bearer of God, and therefore they are entitled to a certain degree of worth, dignity, and respect. On that basis alone, it does not matter if you agree with them or not. It does not matter if you get along with them or not. What matters is who they are by way of creation.

Our image-bearing status continues on even in the post-Fall, post-Flood world, even into New Testament times. You start reading things like this and you see that racism is something that is wrong according to the Bible.

Acts 17:26: Paul on Mars Hill says this,

"and He made from one man..." (Acts 17:26).

That would be Adam.

"...every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation," (Acts 17:26).

Notice that every nation, regardless of what language they speak or what skin color they have, they all come from the same source. That source ultimately is Adam, who is an image bearer of God. There are many, many people, particularly on the left, that are working very hard to try to make it sound as if Christianity is inherently racist, and I am here to tell you it is not.

The truth of the matter is, if you are using the Bible to promote racism as some in history have sought to do, then you are misapplying the Bible because the Bible knows no such doctrine. It teaches that all people, regardless of skin color, have value because they bear God's image.

Now, do you want to know where racism comes from? It comes from Charles Darwin. It comes from the diabolical theory called evolution that he unleashed in 1859 on planet Earth in his book 'On the Origin of Species.' All you have to do to see this clearly for what it is is look at the subtitle of Darwin's book. Most people do not know the full title of Darwin's book published in 1859.

What you will discover is that in subsequent editions, the subtitle is removed. But here is what the whole book says: 'On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection.' But what does the subtitle say? In its original published sense, the subtitle says 'the Preservation of Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life'.

"Favoured races"—doesn't that sound racist to you? What does he mean here by saying "favoured races"? What he is saying is some people are more evolved than other people along this great movement from the goo to you by way of the zoo that allegedly happened over billions of years. People try to argue, "Well, that our race is superior to your race because we are higher on the trajectory than you are. We have moved farther on the trajectory of evolution than you have."

It is not the Bible that promotes racism. It is a logical outworking of the theory of evolution that promotes racism. Now you can go into any group that wants to enslave any other group and see this: the Nazis, the Aryan race, made this argument with the Jews in Hitler's Nazi Germany. They simply said the Jews are not as evolved as the Aryan race. Therefore, it is completely proper and appropriate for the Aryan race to subjugate the Jewish race.

Sadly, people make that same argument related to blacks and whites. Blacks are less evolved than white people are; blacks are closer to the monkey than are white people.

The whole idea of racism just gets dismantled—it disappears when the theory of evolution disappears. If the theory of evolution were to disappear, there would not be any philosophical basis for racism, because you cannot argue that one race is more evolved than another, because evolution itself is a fallacy.

You go back to the Word of God, and what the Word of God teaches is that we are all image bearers, regardless of skin color.

It is interesting in this cancel culture movement that we are now in where everybody's getting canceled on the grounds of racism. I am waiting with bated breath for Darwin to get canceled.

But they never will cancel him because Darwinism forms the basis for all kinds of other pagan thought that they want to keep intact. But Darwinism itself is racist from its core.

See, if I were a racist and I hated a particular group of people on the basis of skin color, I would not really be comfortable around the Bible because of what it teaches about creation. I would be much more comfortable with evolution, and I would gravitate more in that direction.

A lot of evolutionists may not even realize this, but this is the logical outworking of their belief system. Am I saying that every evolutionist is a racist? No. But what I am saying is, if I were a racist, I would be a lot more comfortable with this stuff than I would be with biblical truth.

The fact of the matter is, there is only one race, the human race. You can see that by virtue of creation. You can also see that by virtue of redemption—the plan of redemption is not open to one group of people; it is open to the whole world. The Bible says this over and over and over again.

It really gets under my skin to hear people say Christianity is racist when Jesus Christ Himself has done more for the subject of race and a right understanding of race than any other human being that has ever existed. You can see that in Christ's interaction with the Samaritan woman.

The background of this is the Jewish-Samaritan conflict that had gone on for seven centuries. For seven hundred years this had gone on. They hated each other. Why did they hate each other? It was racial.

The Babylonians came into the land of Israel following the deportation of the northern tribes, and the Babylonians began to intermarry with the Jews, and they created a half-breed race through that called the Samaritans. The Samaritans would not follow the program of the Jews. The Jews worshiped in Jerusalem; the Samaritans worshiped on a mountain called Mount Gerizim.

In fact, that is why Jesus, when He comes into a Samaritan village in Luke 9 and begins to minister to these people—they do not want anything to do with Him. Remember what James and John said, the Sons of Thunder. There is a reason these guys were called the Sons of Thunder. They said, "Should we not call down fire from heaven like Elijah and destroy these people?"

And Jesus says, "You do not even understand what manner you are speaking when you say things like that. The Son of Man has not come into the world to destroy the lives of people on account of race. He is coming to the world to liberate people."

So, there must have been something really nasty going on between the Jews and the Samaritans to get the Sons of Thunder—one of them was named John, who became the Love Apostle; wow, that is the love apostle speaking—saying, "Let's nuke these people, Lord. Let's destroy these people."

The background of it is this racial tension between the Jews and the Samaritans. They hated each other's guts. You think we have racial tension in the United States? Go back to biblical times. You have deep seated animosity between these two groups, not going back just a few centuries, going back seven centuries.

When you understand that background, it blows your mind what Jesus does in John 4, because He ministers to a woman—that is bad enough—from Samaria.

John 4:9 says,

"So the Samaritan woman said to Him, 'How is it that You, though You are a Jew, are asking me for a drink, although I am a Samaritan woman?...'"
(John 4:9).

Then John adds this little parenthetical comment in his gospels,

"...(For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.)" (John 4:9).

Do you want to talk about segregation? There it is, right there in your Bible, from this ancient conflict between those groups going back seven hundred years. Jesus traverses the cultural barrier and starts ministering to her, and it shocked even her.

In John 4:27, it shocked the disciples.

It says in John 4:27,

"And at this point His disciples came, and they were amazed..." (John 4:27).

This was mind-blowing to them.

"...they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, 'What are You seeking?' or, 'Why are You speaking with her?'"
(John 4:27).

They could not believe He was talking to her. Why? Number one, she is the wrong gender; she is a woman. "Don't you understand that women are second-class citizens in the ancient Near East?" Number two, she is the wrong race; she is a Samaritan.

She has a third strike against her: she is the wrong religion. She is not even worshiping the Lord the way she is supposed to at Jerusalem. She is going to a different mountain, Mount Gerizim.

In fact, there is a fourth strike against her. She has had five husbands; and her current partner she is not even married to. She is immoral. The whole culture of the day had taken her and written her off, and here is Jesus showing up, crossing those four barriers to the point where she cannot believe it and the disciples cannot believe it either.

Now, you look at a passage like this, and you are going to tell me that somehow the Bible is anti-woman? That somehow the Bible promotes racism? I am wondering what Bible people are reading, if they are reading it at all. Jesus has done more for women, and He has done more for people victimized by racial abuse than any human being that has ever lived.

Yet they portray Jesus and Christianity as if somehow it is racist at its core. And somehow Charles Darwin is just a man of science, objective science. We are living in a culture and a world of lies.

John 3:16 says this,

"For God so loved the world,..." (John 3:16).

That would include every person, wouldn't it? Of all skin colors, of all nationalities, of all ethnicities. See, we are equal not only in terms of creation, but we are all equal in terms of redemption. The Bible knows nothing of racism.

How about the Great Commission? What did Jesus say in the Great Commission as He is sending out the disciples to do the work of the church?

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of only those in North America."

It does not say that.

"Go only to the Shemites."

"Go only to the Jebusites."

"Go only to the Jews."

The Bible does not teach anything like that.

It says,

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to

follow all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20).

You see, the scope of the Great Commission itself should resolve the issue of racism right then and there. I will tell you one thing: if you are harboring animosity towards another group of people on the account of their ethnicity or skin color, you are not going to be very happy in heaven, because in Revelation 5:9, which I think is a description of the church that has been raptured into heaven that is praising the Lord, look at how the church is described.

"And they sang a new song, saying, 'Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.'"
(Revelation 5:9).

If you are there praising the Lord, following the Rapture, expect to be there—not just with your own nation, your own country, your own language-speaking group, your own ethnicity—because of the global calling in the Great Commission, expect to be there with representatives from the whole world.

This idea of racism—it does not fit the Bible by way of creation. It does not fit the Bible by way of redemption. In fact, who are we in the body of Christ?

Galatians 3:28 says,

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

I was sitting in a particular group at one point, a group of Christian leaders, and they were all commenting on the different racial groups that are in their churches. They are going around the table talking about all of the racial groups that are represented in their churches. I thought to myself, "You know what? Number one, I do not care about that; and number two, I have never even thought about it."

I have never sat down and thought about Sugar Land Bible Church and said, "Okay, this person's an Asian, this person's Indian, this person's Caucasian." To be honest with you, the thought has never even crossed my mind because I believe what God says, that we are all equal by way of creation and by way of redemption.

Now, obviously if you are a female, you are still a female as a Christian. Amen? And it is the same with a male. You still retain your ethnic identity, but the fact of the matter is as God looks at the body of Christ, He does not see groups. He sees His body, which is comprised of people from all over the world.

In fact, that is the reason that Jesus came into the world: to eradicate this barrier.

Ephesians 2:14 says,

*"For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one..."
(Ephesians 2:14).*

Now what two groups is He speaking of here? It is the Jews and the Gentiles. The Jews, at the time of Christ and at the time Paul wrote this, hated the Gentiles and called them dogs. The Gentiles hated the Jews because the Gentiles saw them as arrogant. There was tension between those two groups like you would not believe in biblical times.

And Paul says, "In the church, it is all a thing of the past, because your Jewish brother or sister in Christ is redeemed the exact same way you are: By way of faith alone in Christ alone. Your Gentile brother or sister in Christ has redeemed the exact same way you are."

If we all understand that we are all equal at the foot of the cross, and none of us would be involved with anything in Christianity were it not for God's grace, it does not matter what country someone's from, what language group someone is from, what ethnicity someone is from; it does not matter what their skin color is—none of that matters. We are all equal in terms of redemption.

So, why, then, if all of this is true, would God place a curse on the Canaanites descended from Ham's fourth son? Well, the issue, as we have tried to explain, is not racial, but is moral. The apple does not fall too far from the tree. Apparently, the Canaanites imitated the detestable character that they saw exemplified in Ham, Noah's second son. Apparently, that is what happened.

When Ham sinned against Noah, he traversed a boundary that God has established, and the descendants of Ham—in this case, the Canaanites—said, "You know, if the old man traverses godly boundaries, then we will just go ahead and do that, too."

That whole group settled in Canaan, and they were involved in some of the most wicked, despicable practices. In fact, these practices are so abominable, I do not even think I am comfortable up here in a formal church service, articulating what they were doing. I would just send you to Leviticus 18 and Leviticus 20. It will describe in detail what the Canaanites pre-Israel were involved in.

That is why God said about these folks, "They've got four hundred years and they are gone."

In Genesis 15:16, God said,

"Then in the fourth generation they..." (Genesis 15:16).

That is Israel.

"...will return here, for the wrongdoing of the Amorite..." (Genesis 15:16).

Who is the Amorite? Part of the Canaanites, a descendant from Ham's fourth son.

"...for the wrongdoing of the Amorite is not yet complete" (Genesis 15:16).

This then becomes an apologetic or a defense to the original audience that the Book of Genesis was written to, who had just come out of Egypt and were moving into Canaan to conquer Canaan and slaughter the Canaanites.

When God says, "I want you to kill all of them—man, woman, and child; do not let any of them live; do not let the animals live; kill them all." Why would God say something like that?

Well, the background in the Book of Genesis tells you. This fourth son imitated detestable practices that he learned from Noah's second son who uncovered Noah's nakedness. Those folks went into Canaan, and they lived there for four hundred years with sin after sin after sin after sin with no repentance at all.

In fact, the sins got worse because God says four hundred years earlier, the wickedness of the Amorites is not yet complete. By the time you get to the Book of Joshua with this history in mind, and the Joshua Generation is reading this book as the original audience, they know exactly why God said, "Eradicate these people."

The problem with the nation of Israel is they got about a C- in terms of execution. They did what God told them to do, sort of, but they let a few live and those that continued in the land of Israel as the Israelites were in the land of Canaan now—without the Canaanites totally exterminated, extinguished, annihilated—the Israelites saw what the Canaanites were doing by way of sin and started to imitate their practices, which led to eight hundred years of disaster in the land of Israel.

God finally had to take the nation of Israel in the time of Ezekiel and Daniel and remove them from that land into Babylon for divine discipline to get them away from these detestable practices.

See, if you learn nothing else in this church, at least learn this: you cannot control sin, you cannot contain it. We can make all kinds of excuses for it, but the truth of the matter is, the day will come when the tail will start to wag the dog. That is exactly what happened with Israel: they let a few Canaanites live—they did not do what God said—and over the course of time (it is like yeast spreading through the lump of dough) the tail started to wag the dog to such an extent that you could not even recognize God's people anymore.

There was no distinction between them and the Canaanites. In fact, it got so bad that the Israelites, in the days of Jeremiah, were sacrificing their own children into a fire to satisfy the god of prosperity, Molech. How could it get that bad? It is related to the fact that the Joshua generation did not do what God said. They did it to about a C-.

"Well, gee, Pastor, what is the application for us?"

Well, need I even say? There are things in my life and there are things in your life where the Holy Spirit says, "You need to deal with this right now," and we justify it and we excuse it, and we are deceived into thinking that we are going to manage it, and what happens is the tail eventually will wag the dog.

As the Bible says, your sin will find you out. Suddenly, you find yourself in a situation where you are bearing all kinds of consequences for sin that could have been preempted by not getting a C-, but by doing exactly what God says.

This becomes the background that is being revealed here in the Book of Genesis. The truth of the matter is that there was no curse on the black race. There was a curse on the Canaanites. There is a reason for the curse; it deals with morality and not genetics.

The Bible teaches that there is one race by way of creation and by way of redemption—it should be painfully obvious.

Then we move now to the very end of this chapter, where we see the death of Noah. Look at Genesis 9:28.

It says,

"Noah lived three hundred and fifty years after the flood" (Genesis 9:28).

Here is a graphic that shows you the Flood, and you will notice from this graphic and the one after it that Noah lived three hundred and fifty years after the Flood, which brings Noah's span up to nine hundred and fifty years.

You say, "Well, how do you know that?"

Well, Genesis 9:29 says that.

"So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years,..." (Genesis 9:29).

Genesis 7:6 tells us that he entered the ark at the ripe old age of six hundred. Then the Flood came, and he lived three hundred and fifty years after the Flood. Now notice something very interesting is that the lifespans of people start getting cut back after the Flood. Noah did not live another nine hundred years. He has only three hundred and fifty years.

You will never see in any of the genealogies that we are going to study—we are going to see another one coming in Genesis 11—you will never see people living their great long lifespans as they did before the Flood. Why is that?

Well, the theory that I believe on it—I do not know if it is worth starting a new church over, and if you do not believe this, that is fine; you can go your way and I will go His way; it is an area Christians can disagree on—is this: there, at one time, was surrounding the earth a sort of ball of water. You see it described in Genesis 1:6-7: the "waters above." You see it described in Psalm 148:4: the "waters above."

Essentially, it was like the greenhouse effect. The water was something that surrounded the earth by way of a giant ball of water—a sphere, if you will. It had the effect of filtering the sun's harmful rays. That is why people were living so long before the Flood came.

Because, when the Flood came, God simply released this canopy that surrounded the earth. That is why you keep finding things in the fossil record that do not bear any resemblance to human life and animal life that we have today. There is actually a biblical explanation for this. It is called the canopy.

People criticize the Bible. "You know, you believe the Bible. How ridiculous? Do you believe in a global flood?"

Yes, I believe in that.

"How ridiculous."

Why is it ridiculous?

"Well, there is not enough rain in the clouds to flood the earth."

Well, you are assuming by your statement that God used the clouds. Why do you think God used the clouds?

"Well, because that is how rain falls today."

So you are pretending that what is normative today has always been.

That is a doctrine called uniformitarianism. The fact of the matter is that you have no idea what was happening before the Flood because you were not there. (Some of you look old, but you are not that old.)

Essentially, the reason this whole world was flooded is God released the canopy. It had nothing to do with the clouds. Once the canopy was gone, the greenhouse effect was gone, and the layer that filtered the sun's harmful rays was gone. You do not have people living into their nine hundreds anymore.

Methuselah was the oldest man that ever lived; he lived nine hundred and sixty-nine years. Adam lived nine hundred and thirty years. Noah is going to get another three hundred and fifty years, bringing his total up to nine hundred and fifty, and then it is over. No more long lifespans for people. I think there is actually a biblical answer for that.

Notice here the very end of Genesis 9:29. There are only three words there.

"...and he died" (Genesis 9:29).

Noah, as exemplary as his obedience was so much of the time, was not the promised one that was coming. You see, Noah's parents were so proud of him at his birth that they thought he was the Messiah. Sounds like typical parents, doesn't it?

Genesis 5:28-29. It says,

"Lamech..." (Genesis 5:28).

That is Noah's father.

"...lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and became the father of a son. Now he called his name Noah, saying, 'This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands arising from the ground which the Lord has cursed.'" (Genesis 5:28-29).

"This one," Lamech said at Noah's birth, "is going to fix the curse." What curse? The curse we read about in Genesis 3 with the Fall of man. We know there is a Messiah coming. They thought Baby Noah was the guy.

But you continue to move through the biblical story, and you see how wonderful Noah's obedience was until he got drunk. "Oh, I guess he is not the guy." And then he died. "I guess he is not the guy. I guess he is not the Messiah." There must be something or someone coming later.

That is why this kind of information is included. It is to make us look forward to a Messiah—who would be Jesus Christ—who would ultimately fix the problem of Genesis 3 and be the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15.

Every human being is going to let you down. Even the best of the best are going to have some kind of skeleton in their closet. That is why, as a Christian, I would just strongly exhort you not to place your eyes on man, not to place your eyes in terms of hero worship upon people that are a blessing to you, because those people have a sin nature, just like Noah did.

If you are looking to a person or a group or someone that has led you to Christ or someone that has disciplined you or someone's ministry that has been a blessing to you—and it is okay to show basic respect for that person—be very careful about putting them a notch above where they belong.

Because if you are not careful, you are going to end up very disillusioned, because people will let you down. Sugar Land Bible Church is a great place, but the truth of the matter is the people here are going to let you down. The pastor could let you down, the elders could let you down, the deacons could let you down—because we all have the exact same nature everyone else has. How important it is for us to have our eyes fixed on Christ.

But all things considered with this man Noah, he was not bad at all. A perfect life? No. But, boy, did he walk in obedience to God like very few human beings have. What a joy it is to get to the end of your life and to be able to look back on it and say, "You know what, I spent my life the right way."

David could say that. In Acts 13:36 in the NIV version, it reads as follows,

"Now when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep;..." (Acts 13:36).

I read that and I say, "Lord, I want that for myself. When it is my time to go, I want You to be able to say of me that I served Your purpose in my generation."

A flawless life? No. Perfect life? No. But a life God used for eternal purposes. Noah, even though he had some down ticks, so to speak, certainly could look back on his life as a life well spent.

Daniel could do that also. Daniel 12:4: after Daniel had received and recorded all of those prophecies that we call the Book of Daniel, the angel said to him,

"But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase." (Daniel 12:4).

Daniel 12:8-9,

"As for me, I heard but could not understand; so I said, 'My lord, what will be the outcome of these events?' He said, 'Go your way, Daniel, for these words are concealed and sealed up until the end time.'" (Daniel 12:8-9).

Daniel, at the very end of his life, receiving his final vision, "Just ask the Lord. I want to understand what I have written," and he is told to go his way. "That does not concern you. You have done your job. You have done your part. You have done exactly what I asked you to do. You have faithfully recorded everything. Now enjoy My presence and await your future resurrected body."

What a joy it is to be able to look back at one's life and say, "You know what, it wasn't perfect—a bumpy ride here or there—but God got His way."

Why is that such a big deal? It is such a big deal because of Ephesians 2:10 which says,

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

Very sadly, Calvinistic interpreters teaching the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, which we have gone over in prior sermons as being a wrong doctrine, use this to teach that every single Christian will leave this earth on a note of victory, not just in terms of position—we all leave on a note of victory in that sense—but in terms of practice.

"Everyone's going to go out like Noah. Everyone's going to go out like David. Everyone's going to go out like Daniel."

And I am here to tell you that that is not even true. It is not even true from this verse. Why is that? Because the word 'walk' ('peripateo' [περιπατέω] in Greek) is a subjunctive, which is the mood of possibility.

When Paul says,

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

What it says is that we might walk in them—subjunctive. We may walk in them—subjunctive. They are prepared for you, but whether you walk in it or not—that is between you and the Lord.

God has great things that He wants to do through every life, but some people, because they resist the Spirit in the middle tense of their salvation (progressive sanctification), they just never give God the upper hand, and they get to the end of their life and God had all of these things for them to do but they were a 'might.' They never walked in them.

The Bible is filled with people like this as warnings for us. Noah heeded the warning and got to the end of his life and could look back on a life well spent.

Do you realize how few people get to the end of their life and look back and say, "You know what? God got His way"? Look at what Mark Twain says here in his autobiography. This is what he wrote just before his death.

It says,

"A myriad of men are born; they labor and sweat and struggle for bread; they squabble and scold and fight; they scramble for little mean advantages over each other. Age creeps upon them and infirmities follow; shames and humiliations bring down their prides and their vanities. Those they love are taken from them, and the joy of life is turned to aching grief. The burden of pain, care, and misery grows heavier year by year. At length ambition is dead, pride is dead, vanity is dead; longing for release is in their place. It comes at last—the only un-poisoned gift earth ever had for them—and they vanish from a world where they were of no consequence; where they achieved nothing, where they were a mistake and a failure and a foolishness; where they left no sign that they have existed—a world that will lament them a day and forget them forever."⁴

How different are the words of the Apostle Paul, who was being poured out as a drink offering, and his life was ebbing away as he wrote these words,

"I fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only me, but also to all who have loved His appearing" (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

⁴ Twain, M. *Autobiography*, 2:37

I look at this and I say, "Lord, I want to go out like Noah. I want to go out like Paul. I want to go out like Moses and Daniel." I do not want to go out like Mark Twain, having just wasted much of my life on things that do not matter.

So, when you read these words in the Bible: "and he died," these are things that the Lord wants us to pay attention to as we monitor our own lives in Christ Jesus.

I will close with this, the words of Jim Elliot, a famous Christian. Jim and Elizabeth Elliot were one of the clearly high points of Christianity when you understand their story and how Jim, a graduate from Wheaton College, was going to minister to the Indians who ultimately turned on him and martyred him.

Here is Jim Elliott at the height of his whole life, a very young college graduate. He probably could have gone out into the world and done anything or been anything he wanted to be. Prior to his execution—in the plane, in his journal—he wrote these famous words in Christianity.

He says,

"He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose."

I do not know what you think about a lot lately, but I think a lot about those words, and how significant it is to invest what few fleeting moments we have on this earth into things that matter.

I just give you that as a concluding exhortation, having completed the post-Flood events and post-Flood sin: Noah's sin, Ham's sin and the curse on the Canaanites, and Noah's death. Next week, Lord willing we will be moving into Genesis 10-11, which deals with national dispersion.