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Genesis 9

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Genesis 9.

Topics.

- Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.
- The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every creature.
- You shall not eat flesh with its life.
- Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed.
- The bow in the cloud shall be an everlasting sign of the covenant.
- From Shem, Ham, and Japheth the people of the earth were dispersed.
- Noah drank wine from his vineyard and became drunk.
- The Bible and contraception.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: "Map Locations and People of the Bible," and the title: "Bible Dictionary" on Website Menu.

The previous chapter: in chapter forty-eight the focus was upon the ark coming to rest upon on Mount Ararat; the waters completely subsiding; Noah sending out a raven and a dove; Noah going out of the ark and God telling him that He would never again curse the ground even though the intention of man's heart is continually evil.

GENESIS 9:1

1

Be Fruitful and Multiply and Fill the Earth.

- **Genesis 9:1:** And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.

The Catholic religion uses God's words, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth," to support their teaching that to use conception is against God's will. But at this time the earth had been flooded and only Noah, his wife and his three sons and their wives were left alive on earth so the entire earth was void of human life except for Noah and his family. Since the entire earth was barren of human life it is only natural that God would say, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth," but to apply this today makes no sense, especially when it is considered that in the not too distant future the population of the world (supposing things continue as they always have) will be so great that the earth will not be able to support human life. Added to this the world has now been using conception for generations and it has not stopped the population from increasing each year which also rebuts the idea that contraception prevents human beings from being fruitful multiplying and filling the earth. To discover what the Bible does say about contraception see the title:

- The Bible and Contraception. (At the end of this chapter).

GENESIS 9:2-3

Fear of You and the Dread of You shall be Upon Every Creature.

- **Genesis 9:2-3:** The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. ³Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything.

Here God gives mankind authority and power over every living creature on earth, in the sea and that fly's in the air.

Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you: (v3) some dogmatically claim that this was the first-time man and animals ate meat, but can this statement be emphatically made without any doubt? The following verses clearly show that in the original creation all living creatures including Adam and Eve only ate fruit and plants, no one ate meat and no animal killed another for food.

- Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. ³⁰And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food. And it was so. (Gen. 1:29-30).

And the following verses show that Abel sacrificed animals prior to the flood:

- In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, ⁴and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering. (Gen. 4:3-4).

However, from the time of Abel's sacrifice there is no other mention of sacrifices until Noah walked off the Ark and built an altar to the LORD and offered a sacrifice spoken of in the following verses:

- Noah built an altar to the LORD and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. ²¹And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma. (Gen. 8:20-22).

Though there is no mention of sacrifices from the time of Abel to the time Noah walked off the Ark it appears that the practise of sacrificing animals before the LORD (at least by Noah and the faithful before him) was practised. It is only after the flood and the beginning of the New World that animal sacrifices are directly associated and introduced in to the covenant with the idea of it being a redemptive-substitutionary sacrifice. It is interesting to notice that Noah was to take only the clean animals for sacrifice, this is because these blood sacrifices acted as symbols pointing forward to the ultimate sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, the unblemished Lamb of God on the bloodstained cross of Calvary.

God introduced the exclusivity of eating only clean animals to be sacrificed to God to point forward to the requirement for a redeemer who would be a holy and perfect substitute for mankind. Prior to Abel's sacrifice Adam had eaten of the forbidden fruit and the LORD said:

- Cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; ¹⁸thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground. (Genesis. 3:17-19).

And then cast Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden:

- The LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them. ²²Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—" ²³therefore the LORD God sent him out from the Garden of Eden. (Genesis. 3:21-23).

Here we are told that LORD covered Adam and Eve with garments made from animal skins so it is possible from this time onward Adam and Eve and those following them killed animals to make clothing to cover themselves and protect them from the cold and rather than waste the dead animal began to eat it. Even though the LORD says that they shall eat the plants of the field we are also told that the fields will be overrun

with thorns and thistles and Adam and Eve would have to work very hard to provide food for themselves and their families (Gen. 3:18-19) which means that food would not always be abundantly available so eating the meat of an already dead animal would make sense.

In Genesis chapter eight: we read of Noah, his sons, his wife and his sons' wives and every beast and creeping thing, every bird and everything that moves on the earth went out of the Ark because the waters had subsided and earth had dried out (Gen. 8:14-19).

Then in Genesis chapter nine: God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them:

- Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. ²The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. ³Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. ⁴But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. ⁵And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man. From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man. (Gen. 9:1-5).

These verses show that after the flood, God changed the order that had been established in the Garden of Eden. Before the fall and after the fall up until the flood all living creatures including mankind were to be by God's decree vegetarians. However, it is highly likely that the generation prior to the flood did eat meat since there was no thought toward God or obedience to His law and wickedness was great in the land and every thought of their hearts was continually evil (Gen 6.5). Some may have eaten meat for the following reasons:

- God sacrificed an animal to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness after the fall (Gen. 3.21) and from this time forward they would have killed animals to make clothing and shelter from their hides and skins. Should this be so it is very likely that they ate the dead animal rather than waste it.
- Abel offered the LORD the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions and the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering. (Gen. 4.4-5). Since almost all sacrifices under the Levitical priesthood became food for the priests and their families it is very likely that Abel's sacrifice also became food for his family.
- The fact the LORD explicitly says, "Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you," (Gen. 9:3) does not necessarily mean that it was only after this that mankind began eating meat. It maybe that God is now validating what men had already been doing without any clear law to eat meat before the flood so God is now saying that mankind can now eat meat with a clear conscience. This idea could be supported by the fact that plant food was no longer abundant and animals were being killed for clothing and shelter therefore God in His mercy permitted us to eat meat.

When did animals start eating each other? Exactly when animals began eating animals for food is a mystery. In the original creation, all animals ate plants, not meat

- To every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. (Gen. 1:30).

This means that there was no killing before Adam's sin. Prior to the flood there is much spoken about man's violence against each other, but there is no indication in the Bible that any of the animals ate meat or were violent and vicious. There is no hint that God changed this original command between the time of creation and the flood. It is very unlikely that the animals changed overnight to be what they are today as part of the curse (Gen. 9:2-3) since there is no mention of such a thing and Noah

was able to take the animals two by two into the Ark. It is far more likely that the animals gradually changed overtime into the way they are today as a result of living in man's sinful and violent world. The following verse shows us that up until the flood animals would still have been living on plant foods alone. The LORD told Noah to:

- Take with him every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for him and for them. (Gen. 6:21).

This means when they were on the Ark the animals would not have any fear of each other nor would Noah and his family fear them. However, the following verses show that after the flood, God did give mankind official permission to kill animals for food and eat them.

- The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth and upon every bird of the heavens, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. ³Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. (Gen. 9:2-3).

In the world prior to the flood some animals may have died because of natural causes and injuries so it could be that other animals ate their dead carcasses which would in actual reality be a good thing since it would quickly rid the land of the smelling carcass and stop any form of disease spreading. The flood being the world's greatest disaster would not only have destroyed all the world's lush forests and plant life, but would have also left a certain number of dead animals unburied on the earth's surface which may have been tempting meals for hungry animals to eat. Added to this the earth had been cursed:

- Cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; ¹⁸thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground. (Genesis. 3:17-19).

This means that it is possible that hungry animals were forced to compete against each other for survival, because food was no longer abundant and as the taste for meat increased so too did the killing of each other for food. This is all part of sin entering the world and the awful and dreadful scaring that it brought upon God's wonderful, harmless, peaceful original creation.

CONCLUSION: it cannot be stated with absolute certainty when man began to eat meat or when animals began to eat each other for the following two reasons:

1. Much of what has been said has been based upon certain speculations.
2. Almost all of the covenants made between God and man have the consumption of food associated with them and almost all the blood sacrifices the people offered before the LORD became food for the high priest, the Levitical priesthood and their families. Because of this we cannot know if after the fall Abel and his family ate his sacrifice or whether the generations prior to the flood and God granting mankind to eat meat after the flood (Gen. 9:2-3) actually ate meat. However, what we do know is that in the Garden of Eden and the covenant of creation prior to the flood God provided fruit and plants as food for mankind and the animals.

Then in the covenant with Noah in the New World after the flood God changed this to include, both fruit, plants and meat which indicates that there was some very significant change that had occurred from the world prior to the flood and the world after the flood. The first covenant meal was based upon fruit from the Tree of Life. There was no need to include a sacrificial substitutionary animal in the covenant of creation because Adam had not sinned. It is only after man's sin that a redemptive-substitutionary sacrificial animal sacrifice is introduced in the covenant for the New World.

- Under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. (Heb. 9:22).

The Old Testament ceremonial sacrifices signify the blood of Christ, the Lamb without blemish, shed upon the cross of Calvary. The New Covenant is no longer bloody, because Christ's blood has been shed once for all time.

- The Lord has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. (Heb. 7:27).

The participation now is not in eating the physical, but the spiritual it has been changed from eating a portion of a sacrificed animal to sharing a meal of bread and wine with brothers and sisters in Christ and spiritually share in his presence and in his once-for-all-time blood sacrifice.

NOTE: religions that legalistically and dogmatically forbid eating meat for religious reasons and thereby force their followers to be vegetarians are acting against God and putting their followers in direct rebellion against His will as stated in the following verse:

- Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. (Gen. 9:3).

Some commentators say that even if a person has not chosen vegetarianism for religious reasons it is still a rebellion against God and a slap in His face. However, I would suggest that this is taking things far beyond what God intended since He did not command mankind to eat meat, but gave permission to do so. Added to this many are not comfortable in killing animals and for this reason choose to be vegetarian. These people are not forbidding others to eat meat nor are they acting against God, but are simply being true to their conscience and acting from their heart-filled compassion toward animals.

GENESIS 9:4

You Shall Not Eat Flesh with its Life.

- **Genesis 9:4:** But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood.

As long as the blood flows in the veins of an animal no part of it is to be used for food, the life-blood must be drawn before any of its flesh may be eaten. Following are two reasons why God would command that no animal should be eaten with its life still in it:

1. So that no part of the animal would be cut or torn off while the animal was alive; to prevent cannibalism to which men in the earlier ages of the world were liable; to prevent the horrid cruelty of mutilating or cooking an animal while yet alive and capable of suffering pain. Summing this all up it means no animal should be cruelly killed for food. This is the only biblical law concerning eating the meat of an animal. The blood of the animal is said to be its life, this does not mean that the blood is of itself the life of the animal, but is the means of its life and therefore when the blood is drained out of the animal it quickly dies.

NOTE: God does not command mankind to eat meat, but gives permission, in contrast to this God does emphatically command mankind not to eat an animal while it is alive and to kill it as quickly as possible so it does not suffer unnecessarily.

2. It may also be intended to teach that the life of the animal which is in the blood belongs to God who gave it and not to man and to honour the blood of atonement. The two legitimate ways to treat blood is to make atonement for the sinner and if it is not used this way to cover it with the dirt of the earth.

- The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life. ¹²Therefore I have said to the people of Israel, No person among you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger who sojourns among you eat blood. ¹³"Any one also of the people of Israel, or of the strangers who sojourn among them, who takes in hunting any beast or bird that may be eaten shall pour out its blood and cover it with earth. (Lev. 17:11-13).

God is not only the creator of all things, but also the source of all life and this life is in the blood therefore the blood of man and of animals should never be looked upon as a common and worthless thing, but must be treated with respect in the atonement or covered with earth. It should be noted that this command against eating blood given to Noah and all his descendants and repeated to the Israelites, in a very solemn manner under the Mosaic Law has been confirmed under the New Testament and thereby been made a perpetual obligation. In Acts chapter fifteen the apostles and the elders said to the Gentile church: -

- For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements: ²⁹that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled. (Acts 15:28-29).

GENESIS 9:5-7

Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed.

- **Genesis 9:5-7:** And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man. From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man. ⁶"Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image. ⁷And you, be fruitful and multiply, teem on the earth and multiply in it."

For your lifeblood I will require a reckoning from every beast: (v5) any beast that kills a man or women must be put to death, not for the punishment of the beast, since it is under no law; is not capable of sin and is not a moral creature, but to protect others from any future harm and because human life is valued by God. Though the animal has no proper rights God does command mankind to speedily put it to death so that it does not suffer unnecessarily since it is capable feeling pain. This was confirmed by the Law of Moses:

- When an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten, but the owner of the ox shall not be liable. (Exod. 21:28).

Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed: (v6) the focus here is not upon a man that accidentally killed another, such a crime is not deserving of death. The following verse shows how such a death should be treated under the Mosaic Law:

- This is the provision for the manslayer, who by fleeing there may save his life. If anyone kills his neighbor unintentionally without having hated him in the past— ⁵as when someone goes into the forest with his neighbor to cut wood, and his hand swings the axe to cut down a tree, and the head slips from the handle and strikes his neighbor so that he dies—he may flee to one of these cities and live, ⁶lest the avenger of blood in hot anger pursue the manslayer and overtake him, because the way is long, and strike him fatally, though the man did not deserve to die, since he had not hated his neighbor in the past. (Deut. 19:4-6).

The focus of verse six is upon premeditated, willful and deliberate murder for this type of crime the Scriptures emphatically say:

- Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death. (Exod. 21:12).
- Whoever takes a human life shall surely be put to death. (Lev. 24:17).
- You shall accept no ransom for the life of a murderer, who is guilty of death, but he shall be put to death. (Num. 35:31).

God has committed this judgment to men. The execution of this commandment to put the murder to death must be carried out under the safeguards of the civil law and the justice system of each country to protect the innocent from further harm and bring the healing balm of justice to the hearts of the victim's family and friends. The apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans wrote:

- God's servant is for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. (Rom. 13:4).

It is the law of God and universal principle of justice between the wrongdoer and the one who suffers by the hand of the one doing wrong that if a person doing wrong deprives another of any property they are bound to make it good or to suffer the like loss likewise those who shed blood their blood is to be shed. Here the civil sword is committed to the charge of man the judges shall pass the sentence of death upon the murder when his crime is clearly proved by witnesses. The actual putting to death by the executioner is delegated to man in the most general terms. God does not give any specific detail concerning the administration of the execution, but leaves it open to the magistrates and civil authorities. However, it would be taken for granted that the murder be speedily put to death so that he does not suffer unnecessarily. Throughout history and in our present age there are murderers who have never been found out by man, but this does not mean they will escape the judgment due to them. Whether in this world or in the next, God will discover murders and punish them accordingly.

Suicide: some religious teaches apply the same condemnation that God applies to murderers to those who commit suicide, but this is reading far more into the command concerning murders than what is written. Murder is one person with evil intent deliberately taking the life of an innocent person. In contrast to this most suicides are a result of a man or woman suffering inner misery; enormous hurt; have no hope and are living in a world of mental torment and deep emotional anguish. They are not evil people plotting to harm others in fact most are good people that are so deeply suffering and hurting they see death as their only hope of escape. To put this group of people in the same category as murders, I feel is to not only completely forget that the focus of the verses concerning the murderer is about justice, but also to forget that God sees the heart and is a God of mercy, grace and love.

NOTE: some feel that taking the murderer's life diminishes the value of human life, but in reality, it is quite the opposite. Consider a loving family whose father had been brutally murdered and the murder came to the man's wife and offered her a million dollars to compensate for the loss of her husband, there is no money that can compensate for the loss of a loved one. The highest price that can be paid is to give his life. Though it does not bring the husband back justice acts as a healing balm to a deeply hurting heart. This is why when the courts allow a murder to go free (because of clever lawyers) the victims' family spend years in court appeals until the murder is rightly convicted and when they are it is common to hear people say, "Finally justice has been done," true justice brings a certain sense of relief and peace to the hurting heart. In contrast to this, when justice is not rightly administered the heart of the individual and of society is robbed of having this sense of relief and peace.

God made man in his own image: (v6) clearly the words, "created in the likeness of God" do not refer to God's immortality or wisdom, but rather to the ability to reason and think and to what is commonly called original righteousness as expressed in the following verse:

- God made man upright, but they have sought out many schemes. (Eccles. 7:29).

These words shine a brilliant spotlight on the excellence of man above all other creatures of this world, no other creature is said to be made after the image or likeness of God or said to have had the breath of God breathed into them. Man is made in the likeness of God also means:

- Man has authority and dominion over all creatures wild or tame
- Man is gifted with speech, reason and will power.
- Man has intellect, moral power and a sense of justice
- Man can feel emotion (i.e., anger, jealousy, sorrow and joy, excitement and love etc.).
- Man is created with a mind, free-will and self-consciousness.
- Man understands the things of God that no other creature can.
- Man is able to discern right and wrong and is free to choose good or evil.
- Man has power to exercise his rights especially over inferior creatures.
- Man is able to govern himself in civil matters and judge between right and wrong.
- Man has the rights over his children and all that belongs to him.
- Man feels wronged when that which is rightfully his has been taken and has a sense of justice in requiring the wrongdoer to make compensation.
- Man has power to manage the earth in a manner that enhances their life and comfort.
- Man is also in the likeness of God in a spiritual sense since in that he was created to be connected to heaven and related to the eternal God as no other creature on earth is.

However, since the fall this image of God upon man has been sadly defaced.

GENESIS 9:8-17

The Bow in the Cloud shall be an Everlasting Sign of the Covenant.

- **Genesis 9:8-17:** Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹"Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, ¹⁰and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. ¹¹I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." ¹²And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." ¹⁷God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

Covenant: the word covenant in the Old Testament comes from the Hebrew word (*b^eriyth*) it literally means a compact (because it was made by passing between pieces of flesh), it refers to an agreement, contract, promise and pledge. From the New Testament it comes from the Greek word (*diatheke*) and refers to a special contract, especially a will covenant and testament. A covenant not only provides clear rules and laws, but also guides a relationship between two contracting parties in a way that

nothing else could this is why the Bible is called The Old and New Covenant, or The Old and New Testament,” signifying an agreement between two parties. The Old Testament covenant of law was confirmed by the blood of animals while the New Testament covenant of grace which is the best and most perfect covenant is confirmed by the blood of Christ.

I will establish my covenant with you: (v18) God establish this covenant that He would never again destroy all living creatures or cover the earth by a flood with Noah and his three sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth and all their descendants after them. All mankind are descendants of Shem, Ham and Japheth therefore God’s promise to never again destroy all living creatures or cover the earth by a flood applies to all mankind. The rainbow is set in the sky to be an everlasting sign of God’s covenant between Him and all future generations and all living creatures on the earth that He would never again destroy all living creatures or cover the earth by a flood. This does not mean that there will not be serious floods in certain areas as there have been throughout history, but that the entire globe of the earth will never again be destroyed by a flood.

GENESIS 9:18-19

From Shem, Ham, and Japheth the people of the earth dispersed.

- **Genesis 9:18-19:** The sons of Noah who went forth from the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.) ¹⁹These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the people of the whole earth were dispersed.

Shem: (Asia) comes from the Hebrew word (*shem*) it literally means posterity and carries the idea of a noticeable position and by implication, distinguished of character, honor, authority and famous. He was Noah's oldest son and part of Noah's family of eight who survived the great flood. Shem and his wife were childless before the flood, but after the flood Shem bore a son at 110 years of age. He was father to five sons who became the fathers of the five Semitic nations and the father of the nations of the ancient Near East including the Israelites. The Jewish religion; Judaism; Islam and Christianity all sprang up from the line of Shem. The Semites were particularly known for their religious zeal.

9

The five Semitic nations:

1. Elam (the Persians) they settled northeast of the Persian Gulf.
2. Asshur (the Assyrians) the Biblical name for Assyria, they settled between the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers.
3. Arphaxad (the Babylonians) they settled in Chaldea.
4. Lud (the Lydians) they settled in Asia Minor, but some of them sailed across the Mediterranean and settled in northern Africa.
- 2 Aram (the Syrians) the Biblical name for Syria, is located north and east of Israel. (Taken from Bible History online, the Table of Nations).

Ham: (Africa) comes from the Hebrew word (*Cham*) it literally means hot. He was Noah's second oldest son and part of the family of eight who survived the great flood. Ham and his wife bore four sons who became the fathers of the nations of Africa. Ham's fourth son Canaan was prophetically cursed because he gazed at his father’s nakedness while he was drunk.

This curse would mean later that Canaan would lose his land to the Hebrews and would be subservient to the descendants of Shem. The Hamites were known for their physical endurance.

The four Hamitic nations:

1. Cush (the Ethiopians) they settled in Ethiopia south of Egypt, also early in their history some of them migrated to an area north of the Persian Gulf (Genesis. 10:8-10).
2. Mizraim (the Egyptians) they settled in north-eastern Africa. (Mizraim is the Bible name for Egypt).
3. Phut (the Libyans) sometimes translated Libya, they settled in northern Africa.
- 2 Canaan (the Canaanites) they settled above Africa east of the Mediterranean (Later it was given to the Hebrews). (Taken from Bible History online, the Table of Nations).

Japheth: (Europe) Japheth comes from the Hebrew word (*Yepheth*) it literally means expansion and carries the idea, "God will enlarge." He was Noah's third and oldest son and part of the family of eight who survived the great flood. Japheth and Shem were both greatly blessed for respecting their father Noah when he was found naked. The Japhethites were known for their intellectual endeavours. All the descendants of Japheth mentioned in Genesis chapter ten cover the European (Caucasian) nations which mean that Noah's blessing on Japheth was far reaching.

The seven Japhetic nations are:

- 1 Gomer (the Cimmerians) they settled north of the Black Sea, but afterwards his descendants probably occupied Germany, France, Spain and the British Isles.
- 2 Magog (the Scythians) they lived north of the Caspian Sea.
- 3 Madai (the Medes) they settled south of the Caspian Sea.
- 4 Javan (the Ionians or Greeks) Javan is the Hebrew name for Greeks, they settled in Greece.
- 5 Tubal (the Turks) lived south of the Black Sea.
- 6 Meshech (the Slavs) lived between the Black and Caspian Seas.
- 7 Tiras (the Etruscans) located west of the Black Sea. (Taken from Bible History online, the Table of Nations).

GENESIS 9:20-27

Noah Drank Wine from His Vineyard and Became Drunk.

- **Genesis 9:20-27:** Noah began to be a man of the soil, and he planted a vineyard. ²¹He drank of the wine and became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent. ²²And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside. ²³Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned backward, and they did not see their father's nakedness. ²⁴When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, ²⁵he said, "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers." ²⁶He also said, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant. ²⁷May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant."

Noah cursed Canaan: (v25) Noah planted a vineyard and drank of the wine and became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent (perhaps he passed out while getting ready for bed, whatever the reason Ham saw the nakedness of his father and went out to get his two brothers to come and look. Rather than look Shem and Japheth showed their father respect and took a garment and walked in backwards so they would not see their

father's nakedness. When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what Ham had done to him, he said, "Cursed be Canaan he shall be a servant to his brothers." (Gen. 9:20-25). Noah drinking an excess of wine was wrong and Ham's sin was not that he saw his father naked, but that he failed to show respect to his father and deliberately went to get his brothers so they could also mock and stare at their naked father.

GENESIS 9:28-29

All the days of Noah were 950 years, and he died.

- **Genesis 9:28-29:** After the flood Noah lived 350 years.²⁹ All the days of Noah were 950 years, and he died.

Noah walked off the ark when he was 601 years old and lived to 950 which means he lived 349 years after the flood.

THE BIBLE AND CONTRACEPTION

The Catholic Church uses the following verses concerning Adam, Noah and Onan to support their belief that God disapproves of birth control:

- God said to them (Adam and Eve), "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth." (Genesis. 1:28).
- God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth." (Genesis. 9:1).
- You (Noah and his sons), be fruitful and multiply; bring forth on the earth and multiply in it." (Genesis. 9:7).
- God said to him (Jacob), "I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and kings shall come from your own body." (Genesis. 35:11).
- Onan knew that the offspring would not be his. So, whenever he went in to his brother's wife he would waste the semen on the ground, so as not to give offspring to his brother.
¹⁰And what he did was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and he put him to death. (Genesis. 38:9-10).

In the case of Adam, Eve and Noah: Adam and Eve were the only two people on earth and in Noah's case the earth had been flooded and only Noah, his wife and his three sons and their wives remained on earth. Since the entire earth was devoid of human life it is only natural that God would say, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth," but to apply this today makes no sense, especially when it is considered that in the not too distant future (supposing things continue as they always have) the population of the world will be so great that the earth will not be able to support human life.

In the case of Jacob: God changed his name to Israel and it was from him that the ten sons of Israel came, these sons became the heads of the ten tribes of Israel and these tribes became the nation of Israel. Obviously, God told Jacob to, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth," because it was through Jacob that the LORD established Israel.

NOTE: the world has been using conception for generation now and it has not stopped the population of the world from increasing. This clearly shows that the idea that contraception prevents human beings from being fruitful, multiplying and filling the earth is not true.

In the case of Onan: the fact God put Onan to death for wasting his semen on the ground is also used to support the theory, conception is against God's will.

- Then Judah said to Onan, "Go in to your brother's wife and perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother." ⁹But Onan knew that the offspring would not be his. So whenever he went in to his brother's wife he would waste the semen on the ground, so as not to give offspring to his brother. ¹⁰And what he did was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and he put him to death. (Gen. 38:8-9).

To use the fact that God put Onan to death because he wasted his semen on the ground to support the theory that God is against contraception is not only reading far more into the story than is intended, but also ignoring the true reason God put Onan to death. God was not angry with Onan because he wasted his semen on the ground, but for failing to honour a commandment to produce a child with his dead brother's wife. His sin was not birth control, but rebellion and selfishness. Jewish law states:

- If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the wife of the dead man shall not be married outside the family to a stranger. Her husband's brother shall go in to her and take her as his wife and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. ⁶And the first son whom she bears shall succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. (Deut. 25:5-6).

This was so that his brother's house would be built up and his inheritance would remain with his family and his tribe in Israel. This was a law given to the Jewish nation of Israel it does not apply to those of other nations which means that to use it to support the teaching that conception is against God's will is not only building a doctrine on a false foundation, but also stretching the Scriptures far beyond what God intended.

Does the Bible say anything about contraception? No the Bible does not explicitly speak about contraception, but there are a number of passages where the Bible implies that sex should be enjoyed for other reasons than the production of children and that no wrong is done if a couple have sex with the intention of not having children. There is no command in the Bible or even a suggestion that a married couple should only have sex when they are trying to have children. Added to this Paul in his letter to the Corinthian church wrote:

- The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. ⁴For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise, the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. ⁵Do not deprive one another (1 Cor. 7:3-5)

Paul in these verses calls intercourse between a married man and woman a marital duty and in later verses goes on to say that the husband and wife should not deprive each other except by mutual consent. In the book of Hebrews, it is written:

- Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled. (Hebrews. 13:4).

This means that the marriage bed is undefiled, meaning that there are almost no restrictions concerning what couples choose to do in the marriage bed. In Paul's letter to the Ephesian church he speaks about the role each person in a marriage should play and how they should treat each other. Providing these guidelines are followed every relationship will flourish whether there are children or not. In Psalms it is written:

- Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. (Psalm 127:3).

Children are a natural result of sexual intercourse between a husband and wife and are referred to as the reward of the womb, but the Bible does not restrict sex in marriage to be only for making babies. In fact the Scriptures encourage husbands and wives to give pleasure to their mates. The idea that sex was dirty and evil crept into Christianity from early Catholic teachers that taught their followers that sex should only be engaged in by married couples when they wanted to have children, yet there is no such instruction in the Bible. In Genesis it is written:

- A man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. (Gen. 2:24).

The expression one flesh means they shall become one by the act of sex and one in unity. The book of Proverbs says:

- Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth, ¹⁹a lovely deer, a graceful doe. Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight; be intoxicated always in her love. (Proverbs 5:18-19).

Here the author encourages married couples to enjoy sexual pleasure.

In conclusion: there is no passage in the Bible that forbids husbands and wives from having sex and enjoying it together for the purpose of romance and pleasure and there is nothing wrong with couples using contraceptives.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.

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