

• *Noah like Adam*

The great hero of the flood, Noah, disgraces himself! He is a second Adam, and like Adam he is to populate the land, and be a farmer. Like Adam he falls because of his physical appetite, this time not for fruit from the tree but drink from the vineyard.

• *Mesopotamia repopulated*

A small family came out of the ark (9:18), and God picked up again with the three sons and a grandson, Canaan. The Mesopotamian world and its surrounding areas is repopulated from these three lines (9:19). *'Noah, the man of the soil, began life again and planted a vineyard'* (9:20; to translate, 'Noah ... was the first farmer', is a mistake). He drinks some of its wine. Perhaps he was not aware of what would happen if he drank too much of it. In his grogginess he became uncovered in his tent (9:21). Ham takes pleasure in his father's degradation and spreads the tale of what had happened (9:22). He enjoyed what had happened, but the others do what they can to protect their father in a dignified manner (9:23).

• *Too much wine*

Noah's disgrace

Noah wakes up (9:24), finds out what had happened, thinks about Ham and the grandson Canaan, and is led by the Spirit to give a prophecy. It is the second Messianic prophecy of the Bible.

1. Scripture is honest

1. **We notice the honesty of Scripture.** It does not cover up the sins of the saints. It is an embarrassing story, but the writer makes no attempt to disguise the fact that Noah was fallible. The Bible-writers are forgiving (no one's sin is mentioned in Hebrews 11) but they do not pretend the heroes of faith are faultless.

2. Greatest of believers have weaknesses

2. **The greatest of believers have weaknesses.** Even heroes of faith have sins. Not only Noah's drunkenness, but Abraham's deceit, David's adultery and murder, Peter's cursing, and the disastrous wanderings of Samson, and Jephthah, Solomon, and others, are all told to us. The Christian is not a super-saint. He is an ordinary person saved by grace. The people of God are upheld by God's grace. If we are different it is because of the powerful support of God. If we are not upheld we can fall at any moment. The only thing that makes us different is that we are sustained by God's mercy. If God should let us go we can slip badly. Who can say what we would do if God lets us go? And God can let us go for a while if we become proud.

3. The dangers or wine

3. **We are warned of the danger of wine.** The Bible does not absolutely forbid wine. There are no laws about it, but there are many warnings. *'Let every man be convinced in his own mind'* about the details of behaviour – but take warning!

Noah's Prediction

Led by the Spirit Noah gives a prediction.

1. Canaan is cursed

1. **Canaan is cursed.** Noah thinks about his child Ham who seemed to delight in sin. He thinks too about his grandson Canaan, and is led by the Spirit to see that this bad aspect of Ham's character is going to continue in Canaan. We remember the Canaanites! They became so vile and filthy.

This verse has been misused to justify discrimination against people who are reckoned to descend from Ham. But the writer is talking about Canaanites, not everyone from the line of Ham. In fact the Canaanites did become degraded and nations around dominated them. The Israelites conquered them later. It is

☞¹ 9:18

☞² 9:19

☞³ 9:20

☞⁴ 9:21

☞⁵ 9:22

☞⁶ 9:23

☞¹ 9:24

certainly wicked to grade mankind into groups and then practise discrimination on that basis. Genesis 9:25 certainly cannot justify racism, and fortunately such racist interpretations are not heard much nowadays.

The gospel of Jesus overcame distinctions of this kind. There are no tribes, races, kindred, tongues, in Jesus. There is no Greek or Jew, circumcised, barbarian, Scythian. There is no slave or free person. Christ is in all.

2. Shem is to be blessed

• **Jesus a Semite**

3. Japheth's territory

• **A picture of Salvation for Gentiles**

• **The picture of Salvation starts to grow**

2. **Shem is to be blessed.** He is told that out of his line will come great blessing (9:26). It is interesting that the name Yahweh is used. It means 'God who redeems by the blood of the lamb'. The prediction is Messianic. Noah is given a conviction that salvation and blessing will come through the line of Shem. In due course Jesus would be a Jew, a Semite, a descendant in the line of Shem through whom the entire human race will be blessed.

3. **Japheth is to have extended territory.** His line will not lead to the Messiah but there is blessing in store for him. He had protected Noah and will find protection himself. The language is picturesque. Japheth 'lives in the tents of Shem'. One person is pictured as taking shelter with another. In the course of history salvation would come through a Semite – Jesus. Then an abundance of Gentiles would come to salvation through a Jewish Saviour. The people of Japheth were enlarged in their population and in their territory, but there is more involved here than territorial expansion. The gospel would come through a Semitic Saviour, and when He came salvation would be for all people everywhere. Many of the people of Japheth around the Mediterranean area would 'take shelter' in this Semitic Saviour.



The picture of salvation is slowly beginning to grow. The Saviour will be born of a woman (Genesis 3:15), a Semite (9:26). We shall be told He will be of the tribe of Judah, a son of David, one born in Bethlehem, born of a virgin. The picture starts to grow here in Genesis 3 and 9, but will fill out more and more. Only Jesus fits the picture.

Meanwhile man's second chance did not stop his being a sinner. Noah was not unfallen Adam. And eventually Noah died. Genesis 9:29 completes the keynote of Genesis 5. Sin and death are still continuing, but the Saviour is on His way.

☰¹ 9:26

☰¹
Genesis 3:15

☰² 9:26

	<p>Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His <i>Preaching Through The Bible</i> (PTTB) books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.</p>	
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