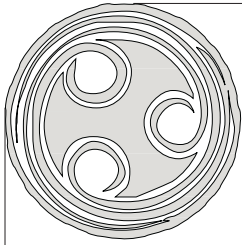


Curses, Consequences and Culture : Genesis 9:18-10:32



"The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations."
-Exodus 34:5-7

sermonnotes

Introduction

"Running away from pain when you've been victimized; tales of another broken home."

Green Day; American Idiot

There are no doubt many similarities to the Genesis flood story and the Mesopotamian versions found in the same era and geographical areas. While the similarities are striking, the dissimilarities are equally profound and actually appear to be a polemic or social commentary on the mythos of the era.

Genesis' Yahweh and the gods of Mesopotamia

- One God vs. a Committee.
- Noah sovereignly chosen by grace vs. a god's favorite (Utnapishtim) escaping the wrath.
- Yahweh in control vs. the gods scared by the deluge.
- Yahweh calling Noah out of the ark as planned vs. Enlil surprised to see that his subject (Utnapishtim) survived.
- Yahweh guarantees no more mass execution vs. the gods making no such promise.
- In Genesis mankind is justly destroyed vs. destruction for "noisiness" and "excessive fertility."
- Noah is saved because of his connection via covenant to only sovereign savior vs. luck or fate to pick the correct god in the pantheon of choices.

I want to catch us up on some key points (regarding God's grace) that need to be seared into our memory as we continue with the story of Noah and his family.

God's actions in judgment are just and merciful (6:5,12,13).
God's grace creates worshipping hearts and righteous people (8:9).
God's grace and man's worship prohibits Him from destroying mankind again (8:21).

God's covenant with His people is the key to Him establishing the relationship with His people that He does (6:18; :9,11,12,13,15,16,17 cf. 9:1,6,7).

God's grace overlooks man's continued rebellion because of His covenant (8:21 cf. Ezekiel 14:14-20).

What is the next generation going to look like? Can we break the chain of sin that haunts us? What would it be like to be the parents of Adolph Hitler? How much of my child's actions are my responsibility? I hope to explore these types of questions as we look at our scripture today.

From The Head...

Our "Simple" Sins Have Grave Consequences (Genesis 9:18-29) It is obvious that Ham's sin was an inherent weakness in his character. It was a weakness that Noah prophetically traced to ham's son Canaan, and much of Ham's offspring. Please note that although this passage has been used to promote racism against people of color, this curse did not come from God, nor is it meant to be universally applied to all of Ham's descendents, or eternal in scope. This is NOT a judgment on race, but an indictment on sin and its ravaging consequences in a person's life.

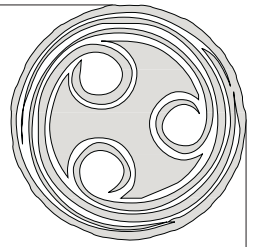
Culture is Born Out of Covenant and Necessity (Genesis 10:1-32) In Ham came some of Israel's greatest enemies (Hivvites, Hittites, Jebusites, Amorites, Philistines, Canaanites...), and some of the very tools that God used to discipline and shape the people He would call His own.

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Our life matters and so do our choices. Everything we do has real consequences that affect generations. I suppose this can be a crippling reality, yet as believers we are comforted with the grace and sovereign work of our Lord in the world. God is able to utilize our choices (both good and evil) to create a world that brings Him glory. Ultimately any "curses" we feel upon our lives are eradicated at the cross of Christ. Shem, Ham, and Japheth are all included in the blessing of God (Genesis 9:1), which is fulfilled in Christ (see Genesis 12:1-3 cf. John 3:16) in spite of the mess they make of their lives in reality. Hearing this story and walking away without examination and repentance will only lead to furthering the sins of our fathers from one generation until the next. We may feel that our secret life and its subsequent choices are going unnoticed, but God is sovereignly using them to bring us into bondage, so that we will turn to Him for release. As we are being formed as a community of faith, it is imperative that we are honing our character around the scriptures, fellowship and the prompting of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We are creating a culture; it will turn out to be a culture of glory or a culture of shame.

sermonnotes

... To The Heart



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