

## Noah's Line: Exposing Heart Issues

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The First Stories: God's Design for Humanity / Shame; Honor; Blessings and Curses / Genesis 9:18–29

In Genesis 9, the sons of Noah found themselves in an unusual predicament. Their father is naked! How shall Noah's sons respond, and how might a believer respond in a situation when parents shame themselves? As followers of the Lord, Christians conduct themselves in ways that require honoring their parents, and we inherit the spiritual blessings of Shem and Japheth.

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Today, we will be reading from [Genesis 9:18-29](#). If you have brought your Bibles, please turn with me to this section of Scripture.

In this section of Genesis, we are introduced to Noah's three sons. All of them were in the ark when God flooded the world. And the story picks up from the day the family disembarks from the ark.

Let's read together the account of Noah's descendants from [Genesis 9:18-29](#).

*Lord God, we pray for you to teach us your Word. Deposit the spiritual word into our hearts. We ask that you create in us good soil and produce grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold ([Mark 4:8](#)). May all the glory be given to you. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.*

During the days of Moses, God redeemed the nation of Israel from the land of Egypt. The Lord was gracious to them. He casts off their slavery and adopts them as his children. And yet, as his children, God had expectations for them, as he does for us.

What expectations does God have for his children? Remember the Ten Commandments? Yes, those were the rules that God expected his beloved children to obey.

Many of you may remember the first one. “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me” ([Ex 20:2-3](#)).

But what about the fifth commandment? Does anyone remember that one?

God’s fifth commandment says, “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you” ([Ex. 20:12](#)).

Honor... means “to give weight to someone.” To honor someone, then, is to give weight or to grant a person a position of respect and even authority in one’s life.

Easy enough. I can give honor when honor is due. *But what about the time when people are vulnerable and have failed?* What are the followers of the Lord to do when caught in an unusual predicament and must make a choice between shame and honoring another?

The fifth commandment is the link in the chain that connects this story to what we read earlier. Now you’ll begin to understand the story isn’t about Noah’s fall. But the actions of three sons.

#### The Failure of Ham: We Are Prone to Expose (Genesis 9:20-23a)

In the Old Testament, nakedness is associated with shame. After Adam and Eve sinned they realized they were....naked!!! Shameful, indeed.

Noah has a lapse in judgment. He pitched his tent and it should be read as Noah purposely exposed himself in his tent. In other words, Noah didn’t hide anything. He left everything out for the whole world to see.

Now let’s imagine Ham for a moment. He perceives his father’s intoxication. And instead of caring for his father. Noah a righteous man, who walked with God and found favor in the eyes of the Lord ([Gen 6:8-9](#)). Ham reveals his heart.

As God said earlier, [man’s] intention and thoughts of his heart were only evil continually ([Gen 6:5b](#)). Ham exploited his father in a moment of weakness. He announced to his brother what he saw - his dad’s shame.

You may never think you have stooped this low to expose your parents in their moment of weakness, but you have.

You have gossiped about their shortcoming. You told others about their anger problems, drinking dilemma, or spiritual immaturity. Those behaviors are no different from Ham's.

Shaming our parents is a sinful act. What is the fifth commandment? Honor! Honor! Honor! Never shame.

Now, will anyone honor a fallen parent in distress? Yes, Shem and Japheth.

The Faithfulness of Shem: Honor Covers What Shame Exposes ([Genesis 9:23-27](#))

The good sons understand how to live in a fallen world. They obeyed God's will by taking the garment and covering Noah. That's how you care for your father's dignity. You cover the shame by giving honor.

If there place where parents should be honored it should be in God's house.

Remember how important it was for Christ to honor his father and mother? In the gospels, Jesus honored his Father by becoming obedient until to the point of death on a cross ([Phil 2:8](#)). And while Christ hung on the cross, he called for John to receive his mother.

Jesus perfectly honored his mother and father. He gave them weight in his life, in their positions, and authority. If we seek to honor our parents, we must sacrificially love them until the very end.

But Noah's story has more for us. After he awakes from his slumber, he calls for blessings and curses to befall his children and grandchildren.

This sets the stage for why Canaan, Ham's grandson, and Israel, Shem and Japheth's descendants, will be at odds forever. One line of Noah's family will be under a curse because of the dishonor shown to Noah, and eventually Ham's family will cease to worship the Lord.

On the other hand, Shem and Japheth are blessed, but not because of who they are, but because of who they worship.

*Blessed be the Lord, The God of Shem.*

*May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tent of Shem.*

very spiritual blessing abides on those who are of Shem's and Japheth's family. Their family will eventually lead to Christ, and in Him comes all the blessings of eternal life to those who believe.

That is why we are people who honor. We are the blessed people of God in Christ.

The Grace of God: Your Shame Has Already Been Covered ([Genesis 9:26-29](#))

To say it another way, you were Adam and Eve and Noah. Your shame was exposed. God knew you were guilty, but in love. God sent his Son to cover you.

Christ is Shem and Japheth hiding your shame. You were the drunk in sin. You didn't see this blessing coming, but God's grace covered every one of your sins. This was done because Christ honored his Father, died for sinners, and overcame the grave by the power of the Holy Spirit.

So what does it mean for us?

*As the blessed children of Shem, you are to bestow honor upon your parents, for God has covered your shame with his Son.*

I pray you, and I will honor our parents by caring for them. To those of us whose parents have gone on to the next world, honor them by remembering them and speaking well of their lives.

We are the people of Shem and Japheth.

Be blessed, and honor well. Amen.