

CHAPTER 9

INTRODUCTION TO GENESIS 9

In this chapter we have an account of God's blessing Noah and his sons, being just come out of the ark, with a renewal of the blessing of propagating their species, and replenishing the earth, the dominion over the creatures, and a freedom from the fear of them; with liberty to eat flesh, only it must not be eaten with blood; with a providential care and preservation of their lives from men and beasts, by making a law that that man or beast should die that shed man's blood, (~~Q008~~Genesis 9:1-6) and after repeating the blessing of procreation, (~~Q007~~Genesis 9:7) mention is made of a covenant God made with Noah, his sons, and all the creatures, that he would drown the world no more, the token of which should be the rainbow in the cloud, (~~Q008~~Genesis 9:8-17) the names of the sons of Noah are observed, by whom the earth was repopled, (~~Q008~~Genesis 9:18,19) and seem to be observed for the sake of an event after recorded; Noah having planted a vineyard, and drank too freely of the wine of it, lay down uncovered in his tent, which Ham seeing, told his two brothers of it, who in a very modest manner covered him, (~~Q007~~Genesis 9:20-23) of all which Noah being sensible when he awoke, cursed Canaan the son of Ham, and blessed Shem and Japheth, (~~Q007~~Genesis 9:24-27) and the chapter is concluded with the age and death of Noah, (~~Q008~~Genesis 9:28,29).

Ver. 1. *And God blessed Noah and his sons*, etc.] With temporal blessings, not spiritual ones; for though some of them were blessed with such, yet not all, particularly Ham:

and said unto them, be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth; depopulated by the flood: this is a renewal of the blessing on Adam, a power and faculty of propagating his species, which was as necessary now as then, since there were so few of the human race left in the world; and the renewal of this grant was the rather necessary, if, as has been observed, Noah and his sons were restrained from cohabiting with their wives while in the ark: but though these words are not an express command for the propagation of their species, yet more than a bare permission, at least they are a direction and instruction to it, and even carry in them a promise of

fruitfulness, that they should multiply and increase, which was very needful at this time.

Ver. 2. *And the fear of you, and the dread of you, shall be upon every beast of the earth*, etc.] This is a renewal, at least in part, of the grant of dominion to Adam over all the creatures; these obeyed him cheerfully, and from love, but sinning, he in a good measure lost his power over them, they rebelled against him; but now though the charter of power over them is renewed, they do not serve man freely, but are in dread of him, and flee from him; some are more easily brought into subjection to him, and even the fiercest and wildest of them may be tamed by him; and this power over them was the more easily retrieved in all probability by Noah and his sons, from the inhabitation of the creatures with them for so long a time in the ark:

and upon every fowl of the air, and upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; as appears by fowls flying away, by beasts and creeping things getting off as fast as they can, and by fishes swimming away at the sight of men:

into your hand are they delivered; as the lords and proprietors of them, for their use and service, and particularly for what follows, (see ¹⁹⁸⁶Psalm 8:6-8) where there is an enumeration of the creatures subject to men.

Ver. 3. *Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you*, etc.] That is, every beast, fowl, and fish, without exception; for though there was a difference at this time of clean and unclean creatures with respect to sacrifice, yet not with respect to food; every creature of God was good then, as it is now, and it was left to man's reason and judgment what to make use of, as would be most conducive to his health, and agreeable to his taste: and though there was a distinction afterwards made under the Levitical dispensation among the Jews, who were forbid the use of some creatures; yet they themselves say ¹⁴⁷⁹, that all unclean beasts will be clean in the world to come, in the times of the Messiah, as they were to the sons of Noah, and refer to this text in proof of it; the only exception in the text is, that they must be living creatures which are taken, and used for food; not such as die of themselves, or are torn to pieces by wild beasts, but such as are taken alive, and killed in a proper manner:

even as the green herb have I given you all things; as every green herb was given for meat to Adam originally, without any exception, (¹⁰⁰⁹Genesis

1:29,30) so every living creature, without exception, was given to Noah and his sons for food. Some think, and it is a general opinion, that this was a new grant, that man had no right before to eat flesh, nor did he; and it is certain it is not before expressed, but it may be included in the general grant of power and dominion over the creatures made to Adam; and since what is before observed is only a renewal of former grants, this may be considered in the same light; or otherwise the dominion over the creatures first granted to Adam will be reduced to a small matter, if he had no right nor power to kill and eat them; besides, in so large a space of time as 1600 years and upwards, the world must have been overstocked with creatures, if they were not used for such a purpose; nor will Abel's offering the firstling and fattest of his flock appear so praiseworthy, when it made no difference with him, if he ate not of them, whether they were fat or lean; and who will deny that there were peace offerings before the flood, which the offerer always ate of? to which may be added the luxury of men before the flood, who thereby were given to impure and carnal lusts; and our Lord expressly says of the men of that age, that they were "eating and drinking", living in a voluptuous manner, which can hardly be accounted for, if they lived only on herbs, (see ^{<472>}Luke 17:22) though it must be owned, that it was a common notion of poets and philosophers ^{f480}, that men in the golden age, as they call it, did not eat flesh, but lived on herbs and fruit.

Ver. 4. *But flesh with the life thereof, [which is] the blood thereof, shall you not eat.*] This is the only exception to the eating of flesh; it was not to be eaten with the blood in it, which is said to be its life; not that the blood is of itself the life, but because it is a means of life, and that being exhausted, the creature must die, and because the animal and vital spirits appear to us most vigorous in it; yea, it is the ailment and support of them, and which furnishes out the greatest quantity of them: or rather it may be rendered, "the flesh with its life in its blood" ^{f481}; while there is life in the blood, or while the creature is living; the meaning is, that a creature designed for food should be properly killed, and its blood let out; that it should not be devoured alive, as by a beast of prey; that raw flesh should not be eaten, as since by cannibals, and might be by riotous flesh eaters, before the flood; for notwithstanding this law, as flesh without the blood might be eaten, so blood properly let out, and dressed, or mixed with other things, might be eaten, for aught this says to the contrary; but was not to be eaten with the flesh, though it might separately, which was afterwards forbid by another law. The design of this was to restrain cruelty in men,

and particularly to prevent the shedding of human blood, which men might be led into, were they suffered to tear living creatures in pieces, and feed upon their raw flesh, and the blood in it. The Targum of Jonathan is,

“but the flesh which is torn from a living beast at the time that its life is in it, or which is torn from a beast while it is slain, before all its breath is gone out, ye shall not eat.”

And the Jewish writers generally interpret this of the flesh of a creature taken from it alive, which, they say, is the seventh precept given to the sons of Noah, over and above the six which the sons of Adam were bound to observe, and they are these;

1. Idolatry is forbidden.
2. Blasphemy is forbidden.]
3. The shedding of blood, or murder is forbidden.
4. Uncleaness, or unjust carnal copulations is forbidden.
5. Rapine or robbery is forbidden.
6. The administration of justice to malefactors is required.
7. The eating of any member or flesh of a creature while alive ^{f482} is forbidden.

Such of the Heathens who conformed to those precepts were admitted to dwell among the Israelites, and were called proselytes of the gate.

Ver. 5. *And surely your blood of your lives will I require*, etc.] Or “for surely your blood”, etc. ^{f483}; and so is a reason of the preceding law, to teach men not to shed human blood; or though, “surely your blood”, as Jarchi and Aben Ezra; though God had given them liberty to slay the creatures, and shed their blood, and eat them, yet he did not allow them to shed their own blood, or the blood of their fellow creatures; should they do this, he would surely make inquisition, and punish them for it:

at the hand of every beast will I require it; should a beast kill a man, or be the instrument of shedding his blood, it should be slain for it; not by means of another beast, God so ordering it, as Aben Ezra suggests, but by the hands or order of the civil magistrate; which was to be done partly to show the great regard God has to the life of man, and partly to punish men for

not taking more care of their beasts, as well as to be an example to others to be more careful, and to lessen, the number of mischievous creatures:

and at the hand of man, at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man; which may be reasonably supposed; for if it is required of a beast, and that is punished for the slaughter of a man, then much more a man himself, that is wilfully guilty of murder; and the rather, since he is by general relation a brother to the person he has murdered, which is an aggravation of his crime: or it may signify, that though he is a brother in the nearest relation, as his crime is the greater, he shall not go unpunished.

Ver. 6. *Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed*, etc.] That is, he that is guilty of wilful murder shall surely be put to death by the order of the civil magistrate; so the Targum of Jonathan,

“by witnesses the judges shall condemn him to death,”

that is, the fact being clearly proved by witnesses, the judges shall condemn

“him to death,”

that is, the fact being clearly proved by witnesses, the judges shall pass the sentence of death upon him, and execute it; for this is but the law of retaliation, a just and equitable one, blood for blood, or life for life; though it seems to be the first law of this kind that empowered the civil magistrate to take away life; God, as it is thought, reserving the right and power to himself before, and which, for some reasons, he thought fit not to make use of in the case of Cain, whom he only banished, and suffered not others to take away his life, but now enacts a law, requiring judges to punish murder with death: and which, according to this law, ought never to go unpunished, or have a lesser punishment inflicted for it: the reason follows,

for in the image of God made he man; which, though sadly defaced and obliterated by sin, yet there are such remains of it, as render him more especially the object of the care and providence of God, and give him a superiority to other creatures; and particularly this image, among others, consists in immortality, which the taking away of his life may seem to contradict; however, it is what no man has a right to do.

Ver. 7. *And you, be ye fruitful and multiply*, etc.] Instead of taking away the lives of men, the great concern should be to multiply them; and this indeed is one reason of the above law, to prevent the decrease and ruin of

mankind; and which was peculiarly needful, when there were so few men in the world as only four, and therefore it is repeated in stronger terms:

bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein; that the whole earth might be overspread with men, and repopled sufficiently, as it was by the sons of Noah, (see ~~<0099>~~ Genesis 9:19 10:32).

Ver. 8. *And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him*, etc.] Not only what is contained in the preceding verses, but in the subsequent ones:

saying; as follows.

Ver. 9. *And [I], behold, [I] establish my covenant with you*, etc.] Not the covenant of grace in Christ, but of the preservation of the creatures in common, a promise that they should not be destroyed any more by a flood; to which promise it seems an oath was annexed, as appears from (~~<2549>~~ Isaiah 54:9) which passage refers to this covenant, as Aben Ezra on the place observes; and both to raise attention to what is here affirmed, and to show the certainty of it, the word “behold” is prefixed to it; nor is it amiss what Jarchi observes, that this follows upon the direction and exhortation to procreation of children, and is an encouragement to it; since it is assured that posterity should be no more cut off in the manner it had been; for this covenant was made and established not only with Noah, and his sons, but with all their succeeding offspring, as follows:

and with your seed after you; with all their posterity to the end of the world; so that this covenant was made with all the world, and all the individuals in it, from Noah’s time to the end of it; for from him and his sons sprung the whole race of men that peopled the world, and still continue to inhabit it; hence here is nothing in it peculiar to the seed of believers.

Ver. 10. *And with every living creature that is with you*, etc.] This is a further proof that this was not the covenant of grace, but of conservation, since it is made with irrational as well as rational creatures:

of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; the birds of the air, the tame cattle, and the wild beasts:

from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth; which take in the creeping things not mentioned, for these were in the ark, and came out of the ark with Noah; and this covenant not only included all the several

kinds of creatures that came out of the ark with Noah, but it reached to all that should spring from them in future ages, to the end of the world.

Ver. 11. *And I will establish my covenant with you*, etc.] This is repeated to denote the certainty of it, as well as to lead on to the particulars of it:

neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither man nor beast, at least not all of them, and especially by water:

neither shall there be any more a flood to destroy the earth; not a general deluge, otherwise notwithstanding this promise there might be, as there have been, particular inundations, which have overflowed particular countries and places, but not the whole earth; and this hinders not but that the whole earth may be destroyed by fire, as it will be at the last day, only not by water any more; and this is the sum and substance of the covenant with Noah, his sons, and all the creatures that have been, or shall be.

Ver. 12. *And God said, this is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you*, etc.] Meaning the bow in the cloud, and which might be formed in the cloud at this time, that Noah might see it, and know it when he saw it again, and seems to be pointed unto: “this is the token”; or sign of the covenant made between God and Noah, and his sons:

and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations; which more clearly shows and proves, that this covenant reaches to all creatures that then were, or should be in all ages, to the end of the world.

Ver. 13. *I do set my bow in the cloud*, etc.] Or “I have given”, or “have set it”^{f484}; which seems as if it was at that instant set; this is the same we call the “rainbow”: and so Horace^{f485} calls it “arcus pluvius”: it is called a “bow”, because of its form, being a semicircle, and a “rainbow”, because it is seen in a day of rain, and is a sign of it, or of its being quickly over, (²⁰¹²Ezekiel 1:28) and this appears in a moist dewy cloud, neither very thick nor very thin, and is occasioned by the rays of the sun opposite to it, refracted on it: and this God calls “his bow”, not only because made by him, for, notwithstanding the natural causes of it, the cloud and sun, the disposition of these to produce it, such a phenomenon is of God; but also because he appointed it to be a sign and token of his covenant with his creatures; so the Heathen poets^{f486} call the rainbow the messenger of Juno. It is a question whether there was a rainbow before the flood, and it is not easily answered; both Jews and Christians are divided about it; Saadia thought there was one; but Aben Ezra disapproves of his opinion, and

thinks it was first now made. The greater part of Christian interpreters are of the mind of Saadiah, that it was from the beginning, the natural causes of it, the sun and cloud, being before the flood; and that it was now after it only appointed to be a sign and token of the covenant; but though the natural causes of it did exist before, it does not follow, nor is it to be proved, that there was such a disposition of them to produce such an effect; and it might be so ordered in Providence, that there should not be any, that this might be entirely a new thing, and so a wonderful one, as the word for “token”^{f487} signifies; and the Greeks calls the rainbow the “daughter of Thaumas” or “Wonder”^{f488}; and be the more fit to be a sign and token of the covenant, that God would no more destroy the earth with water; for otherwise, if this had been what Noah and his sons had been used to see, it can hardly be thought sufficient to take off their fears of a future inundation, which was the end and use it was to serve, as follows:

it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth; that is, between God and the creatures of the earth; or of a promise that God would no more destroy the earth, and cut off the creatures in it by a flood; for though it is a bow, yet without arrows, and is not turned downwards towards the earth, but upwards towards heaven, and so is a token of mercy and kindness, and not of wrath and anger.

Ver. 14. *And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth,* etc.] Or “cloud a cloud”^{f489}, cause the clouds to gather thick in the heavens, and to hang over the earth ready to pour down great quantities of water; by reason of which the inhabitants might dread another flood coming upon them: wherefore, in order to dissipate such fears, it shall be so ordered,

that the bow shall be seen in the cloud; after it has pretty much discharged itself; for the rainbow is always in a thin, not a thick cloud; after the heavy showers are fallen from the thick clouds, and a small thin one remains, then the rainbow is seen in it; not always, but very frequently, and when the sun and clouds are in a proper position: and this is often so ordered, to put men in mind of this covenant, and to divest them of, or prevent their fears of the world being drowned by a flood; for when they see this, it is a sure sign the rain is going off, since the cloud is thinned, or otherwise the rainbow could not appear: and a most glorious and beautiful sight it is, having such a variety of colours in it, and in such a position and form. Some think that it serves both to put in mind of the destruction of the old world by water,

through its watery colours, and of the present world by fire, through its fiery ones. Others make the three predominant colours to denote the three dispensations before the law, under the law, and under the Gospel: rather they may signify the various providences of God, which all work together for the good of his people; however, whenever this bow is seen, it puts in mind of the covenant of preservation made with all the creatures, and the firmness, stability, and duration of it; and is by some considered as an emblem of the covenant of grace, from (²⁵⁴⁹Isaiah 54:9,10) which is of God's making, as this bow is; is a reverberation of Christ the sun of righteousness, the sum and substance of the covenant; consists of various blessings and promises of grace; is expressive of mercy and peace, and is a security from everlasting destruction: or rather it may be thought to be an emblem of Christ himself, who was seen by John clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow on his head, (⁴⁰⁰Revelation 10:1) this being a wonderful thing, as Christ is wonderful in his person, office, and grace; and as it has in it a variety of beautiful colours, it may represent Christ, who is full of grace and truth, and fairer than the children of men; and may be considered as a symbol of peace and reconciliation by him, whom God looks unto, and remembers the covenant of his grace he has made with him and his chosen ones in him; and who is the rainbow round about the throne of God, and the way of access unto it; (⁴⁰⁰Revelation 4:3) the Jews have a saying,

“till ye see the bow in its luminous colours, do not look for the feet of the Messiah, or his coming^{f490}.”

Ver. 15. *And I will remember my covenant which is between me and you, and every living creature of all flesh*, etc.] (see ⁴⁰⁰Genesis 9:11,12)

and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh; this is repeated to remove those fears which would naturally arise, upon the gathering of the clouds in the heavens; but as God would remember his covenant, which he can never forget; and is always mindful of, so men, when they see the bow in the cloud, may be assured, that whatever waters are in the heavens, they shall never be suffered to fall in such quantity as to destroy all creatures as they have done.

Ver. 16. *And the bow shall be in the cloud*, etc.] Not whenever there is a cloud, but at some certain times, when that and the sun are in a proper position to form one, and when divine wisdom sees right there should be one; then it appears and continues for a time, and as the cloud becomes thinner and thinner, it disappears:

and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth; not that forgetfulness, or remembrance, properly speaking, belong to God, but this is said after the manner of men; who by this token may be assured, whenever they see the bow in the cloud, that God is not unmindful of the covenant he has made with all creatures, and which is to continue to the end of the world.

Ver. 17. *And God said to Noah, this is the token of the covenant,* etc.] Which is repeated for the greater confirmation and certainty of it, since the fears of men would be apt to run very high, especially while the flood was fresh in memory;

which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth: (see ^{<009D>}Genesis 9:9-11), it is highly probable, that from the rainbow being the token of the covenant between God and Noah, and the creatures, sprung the fable of the Chinese concerning their first emperor, Fohi, who seems to be the same with Noah, and whom they call the son of heaven, and say he had no father; which is this, that his mother, walking on the bank of a lake near Lanthien, in the province of Xensi, trod upon a large footstep of a man impressed upon the sand, and from thence, being surrounded with the rainbow, conceived and brought forth Fohi ^{f491}.

Ver. 18. *And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth,* etc.] These were born before the flood, and went into the ark with Noah, and came out with him; (see ^{<009D>}Genesis 5:32 6:10)

and Ham [is the] father of Canaan; this is observed for the sake of the following history, concerning the behaviour of the one to Noah, and of the curse of the other by him, which would not have been so well understood if this remark had not been made: the father and the son, as they were, related in nature, they were much alike in manners and behaviour. Cush, the firstborn of Ham, is not mentioned, but Canaan, his youngest son, because he was cursed, as Aben Ezra observes; and who remarks that the paragraph is written to show that the Canaanites were accursed, the father of whom this Canaan was; and who is the same Sanchoniatho ^{f492} calls Cna, and says he was the first that was called a Phoenician.

Ver. 19. *These are the three sons of Noah,* etc.] And his only ones; and if he had any more, they left no posterity behind them, since it follows,

and of them was the whole earth overspread, with inhabitants, by them and their posterity only: Berosus^{f493} indeed says, that Noah, after the flood, begat more sons, and giants; and his commentator, Annius, talks of seventeen of them, among whom was Tuiscon, the father of the Germans; and the author of Juchasin^{f494} ascribes a fourth son to Noah, whose name he calls Joniko, who taught astronomy in the world, and taught Nimrod the art of war; but these are fabulous stories, and contrary to the sacred Scriptures, which speak of three sons of Noah, and no more, and say that by these the earth was replenished after the flood: hence, among the Heathen writers, we read of Saturn and his three children, who by many circumstances appears to be the same with Noah, as Bochart^{f495} hath proved at large.

Ver. 20. *And Noah began to be an husbandman*, etc.] Or “a man of the earth”^{f496}, not lord of it, as Jarchi, though he was, but a tiller of the earth, as he had been before the flood, and now began to be again; he returned to his old employment, and which perhaps he improved, having invented, as the Jews^{f497} say, instruments of husbandry; it may be, the use of the plough, which made the tillage of the ground more easy; he was expert in husbandry, as Aben Ezra observes, and which, as he remarks, is great wisdom; and though he was so great a man, yet he employed himself in this way:

and he planted a vineyard; not vines, but a vineyard; there were vines before scattered up and down, here one and there another, but he planted a number of them together, and set them in order, as the Jewish writers say^{f498}; and some of them^{f499} will have it that he found a vine which the flood brought out of the garden of Eden, and planted it; but this is mere fable: where this plantation was cannot be said with certainty; the Armenians have a tradition that Noah, after quitting the ark, went and settled at Erivan, about twelve leagues from Ararat, a city full of vineyards; and that it was there he planted the vineyard, in a place where they still make excellent wine, and that their vines are of the same sort he planted there^{f500}; which contradicts what Strabo^{f501} says of the country of Armenia, its hills and plains, that a vine will not easily grow there.

Ver. 21. *And he drank of the wine, and was drunken*, etc.] Either not being acquainted with the strength of it, as is thought by many; or having been used to weaker liquor, as water; or through the infirmity of his age; however, he was overtaken with it, and which is recorded, not to disgrace

him, but to caution men against the evil of intemperance, as well as to encourage repenting sinners to expect pardon: and this shows that the best of men are not exempted from sin, nor secure from falling; and that though Noah was a perfect man, yet not as to be without sin; and that whereas he was a righteous man, he was not so by the righteousness of works, but by the righteousness of faith:

and he was uncovered within his tent; being in liquor when he laid down, he was either negligent of his long and loose garments, such as the eastern people wore without breeches, and did not take care to wrap them about him; or in his sleep, through the heat of the weather, or of the wine, or both, threw them off.

Ver. 22. *And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father,* etc.] Which, had it been through surprise, and at an unawares, would not have been thought criminal; but he went into his father's tent, where he ought not to have entered; he looked with pleasure and delight on his father's nakedness: Ham is represented by many writers as a very wicked, immodest, and profligate creature: Berosus^{f502} makes him a magician, and to be the same with Zoroast or Zoroastres, and speaks of him as the public corrupter of mankind; and says that he taught men to live as before the flood, to lie with mothers, sisters, daughters, males and brutes, and creatures of all sorts; and that he actually did so himself, and therefore was cast out by his father Janus, or Noah, and got the name of "Chem", the infamous and immodest:

and told his two brethren without; he went out of the tent after he had pleased himself with the sight; (see ~~<3025>~~ Habakkuk 2:15) and in a wanton, ludicrous, and scoffing manner, related what he had seen: some of the Jewish Rabbins^{f503}, as Jarchi relates, say that Canaan first saw it, and told his father of it; and some say^{f504}, that he or Ham committed an unnatural crime with him; and others^{f505}, that he castrated him; and hence, it is supposed, came the stories of Jupiter castrating his father Saturn, and Chronus his father Uranus: and Berosus^{f506} says, that Ham taking hold of his father's genitals, and muttering some words, by a magic charm rendered him impotent: and some^{f507} will have it that he committed incest with his father's wife; but these things are said without foundation: what Noah's younger son did unto him, besides looking on him, we are not told, yet it was such as brought a curse on Canaan; and one would think it

would be more than bare sight, nay, it is expressly said there was something done, but what is not said, (^{<00924}Genesis 9:24).

Ver. 23. *And Shem and Japheth took a garment*, etc.] Who were the two brothers Ham told what he had seen, and who, no doubt, reproved him for his ill behaviour, and then took a garment, a coat of their own, very probably, some large garment fit for the purpose;

and laid it upon both their shoulders; one part of it on the right shoulder of the one, and the other on the left shoulder of the other:

and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; going backward when they came into the tent, and to the place where their father lay, they threw the garment off from their shoulders over him, and so covered him:

and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness: which they purposely shunned, for which reason they went backwards, and their faces were backwards to their father; which showed their modesty, and their filial piety and duty, and thus by their actions reproved Ham, as well as doubtless they did by words.

Ver. 24. *And Noah awoke from his wine*, etc.] From his sleep, which his wine brought on him; when the force and strength of that was gone, and when not only he awaked, but came to himself, and was sober;

and knew what his younger son had done to him; either by revelation, as some, or prophecy, as Ben Gersom, or by the relation of his two sons, whom, when finding himself covered with another's garment, he might question how it came about, and they told him the whole affair: some, as Aben Ezra, Ben Gersom, and Abendana, think that this was not Ham, the younger son of Noah, and whom some also will have not to be the youngest, being always placed middlemost, but Canaan, the fourth and youngest son of Ham; and whom Noah indeed might call his younger, or "his son, the little one"^{f508}; as it was usual for grandchildren to be called the sons of their grandfather; (see ^{<00235}Genesis 29:5) and Noah might be informed how his little son, or rather grandson Canaan, had been in his tent, and seeing him in the posture he was, went very merrily, and told his father Ham of it, who made a jest of it also; and this seems the more reasonable, since Canaan was immediately cursed by Noah, as in the following verse; (see Gill on "^{<0092}Genesis 9:22") this affair must happen many years after Noah's coming out of the ark, since then his sons had no

children; whereas Ham had at this time four sons, and Canaan was the youngest of them; and he was grown up to an age sufficient to be concerned in this matter, of treating his grandfather in an ill way, so as to bring his curse upon him: Jarchi interprets “little” by abominable and contemptible, supposing it refers not to age, but character, and which was bad both in Ham and Canaan: (see Gill on “⁴⁰¹²²Genesis 9:22”).

Ver. 25. *And he said*, etc.] Not in a drunken fit, as some profane persons would suggest, for he was awaked from his wine; nor in the heat of passion, but by inspiration, under a spirit of prophecy:

cursed [be] Canaan; or, “O cursed Canaan”, or rather, “Canaan is”, or “shall be cursed”^{f509}; for the words are either a declaration of what was his case, or a prediction of what it should be. It may seem strange that Canaan should be cursed, and not Ham, who seems to be the only aggressor, by what is said in the context; hence one copy of the Septuagint, as Ainsworth observes, reads Ham, and the Arabic writers the father of Canaan; and so Saadiah Gaon supplies it, as Aben Ezra relates; and the same supplement is made by others^{f510}: but as both were guilty, as appears from what has been observed on the former verses, and Canaan particularly was first in the transgression; it seems most wise and just that he should be expressly named, since hereby Ham is not excluded a share in the punishment of the crime he had a concern in, being punished in his son, his youngest son, who perhaps was his darling and favourite, and which must be very afflicting to him to hear of; and since Canaan only, and not any of the other sons of Ham were guilty, he, and not Ham by name, is cursed, lest it should be thought that the curse would fall upon Ham and all his posterity; whereas the curse descends on him, and very justly proceeds in the line of Canaan; and who is the rather mentioned, because he was the father of the accursed race of the Canaanites, whom God abhorred, and, for their wickedness, was about to drive out of their land, and give it to his people for an inheritance; and in order to which the Israelites were now upon the expedition, when Moses wrote this account, and which must animate them to it; for by this prediction they would see that they were an accursed people, and that they were to be their servants:

a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren; the posterities of Shem and Japheth, who stood in the relation of brethren to Canaan and his posterity; and to those he and his offspring were to become the most mean abject servants, as the phrase implies: this character agrees with the name

of Canaan, which may be derived from [nk, “to depress”, “humble”, and “make mean and abject”.

Ver. 26. *And he said, blessed be the Lord God of Shem*, etc.] Shem was blessed before Japheth, because he was the first and principal in advising and conducting the affair before ascribed to them, as Jarchi on (^{<0023>}Genesis 9:23) suggests; and though the words are in the form of an ascription of blessedness to God, the fountain of all good, and by whose grace Shem was influenced and enabled to do the good he did, for which the Lord’s name was to be praised and blessed; yet it includes the blessing of Shem, and indeed the greatest blessing he could possibly enjoy; for what greater blessing is there, than for a man to have God to be his God? this includes everything, all blessings temporal and spiritual; (see ^{<0015>}Psalm 144:15) some interpret the God of Shem of Christ, who, according to the human nature, was a descendant of Shem; and according to the divine nature the God of Shem, God over all, blessed for ever, (^{<0004>}Romans 9:4,5).

And Canaan shall be his servant; the posterity of Canaan be servants to the posterity of Shem: this was fulfilled in the times of Joshua, when the Israelites, who sprung from Shem, conquered the land of Canaan, slew thirty of their kings, and took their cities and possessed them, and made the Gibeonites, one of the states of Canaan, hewers of wood and drawers of water to them, or the most mean and abject servants.

Ver. 27. *God shall enlarge Japheth*, etc.] Or give him a large part of the earth, and large dominions in it, as his posterity have had; for, as Bochart ^{&511} observes, to them belonged all Europe, and lesser Asia, Media, Iberia, Albania, part of Armenia, and all those vast countries to the north, which formerly the Scythians, and now the Tartars inhabit; not to say anything of the new world (America), into which the Scythians might pass through the straits of Anian;

and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; inhabit the countries belonging to the posterity of Shem: this was verified by the Medes, who were the descendants of Japheth, together with the Babylonians seizing upon the Assyrian empire and overthrowing that, for Ashur was of Shem; and in the Greeks and Romans, who sprung from Japheth, when they made conquests in Asia, in which were the tents of Shem’s posterity; and who, according to the prophecy in (^{<0024>}Numbers 24:24) that ships from the coast of Chittim, Greece, or Italy, or both, should afflict Ashur and Eber, the Assyrians and

the Hebrews, or those beyond the river Euphrates, who all belonged to Shem; and particularly this was fulfilled when the Romans, who are of Japheth, seized Judea, which had long been the seat of the children of Shem, the Jews; and at this day the Turks, who are also Japheth's sons, literally dwell in the tents of Shem, or inhabit Judea: the Targums understand this in a mystical sense. Onkelos thus:

“God shall cause his Shechinah or glorious Majesty to dwell in the tents of Shem;”

which was remarkably true, when Christ, the brightness of his Father's glory, the Word, was made flesh, and tabernacled in Judea: Jonathan Ben Uzziel thus;

“and his children shall be proselytes, and dwell in the school of Shem;”

and many Christian writers interpret them of the conversion of the Gentiles, and of their union and communion with the believing Jews in one Gospel church state, which was very evidently fulfilled in the first times of the Gospel: and they read these words in connection with the former clause thus, “God shall persuade Japheth^{f512}, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem”; that is, God shall persuade the Gentiles, the posterity of Japheth, by the sweet alluring voice of his Gospel, and through the power of his grace accompanying it, to embrace and profess Christ and his Gospel, and join with his churches, and walk with them in all the commandments and ordinances of Christ; and at this day all the posterity of Japheth, excepting Magog, or the Turks, bear the name of Christians: the Talmudists^{f513} interpret the passage of the language of Japheth being spoken in the tents of Shem; which had its accomplishment when the apostles of Christ spoke and wrote in Greek, one of the languages of Japheth's sons. Some understand this of God himself, he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, or in Israel, as Jarchi, and was verified remarkably in the incarnation of the Son of God;

and Canaan shall be his servant; the posterity of Canaan servants to the posterity of Japheth; as they were when Tyre, which was built by the Sidonians, and Sidon, which had its name from the eldest son of Canaan, fell into the hands of Alexander the Grecian, who sprung from Japheth; and when Carthage, a colony of the Phoenicians of Canaan's race, was taken and demolished by the Romans of the line of Japheth, which made

Hannibal, a child of Canaan, say, “agnoscere se fortunam Carthaginiis”^{f514}, that he owned the fate of Carthage; and in which some have thought that he refers to this prophecy.

Ver. 28. *And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years.*] So that he not only saw the old world, and the wickedness of that, and the destruction of it for it, but an increase of wickedness again, the building of the tower of Babel, the confusion of languages, the dispersion of his offspring, and the wars among them in the times of Nimrod, and others: however, it was a blessing to mankind that he lived so long after the flood in the new world, to transmit to posterity, by tradition, the affairs of the old world; and to give a particular account of the destruction of it, and to instruct them in the doctrines and duties of religion. By this it appears, that he lived within thirty two years of the birth of Abraham. The Jews conclude from hence, that he lived to the fifty eighth year of Abraham’s life: it may be remarked, that it is not added here as usual to the account of the years of the patriarchs, “and he begat sons and daughters”; from whence it may be concluded, that he had no more children than the three before mentioned, as well as from the silence of the Scriptures elsewhere, and from the old age of himself and his wife, and especially from what is said, (see Gill on “~~Genesis 9:19~~” Genesis 9:19”).

Ver. 29. *And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years,* etc.] He lived twenty years more than Adam did, and within nineteen of Methuselah, and his age must be called a good old age; but what is said of all the patriarchs is also said of him,

and he died: the Arabic writers say^{f515}, when the time of his death drew nigh, he ordered his son Shem by his will to take the body of Adam, and lay it in the middle of the earth, and appoint Melchizedek, the son of Peleg, minister at his grave; and one of them is very particular as to the time of his death; they say^{f516} he died on the second day of the month Ijar, on the fourth day (of the week), at two o’clock in the morning.