

The Providence of Restoration in Noah's Family

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Exposition of the Divine Principle (1996 Translation)



Photo date and location unknown

Noah successfully restored through indemnity the foundation of faith by fulfilling the dispensation of the ark and thereby making a symbolic offering acceptable to God. In doing so, Noah fulfilled both the indemnity condition for the restoration of all things and the indemnity condition for the symbolic restoration of human beings. Upon this foundation, Noah's sons, Shem and Ham, were then to have stood in the position of Cain and Abel, respectively. Had they then succeeded in the substantial offering by fulfilling the indemnity condition to remove the fallen nature, they would have laid the foundation of substance.

For Noah's family to make an acceptable substantial offering, Ham, Noah's second son, was to restore the position of Abel, Adam's second son. He was supposed to become the central figure of the substantial offering, just as Abel was the central figure of his family's substantial offering. In Adam's family, Abel had successfully made the symbolic offering in Adam's place to restore through indemnity the foundation of faith and to be qualified as the central figure of the substantial offering. In the case of Noah's family, it

was Noah, not Ham, who made the symbolic offering. Therefore, for Ham to stand in the position of Abel, as one who has succeeded in making the symbolic offering, he had to become inseparably one in heart with his father, Noah. Let us examine how God worked to help Ham become one in heart with Noah.

The Bible reports that when Ham saw his father lying naked in his tent, he felt ashamed of Noah and took offense. Ham stirred up the same feelings in his brothers, Shem and Japheth. Swayed by Ham to feel ashamed of their father's nakedness and turning their faces so as not to behold the sight, they walked backwards and covered their father's body with a garment. This act constituted a sin, so much so that Noah rebuked Ham, cursing his son to be a slave to his brothers. (Gen. 9:20-25)

Why did God conduct this dispensation? Why was it such a sin to feel ashamed of nakedness? To understand these matters, let us first recall what constitutes sin. Satan cannot manifest his powers - including the power to exist and act - unless he first secures an object partner with whom he can make a common base and engage in a reciprocal relationship of give and take. Whenever a person makes a condition for Satan to invade, it means that he has allowed himself to become Satan's object partner, thereby empowering Satan to act. This constitutes sin.

Next, let us examine why God tested Ham by having him behold Noah's nakedness. We saw that the ark symbolized the cosmos, and that the events occurring immediately after the dispensation of the ark represented the events which took place immediately after the creation of the cosmos. Hence, Noah's position right after the flood was much like that of Adam after the creation of heaven and earth.

Adam and Eve before the Fall were close in heart and innocently open with each other and with God; as it is written, they were not ashamed of their nakedness.(Gen. 2:25) Yet after they fell, they felt ashamed of their nakedness. They covered their lower parts with fig leaves and hid among the trees of the garden, fearing that God would see them.(Gen. 3:7-8) This shame was an indication of their inner reality, for they had formed a bond of blood ties with Satan by committing sin with their sexual parts. By covering their lower parts and hiding, they expressed their guilty consciences, which made them feel ashamed to come before God.

Noah, who had severed his ties to Satan through the forty-day flood judgment, was supposed to secure the position of Adam right after the creation of the universe. God expected that the members of Noah's family would react to Noah's nakedness without any feelings of shame and without any thought to conceal his body. God wanted to recover the joyful heart which He had felt when looking at Adam and Eve in their innocence before the Fall by taking delight in the innocence of Noah's family. To fulfill such a profound wish, God had Noah lie naked. Had Ham been one in heart with Noah, regarding him with the same heart and from the same standpoint as God, he would have looked upon his father's nakedness without any sense of shame. He thus would have fulfilled the indemnity condition to restore in Noah's family the state of Adam and Eve's innocence before the Fall.

We can thus understand that when Noah's sons felt ashamed of their father's nakedness and covered his body, it was tantamount to acknowledging that they, like Adam's family after the Fall, had formed a shameful bond of kinship with Satan and were thus unworthy to come before God. Satan, like the raven hovering over the water, was looking for a condition to invade Noah's family. He attacked the family by taking Noah's sons as his object partners when they in effect acknowledged that they were of his lineage.

When Ham felt ashamed of his father's nakedness and acted to cover it up, he made a condition for Satan to enter; hence his feeling and act constituted a sin.