

And Cham, the father of Kenaan, saw his father's nakedness. (9:22)

The *Pirkei D'R' Eliezer* contrasts the debased personality of Cham with those of his brothers. While Noach was inebriated, Shem and Yefes respectfully remained outside of his tent. Cham, in contrast, did not hesitate and audaciously entered. His action was aggrieved even more because he was a father himself. His experience with his own children should have sensitized him to act quite differently towards his father. But not only did he see his father's shame, he took pleasure in telling about his father to his brothers with sneers and derision.

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch Zt"l continues with an exposition on the brothers morally correct relationship of parent and child. Man's universe is built entirely upon this relationship. As long as children see their parents entrusted with the Divine mission, as long as children respect the spiritual being within their parents, then humanity will develop in a healthy way. However, when a child lacks the respect due his parents as messengers of Hashem, and views his father as only a physical being with a limited role, he then no longer feels a sense of decency and esteem for his parents. At that point, unfortunately, the relationship is broken; the future can no longer be built upon and benefit from the past.