

Fourth Quarter Strategies – Saturday, August 12, 2017

DNA testing has become an extremely huge business in recent years. Lately, I've heard a number of interesting conversations dealing with the topic of getting a better grasp on past ancestry. It seems as though many folks are consumed with finding out as much as they possibly can about their roots. The discovery of DNA provided a wonderful breakthrough in science and medicine, but I never imagined so many would become obsessed in using DNA tests to determine their ancestral history going back hundreds of years.

Personally, I'm more concerned about living in the present and looking forward to what lies ahead rather than spending my energy on the past. For instance, I'm not the least concerned that one of my distant relatives in Texas on my mother's side of the family was hanged for stealing a horse. The story in my family goes that it was all a big mistake! That's what I was told as a boy and I just have to live with the fact that none of my relatives have greatly impacted the world. Even if they had I wouldn't want to rest on their laurels.

Then again, if we go far enough back in history, we'll find that we all came from one family. According to the historical account in the Bible, only Noah, his wife and his three sons and their wives survived the Great Flood that covered the whole earth. According to biblical history, that flood occurred around 4500 years ago. Noah was the son of Lamech and a grandson of Methusaleh. He walked with God and was instructed to build an ark for his family to survive the deluge that would utterly wipe out every living creature not on the ark.

Therefore, according to scripture we are all related to Noah through one of his three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. So, we all come from the line of Noah. Genesis 10 gives us the family tree of Noah, which you may find interesting, although I doubt you'll find any suitable names for future males in your family.

There are a number of online services soliciting our curiosity in our ancestry these days. What I find interesting is that they all disclose that the DNA testing results are not without some error. According to my parents, my heritage is German, English, Irish and only God knows what else. Frankly, that's good enough for me and all I need to know is that my light complexion makes me very susceptible to skin cancer. What's most important to me is knowing that I'm a child of God and I've been adopted into His family!

Many of you may be searching for significance through your DNA and family history. Listen to what an Old Testament prophet shares in Isaiah 66:28: *"And I, because of their actions and imaginations, am about to come and gather all nations and tongues, and they will come and see my glory."* You see, God is preparing us for His Kingdom and we'd be wise to come to Him while there's still time. Isaiah, whose name means *Salvation of the Lord*, prophesied before four kings in the 8th Century BC. He heard and conveyed this message of hope from God that is available to all mankind to become sons and daughters of the Most High.

I became an adopted son more than thirty years ago and I'm so glad that I answered His call. God's call is a universal call to all who will open their heart and listen to His message of salvation. In Revelation 3:20 we hear these words from Jesus beckoning us, *"Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me."* Since our separation from God in the Garden of Eden, God formulated a plan to bring us back into His family. He wants His creation to be in communion with Him once again. He is our true heritage and I trust you will answer His plea!

Passages to Ponder: Genesis 10:1-32; Isaiah 45:22; Romans 8:23-24; Ephesians 1:4-6; Hebrews 2:10-12; James 1:18

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See Genesis chapter 10

Isaiah 45:22 New International Version (NIV)

²²“Turn to me and be saved,
all you ends of the earth;
for I am God, and there is no other.

Romans 8:23-24 New International Version (NIV)

²³Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have?

Ephesians 1:4-6 New International Version (NIV)

⁴For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

Hebrews 2:10-12 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁰In bringing many sons and daughters to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through what he suffered. ¹¹Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters. ¹²He says,

“I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters;
in the assembly I will sing your praises.”

James 1:18 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁸He chose to give us birth through the word of truth that we might be a kind of first fruits of all he created.