

GENESIS 11-12

REVIEW

▪ CHAPTER 6-8

- o EVERY intent of man – before it was a thought - was ALREADY evil DAILY!
- o Therefore - God said His Spirit would not always strive with man...
- o He would give them 120 years – then He would wipe out the sin with a global flood!
- o BUT – Noah found GRACE in the sight of the Lord - and the Lord told Noah to build an ARK!
- o God led 2 of each kind of animal onto the Ark with Noah (*14 clean*) and then shut the door!
- o Then the fountain of the deep erupted / the windows of heaven opened / rain fell for 40 days...
- o EVERYTHING and EVERYONE that breathed air died – ONLY those on the Ark survived!

▪ CHAPTER 9-10

- o God gave Noah the promise of the Rainbow – the Noahic covenant - God is faithful!
- o Noah became a farmer - and had a little too much to drink...
- o Canaan was cursed because of the poor character of his father Ham!
- o Then God gave a list of 70 names that became all of the nations of the earth!

OBEYING THE COMMAND... (6 POINTS)

▪ 1ST – DISOBEYING THE COMMAND... VS. 1-4 (3 POINTS)

- o 1st - One language and speech... vs. 1
 - After the flood there was still only one language...
 - That makes sense – there was only 8 people – one family - who survived the flood...
 - What language – the best bet is HEBREW – the language of the Jews...
 - Shem the godly son of Noah – was not likely at Babel – where languages were confused...
 - The language Shem spoke before the flood – was also spoken by him after Babel...
 - He then passed on his language to his children – grandchildren - to Abraham!
 - Note that all the names of the Bible have meanings in Hebrew!
- o 2nd - They journeyed to the east – likely from Ararat (*ark*)... vs. 2
 - Who are they - the descendents of Ham and Cush – led by a man named Nimrod...
 - They settled in Shinar (*modern day Iraq – ancient Mesopotamia / Babylon*) ...
 - Nimrod – rebellion - was mighty against the Lord – a great HUNTER – **Genesis 10:9**
 - The Jewish Talmud helps us here - for it says that he was a hunter of the souls of men!
 - (*Targum Yonatan ben Uziel - Genesis 10:9 - Bereishit Rabbah 37:2*)
- o 3rd - A city and tower whose top is in heaven... vs. 3-4
 - They mastered the art of making bricks (*first in OT*) – using asphalt as mortar...
 - They burned / burned (*repeated twice*) the clay to make it hard as stone...
 - This allowed men for the first time to build upwards – to build a CITY and a TOWER!
 - They build a CITY...
 - In the most recent US election – the map has almost all one color – except the big cities!
 - Cities where men gather so they can and validate their own ideas and ignore God...
 - Where all of the trees are manicured - and lights wash out the beauty of creation at night...
 - And where many of the most heinous crimes take place – because God has been forgotten!
 - **Psalms 19:1** – “The heavens tell of the glory of God. The skies display his... craftsmanship.”
 - They built a TOWER – ziggurat (*Babylonian pyramid*) ...
 - They built a tower to try and build a bridge to God – a tower to heaven!

- God is in heaven – we are here on earth – He seems so far away...
- We realize that our lives are incomplete without God...
- Life without Him is a puzzle and a mystery – only with God does it make sense...
- Life without Him is impossible – we might convince ourselves otherwise...
- But there always comes a day when we face a trial beyond our control!
- Their leader - Nimrod - led the people to rebel...
 - God had said the Noah – **Genesis 9:1** - Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth...
 - God had also promised that he would never flood the earth again – **Genesis 9:15**
 - But Nimrod led the people to come together – rather than go out – rebellion!
 - To build a tower so great no flood from God could NEVER cover it!
 - He got the people to listen to him - rather than listen to God...
 - He inspired them to doubt God - working on their fears!
 - I could not help thinking of COVID – that has shut down countless churches...
 - Causing FEAR and PANIC in people across the world...
 - Because when we do not listen to the Lord – base our lives on His WORD...
 - We begin to DOUBT God – not because He is not faithful – we are not obeying...
 - And we end up living in FEAR – because we are not following His WORD!
 - **II Timothy 1:7** – “God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”
- The birth of false religion (*Two Babylons – Alexander Hislop*) ...
 - Babel and Nimrod are the source for all non-Christians religions...
 - Nimrod began to demand to be worshiped as a god – Marduk
 - He married a beautiful woman - Semiramus (*she was already married*)
 - He gave his wife the god name – Ishtar (*Easter*)
 - He led all the people into false worship and pagan rituals...
 - Perverting the true worship of God – e.g. – the zodiac...
 - Shem – son of Noah – went to war with Nimrod because of his idolatry...
 - Shem arrested Nimrod – tried and executed him!
 - After the death of Nimrod - Ishtar claimed to have a virgin birth (*ray of sun*)
 - She claimed it was her husband reborn (*resurrection*)
 - She was to be worshiped as the Great Mother – Queen of Heaven – **Jeremiah 7:18**
- The people did not listen to the Lord and follow His commands
 - Therefore - they ended up being fooled and trapped by a false religion...
 - They thought they could build their own tower to reach heaven...
 - All RELIGIONS are the effort of men to build a tower to God – to reach God...
 - The problem is that none work – RELIGION will never get you to heaven...
 - RELIGION keeps us from heaven – because we trust in our work rather than in the Lord...
 - We live in a nation where many are very hardened towards the Gospel...
 - Because they have been indoctrinated in a lifetime of traditions and superstitions...
 - And they are proud and think RELIGION is enough to get them into heaven!
- **2ND - OBEYING THE COMMAND... VS. 5-9 (3 POINTS)**
 - 1st – Abuse of language – indeed one language and this is what they do... vs. 5-6
 - Language and speech are a unique gift of God...
 - ONLY man has the ability to be able to communicate detailed concepts through speech...
 - It was a gift given by God so that man would first and foremost communicate with Him...
 - But man perverted the gift and began to use it for his own selfish purposes!

- With ONE language - NOTHING will they propose will be withheld from them...
 - For the vast majority of human existence – things did not change...
 - The world you died in looked the same as the one you were born in...
 - And you probably never traveled more than couple miles from where you were born!
 - That changed 100 years ago – went from horse and buggy to spaceships in a generation!
 - **Because language is no longer a barrier – men are united again!**
 - **And once again we are trying to reach the heavens to prove we are like God!**
- God saw the efforts of men – trying to reach heaven on their own (*false religion*) ...
 - There is nothing to suggest that God was upset...
 - There was a very obvious need for Him to intervene - their way was not working!
 - **The best efforts of men to reach God are bound to fail...**
 - **Even if the tower of Babel had been 10000 meters high - no heaven**
 - **No matter what men try and do – build rockets to the moon – no heaven!**
- o 2nd - The answer - come let US go down... vs. 7
 - Come let US go down...
 - Jesus and the Holy Spirit were there with the Father...
 - They all were a part of rescuing man from the false religion of Babel!
 - And Confuse their language – *babel* – so they do not understand each other...
 - The solution was for God to directly intervene and stop the building of the tower...
 - Turns out the solution is God – He came down to make everything right...
 - There is no RELIGION – no way – for man to reach (*build a bridge*) to God...
 - **That is why God reached down to man – through the cross of Jesus!**
 - **Christianity is not a religion – is not about our efforts – good works!**
 - **It is about the faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ – John 19:30**
 - **It is about having a loving RELATIONSHIP with the living God!**
- o 3rd - Scattered all over the face of the earth... vs. 8-9
 - The result of God coming down - was man following the WORD of God...
 - They now followed the command to - be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth!
 - **When we finally look the answer – the only answer – Jesus...**
 - **We will find that life makes sense – there is no more confusion!**
 - Man will not stay separated...
 - **Zephaniah 3:9** – “Then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, that they all may call on the name of the LORD...”
 - **One day all those who find the answer – will worship before the throne of God!**
 - **Revelation 5:9** – “You ... have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation.”
- **3RD – FROM SHEM TO ABRAHAM... vs. 10-32 (4 POINTS)**
 - o 1st – The Genealogy of Shem... vs. 10-26 (*I Chronicles 1:17-27 / Luke 3:34-36*)
 - There are 10 names listed giving the genealogy from Shem to Abram...
 - The list is identical to the one given in **Genesis 10:21-32** – but adds 5 more generations...
 - **A MAJOR shift in the Bible – concluding the first section of Genesis – origin of the world...**
 - **Moving us into the second section of the Bible – the origin of the Chosen People!**
 - **From this point on - the ENTIRE Old Testament will focus on one nation – Israel!**
 - **Because it will be from Israel that God bring the promised seed – Genesis 3:15 – Jesus!**
 - o 2nd - The accuracy of the history...
 - Considering the VERY long lives of people prior to and just after the flood...
 - There are only a handful of generations in between to pass down the stories!

- Shem almost outlived Abraham – died when Abraham was 150!
- Noah died just 2 years before Abraham was born!
- And Adam would have been alive during the time of Methuselah – grandfather of Noah!
- **Which means ONLY 4 generations from Adam to Abram – creation to the birth of Israel!**
- o 3rd - Much shorter life spans after the flood...
 - Noah lived to 950 / Shem lived to 600 / Abraham lived to 175...
 - In only 10 generations – Shem to Abram - the life span of men dropped by 775 years!
 - **This was likely a result of the dispersion at the Tower of Babel...**
 - **With smaller communities intermarrying (*common practice*) increased genetic defects!**
- o 4th – The genealogy of Terah... vs. 27-32
 - Terah had 3 sons...
 - Abram (*exalted father*) / Nahor (*snorting*) / and Haran (*mountaineer*)...
 - Lot was the son of Haran – nephew of Abram – we will learn a lot more about him...
 - They lived in Ur of the Chaldeans – (*modern day Iraq*) ...
 - The same area as Babel – which as we saw was very pagan!
 - They took wives...
 - Abram married Sarai – his half sister - **Genesis 20:12** (*same father different mother*) ...
 - Nahor married Milcah – (*his niece*) the daughter of his brother Haran...
 - Perhaps Lot married his sister Iscah (*one who watches*) – only mention of here in the Bible
 - But Sarai had no children – a point that will become crucial to the history of Abraham!
 - Terah took (*he was leading*) his sons...
 - Terah / Abram / Lot – and their wives left the Ur of the Chaldeans...
 - They left for the land of Canaan – but when he arrives in Haran – Terah died
- **4TH - THE COMMAND AND THE PROMISE... VS. 1-3 (2 POINTS)**
 - o 1st – The command - get out of your country – from your family – your Father's house... vs. 1
 - Leave it all behind (*country / family / father*) ...
 - **Matthew 10:37-38** – “He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me.”
 - **The cost to follow Christ – leave it all behind...**
 - **That seems a steep cost – till you understand the reward!**
 - **Matthew 19: 29** – “Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.”
 - To a place - a very non-descript destination...
 - God did not give very detailed directions to Abram
 - He just him to go to a place He would show him...
 - **Psalms 119:105** – “Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.”
 - **God gives us just enough information to keep dependent on Him**
 - **If God gave me the five year plan – I would thank Him – rely on myself to fulfill it...**
 - **But if He only gives me the next step – I come to Him daily – step by step!**
 - o 2nd - If Abram followed the command - there were 4 promises given... vs. 2-3
 - I will make you a GREAT NATION...
 - From the descendants of Abram came the nation of Israel...
 - **How GREAT is the nation of Israel – it had existed for 3000 years already!**
 - **Every writer in the Bible – every apostle - everyone in the first church was Jewish!**
 - **Most important of all - Jesus is Jewish – that is a GREAT nation!**

- I will bless you and make your NAME GREAT...
 - The Father of all the Jewish people - the Father of the Arab people (*Ishmael*) ...
 - The (*spiritual*) Father of all Christians – grafted in – **Romans 11:17**
 - **Romans 4:16** – “For Abraham is the father of all who believe.”
 - **That accounts for more than half the population of the world – a GREAT NAME indeed!**
- You shall be a BLESSING - (*in you all the families of the earth will be blessed*)
 - **Galatians 3:16** – “God gave the promise to Abraham and his child [singular]... and that, of course, means Christ.”
 - **All the nations were blessed through Abram – because of Jesus!**
- I will BLESS those who BLESS you – and CURSE those who CURSE you
 - This holds true to this very day – blessing and cursing the nation of Israel...
 - **Every nation who has ever come against Israel – has been humbled!**
 - Spain was a world power in the 1500s - Spanish inquisition – the empire crumbled...
 - Germany was a world power 1940s - the Holocaust – the empire crumbled...
 - England was an empire - sided with the Arabs in 1948 - slipped from the world stage...
 - Philippines voted for Israel to become a nation – 1948 – after gaining its independence...
 - USA is a blessed nation – if they ever stop supporting Israel – blessing become curses!
 - **God blesses those who bless Israel - He curses those who curse Israel – to this very day!**
- **5TH – PARTIAL OBEDIENCE... vs. 4-9 (3 POINTS)**
 - o 1st - Partial obedience... vs. 4
 - Abram was 75 years old when he left HARAN...
 - We are given additional information by Steven in Acts 7...
 - **Acts 7:2-3** – “The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, BEFORE he dwelt in Haran, and said to him, ‘Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.’ And from there, when his father was dead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell.”
 - Abram was FIRST called by God in the Ur of the Chaldean – to leave his relatives...
 - He departed as the Lord had spoken to him - but went with his FAMILY (*Terah / Lot*) ...
 - The result was his father TOOK him to Haran – rather than Canaan – **Genesis 11:31**
 - After the death of his Father Terah – God called Abram AGAIN – to leave Haran – vs. 4
 - And he departs again – but STILL brings Lot with him – a decision he will regret
 - Abram was NOT perfect – he did obey – but reluctantly...
 - In spite of that God was faithful to fulfill all of his promises to Abram!
 - **If we will just step out in faith – even imperfectly stepping out...**
 - **God is faithful to do things in our lives that are beyond our wildest imaginations!**
 - **Ephesians 3:20** – “Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us...”
 - o 2nd - Abram came to the Land of Canaan... vs. 5
 - Named after the son of Ham - grandson of Noah (*the one who was cursed*) ...
 - It might have left Abram wondering – is this really the right place!
 - **When we step out in faith to follow God – we need to be careful of expectations...**
 - **We might end up in a place that leaves us wondering – is this it...**
 - **Our identity is not in where we are serving - our identity is simply in Christ!**
 - o 3rd - Knowing God... vs. 6-9
 - Abram entered near Shechem – near Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerizim (*30 miles north of Jerusalem*)
 - God met with Abram and gave him the promise - I will give your descendants this land!
 - He moved to the mountain east – between Bethel and Ai (*12 miles from Jerusalem*)

- Bethel – means the house of God / Ai – from a root word that means ruin or sin...
- Abraham pitched his tent – built an altar – and called on the name of the Lord - YHVH
- It was here – that Abram really got to know God – calling Him by name!
- When we step out in faith it is not about where we end up...
 - It is not even about what we are doing - it is about getting to know God personally...
 - It is one thing to say that we believe in God as our savior...
 - It is something far more special to say He is our friend!
 - The only way to get to know God is to take a step of faith!
- **6TH – THE FAMINE... VS. 10-20 (4 POINTS)**
 - 1ST - Times got tough – so Abram decided to go down to Egypt... vs. 10
 - Egypt was already an advanced country – more likely to have food...
 - In the Bible - Egypt is often used as a picture of the world...
 - So rather than trusting in the Lord – Abram ran to the world for the answers!
 - 2ND – Swapping problems... vs. 11-13
 - Sarai was beautiful - Abram was afraid he would be killed so another man could marry her...
 - This is saying something about Sarai– she was already 65 years old!
 - By going to Egypt Abram was no longer being affected by the famine...
 - BUT - because Abram had looked to the world – he found himself in another dilemma!
 - His solution – say that you are my sister – which was a half truth - **Genesis 20:12**
 - Now not only was Abram not trusting in the Lord – he was lying!
 - When we listen to the advice of the world – we might find what looks like an answer...
 - But the solution will only be temporary – replaced by yet another problem...
 - Because God loves us too much to let us get away with NOT trusting in Him!
 - 3RD – Failed plans... vs. 14-20
 - Sarai was beautiful and taken into the house of Pharaoh (*the king of Egypt*)
 - Abram was treated well for the sake of Sarai
 - He was given animals and servants (*one of whom was Hagar – a problem later on*)
 - Then God began to plague Pharaoh and his house for the sake of Sarai...
 - Then Pharaoh confronted Abram – and kicked him out of Egypt...
 - What started out well –fell apart – because it depended on the world and Abram!
 - So often we miss the reason why we have problems...
 - We think that we have a tough marriage because of the other person...
 - We think that we have no money because we do not have a good job...
 - We think we are sick because we have done something wrong...
 - None of those are the reasons – we have problems because of whom we rely on!
 - **II Corinthians 1:8-9** – “We do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of our trouble which came to us in Asia: that we were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired even of life. Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead...”
 - 4TH – Back to the beginning... vs. 1-4
 - Abram returned to the place where he had first made the altar (*between Bethel and Ai*)
 - For the second time Abram called on the name of the LORD – YHVH
 - When we make that mistake of running to the world or depending on ourselves...
 - When we find that we are only running from one problem to another...
 - The answer is simple – pick up where you left off – go back to Jesus!
 - He does not go anywhere – He is right where we left Him...
 - Waiting for us to find Him – the one and only answer to every problem!