

Summary of Genesis 9-11

Last week we covered the genealogy and flood accounts from Genesis 5-8. We noted that though the flood, God was re-creating the earth (New Creation) and that Noah was born to “Reverse the Curse”. This week we are going to look at the world after the flood that we find in Genesis 9-12. In this post- flood world, we get the necessary details from Moses which build the context and significance of the life of Abraham. We find out how the promise of blessing makes it form Adam to Noah, then Noah to Adam.

I. After the Flood (Genesis 9)

As we have read in Genesis 9, Noah and his family emerge from the Ark, along with all of the animals and creatures that are with them. We made the point last week in passing, and will now further develop, that Noah takes on the form of a New Adam. That is to say that Adam’s life established a pattern or a mold which shapes the life of Noah. Why or how could we say this? Well, we need only notice the parallels and similarities between Adam’s life and Noah’s life:

1. Both are parents of the human race, such that everyone descends from Adam & Noah
2. God makes a covenant both with Adam and Noah
3. Both have a specific involvement with all of the animals/creatures on the earth
4. Both were gardeners and cultivated the ground (Adam in Eden, Noah in a vineyard)
5. Both are charged to “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” (see Gen. 1:28 & 9:1)
6. Both have a “Sin Incident” in their cultivated areas
7. Both have “Nakedness” related to their “Sin Incident”
8. Both have their “nakedness” resolved with being clothed
9. After their “Sin Incident” both have a pronouncement of curse invoked

In Genesis 9:25-27 we have the only recorded words by Noah by way of curse, not to Ham, but to Ham’s son Canaan (who is the father of the Canaanites).

He said, “Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers.” 26 He also said, “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant. 27 May God enlarge Japheth, and let him dwell in the tents of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant.”

This sets up the genealogy that we find in Genesis 10.

II. The Nations from Noah (Genesis 10)

In Genesis 10 we have an extensive description of Noah’s sons that is immediately relevant to the Israelites that Moses is writing to. The first section deals briefly with Japheth, the last section deals briefly with Shem (which is picked back up in 11:10-32), and the middle section deals with Ham and his son Canaan. It is in this middle section

where we get the background of the founding of cities and kingdoms that are significant to Israel and her history:

1. Nimrod founded Babel (which becomes Babylon)
2. Nimrod founded Nineveh (which becomes the capital of Assyria)
3. Egypt founded Egypt
4. Casluhim founded the Philistines
5. Canaan founded the Canaanites

NOTE that throughout the history of the Old Testament that these nations become the enemies of Israel in very significant ways.

Of course Moses includes more about the Canaan and his territory because this is the territory that God will be promising to Abraham, as we will see later in Genesis.

III. The Tower of Babel (Genesis 11)

Although the Lord had judged the earth by a flood because he “saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5), the flood ultimately does not solve this problem (nor was it intended to). The rebellion of humanity that we saw in the Garden repeats in self on a larger scale in the Tower of Babel event. God had commanded both Adam as well as Noah to be fruitful, to multiply, and to fill the earth. However, in Genesis 11 we see that people were unified in rebellion against God by not dispersing and filling the earth. As a matter of fact, they are seeking to be like God in their actions, but they are doing it the wrong way. Their language is in the form of divine imitation of the creation of the world with the “let us make” of Genesis 1:26. Notice:

Genesis 1:26: Then God said, “**Let us make** man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

Genesis 11:3-4: And they said to one another, “Come, **let us make** bricks, and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. 4 Then they said, “Come, **let us build** ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and **let us make** a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.”

So just like Adam and Eve in the garden, these people are united (with the Serpent) in rebellion against God. So what is God’s response? He came to them in judgment by giving them different languages to confuse them and create “enmity” so that they spread over the earth. This is very similar to what God does in the Garden to Adam and Eve. Notice the similarities:

Genesis 3:22-24: Then the LORD God said, “**Behold**, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever-” 23 therefore **the LORD God sent him out** from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. 24 **He drove out the man**, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

Genesis 11:6-8: And the LORD said, “**Behold**, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. 7 Come, **let us** go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another’s speech.” 8 **So the LORD dispersed them** from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. 9 Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. And from there **the LORD dispersed them** over the face of all the earth.

It is interesting that God has to curse those building Babel in order for them to fulfill what God’s purpose (filling the earth).

Now this leads us to another place that begs the reader, “Is God going to leave humanity in this cursed state?” The rest of Genesis 11 (verses 10-32) leads us to another “Reverse the Curse” promise of blessing that will be given to the man Abram.