



A Study of the Book of GENESIS

Joe M. Easterling - Minister of Discipleship

WEEK SIX

Noah's Covenant & the Tower of Babel (Genesis 9-11)

Perhaps no other portion of Scripture is more pivotal for understanding key elements of human history than Genesis 9-11. Within these three chapters, one may find the answer to many of the major questions of origin and the biblical narrative, including answers to:

- ✓ Climate Change
- ✓ The Origin of Races and Nations
- ✓ The Origin of Languages
- ✓ The Prophetic Rise of a God-chosen Nation

GENESIS 8:20-9:17 – GOD'S COVENANT WITH NOAH

The first God-man covenant mentioned in the Bible is the one God made with Noah.

- ***8:20-22 – Noah's Worship & God's Response***

The first recorded act of Noah after getting off the ark was to make an offering to God. Since this is the first mention of an “_____” in the Bible, a few important things should be noted about this offering:

- This offering was _____ by Moses, not commanded by God.
- These offerings were primarily of _____ (and possibly of intercession for the new world).
- This was a considerably generous offering of _____ animal and bird.
- This offering would have required a great deal of _____.ⁱ

In response to enjoying the “soothing aroma” of Noah’s sacrifice, God determined “in His heart” three decisions:

- 1) He would never _____ the ground for man’s (“adam”) sake again.

- 2) He would never _____ everything by flood again.

- 3) He assures that _____ will be predictable and dependable “while the earth remains.”
 - 2 Peter. 3:10

- ***9:1-7 – God’s Instructions to Noah for Governing a Sin-stained World***

Now that the world has essentially reset with Noah and his family, God goes back to his original command to Adam and repeats it here to Noah:

<u>Genesis 1:28-30</u>	<u>Genesis 9:1-3</u>
²⁸ Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it...”	¹ So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.”
“... have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”	² “And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be on every beast of the earth, on every bird of the air, on all that move on the earth, and on all the fish of the sea. They are given into your hand.”
²⁹ And God said, “See, I have given you every herb that yields seed which is on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food. ³⁰ Also, to every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which there is life, I have given every green herb for food”; and it was so.	³ “Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.”

- In addition, God established new ordinances for all of humankind:
 - Don't eat flesh with _____ (which represents its life).
 - Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 9:22
 - Taking a _____ life by any creature will require the killer's _____ as well.

- **9:8-17 – God's Covenant with Noah**

The first mention of God establishing a covenant with humanity is with Noah (Gen. 6:18), thus giving the Noahic Covenant the ability to establish the parameters that will define what a covenant is throughout the Bible.

- The _____ for the covenant.
- The _____ of the covenant.
- The _____ and _____ of the covenant.
- The _____ of the covenant.
- The _____ of the covenant.

GENESIS 9:18-10:32 – THE DESCENDANTS OF NOAH

- **9:18-29 – The Curse of Noah on Canaan**

- What did Ham do that caused the curse of Canaan?

- Why was Canaan cursed rather than Ham?

- Why is this story was recorded in Genesis?

- **Chapter 10 – The Table of Nations**

Chapter 10 gives us the earliest table in existence of the origin of the nations. Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, became the founders of the three great racial families of the earth:

- ❖ (10:2-5) Japheth –

- ❖ (10:6-30) Ham –

- ❖ (10:22-31) Shem –

GENESIS 11:1-9 – THE TOWER OF BABEL

Chapter 11 backtracks from chapter 10 to explain what happened to scatter the nations.

- **vv. 3-4** – There were at least two reasons why God was not happy with the plans of the people of Babel.
 - They were to “_____” (Gen. 9:1), but they wanted the opposite (Gen. 11:4)
 - They wanted a name “for _____” rather than filling the earth with God’s _____.

The name “Babylon” has become almost synonymous with the attitude of pride and power. The tower was likely a pagan temple designed to extend above all else as a symbol of the religion of the people.ⁱⁱ

- **vv. 5-6** – God had a real concern with the tower they were building. Should they feel they accomplished it, “nothing that they proposed to do will be withheld from them.” There are two problems with this attitude:
 - They would conclude that nothing would ever stop their desires. If they can do whatever they wish, thus they would _____.
 - They would be without _____, a return to “the days of _____.”
- **vv. 7-9** – The word “Babel” is a transliteration of an Akkadian word which the Babylonians understood to mean the “_____ of the _____.” Moses makes a play on words here with the Hebrew word “_____,” indicating that a united “Babel” disintegrated into confusion.ⁱⁱⁱ

AN IMPORTANT POINT IN THE REDEMPTION STORY

The first occurrence of speaking in unknown tongues in the Bible involved God’s judgment at the tower of Babel. The people of that time could communicate entirely with one another in one single language. They decided to build a tower “whose top is in the heavens” to prove their might and glory. God was concerned about the ramifications of their success in building this tower, for then “nothing that they purpose to do will be withheld from them,” thus they will no longer need God. Though it is absurd to believe God fears that man will come to the point of independence from Him, it is quite reasonable to see His concern over the mindset that they no longer need Him. For when man feels he no longer needs God, he will no longer seek God and, therefore, no longer have an avenue for redemption. Therefore, God broke up their communication by confounding their language. They were no longer able to communicate as one, and they were no longer able to exalt themselves to damnation.

Incidentally, the next chapter in Genesis introduces Abram and begins the story of God’s chosen race who was commissioned to communicate the gospel to the Old Testament world. Through signs and wonders, the children of Israel declared the majesty of Yahweh, whether through providence or judgment. The important point to note here is that God’s communication after the judgment at Babel was through the children of Israel. *What event similar to the Tower of Babel bookmarks the end of the Hebrew Dispensation?*

ⁱ Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record: A Scientific & Devotional Commentary on the Book of Beginnings* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1976), 216.

ⁱⁱ W. A. Criswell, *The Believer’s Study Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1991), 23.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid, 23-24.