

## Genesis 9-11 – Chapter Study

### INTRODUCTION

Let's set the scene for our study tonight.

The Flood waters have subsided and Noah and his family have stepped off the ark.

The first thing Noah did was to build an altar and make sacrifice to the Lord.

God then promised that even though the human soul is tweaked by sin and man is bent toward evil, He will not bring such a global judgement again – not until the end.

A new world lies before them; they are starting over.

So God now lays down the basic rules that are to govern their lives.

### CHAPTER 9

**<sup>1</sup>So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them:  
“Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.**

We find a phrase here which comes often in scripture, in fact, so often we might miss it for constant familiarity with it – “God *blessed* Noah and his sons.”

How? What does that mean exactly?

The blessing God gave them is spelled out in the words that follow; here's the blessing –

**“Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.”**

A “Blessing” is a spoken-pledge to *favor* someone who remains loyal to the guidelines that bound the blessing.

The blessing God pronounces on Noah and his sons, and so really, the entire human race which will flow from them, is *life*.

God is telling Noah and his sons they are to go forth to live *profitable* lives, having children and *filling the earth* with their descendants.

Life is to multiply and spread.

There is no word here of *restraint or limitation*; no caution about *population control*.

On the contrary – they are handed a *mandate*, one that will

bring favor from God, of going forth into all the earth and bearing children.

We hear a lot today about overpopulation and the strain on earth resources that it produces.

Pollution is a problem in many areas and if you listen to some in the environmental movement you'd come to the conclusion mankind is a dangerous cancer on Mother Earth that it would be best to excise.

But overpopulation is only a problem where people have failed to follow God's command to fill the earth.

And pollution and lack of resources is only a problem where mankind has exercised poor stewardship of creation because of sin and greed.

Numerous studies have shown that with a commitment to godly stewardship, Planet Earth could support billions more men & women.

As Noah & his sons now face a brand new environment, they might be wondering what God wants of them in terms of the future.

So He comes to them and repeats the mandate given to Adam & Eve in Genesis 1:28 -

**Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it . . ."**

In the next verses in ch. 1, God tells Adam & Eve what their diet is to consist of. He does the same thing here -

**<sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.**

In Genesis 1, the diet of man is given as herbs, vegetables and fruit only – no mention is made of meat.

But after the Flood, meat is added by God to man's diet.

This may be because of the radically different conditions that existed *after* the Flood.

A purely vegetarian diet may not have produced the same level of

*nutrition* as before the Flood and supplementing with *occasional* meat may have been the provision of God to keep man healthy.

Now – there’s a huge debate that takes place between some over diet and we need to be careful when dealing with this subject so we think and discuss things Biblically.

To be vegetarian for purely health reasons is fine – more power to those who are!

But to argue for vegetarianism based on a *spiritual argument* finds *no support* in scripture.

On the contrary – God here extends man’s diet to *include* meat.

To forbid what God allows is inappropriate.

Let me say this regarding the *debate* that rages in some circles over diet – Paul speaks directly to this issue in Romans 14:17 when he writes . . .

**. . . the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.**

The context of that statement is the discussion about the propriety of eating meat for spiritual reasons!

Some felt a freedom to eat meat – other didn’t.

Paul’s main appeal is that such debates OUGHT NOT DIVIDE US from one another.

I was deeply grieved when a few years ago a precious family in our fellowship got a hold of some teaching which convinced them eating meat was inappropriate.

When I wouldn’t agree to promote that teaching in the church here, they separated from us.

This is the very thing Paul cautions us against.

I’ve heard the *health* reasons made for a vegetarian diet – and some excellent points are made.

I support and affirm those who want to make a *personal* choice to keep a vegetarian diet for *health* reasons.

But when a vegetarian diet is present as God’s approved diet and moral and spiritual reasons are given for it, then we must take opposition to it.

It’s become trendy for many in the Hollywood crowd to be vegetarian.

Some in the animal rights movement have become fiercely pro-vegetarian on moral grounds.

In light of this we might find the Apostle Paul's words in 1 Timothy 4 enlightening . . .

**<sup>1</sup>Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, . . . *commanding* to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. <sup>4</sup>For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; <sup>5</sup>for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.**

In v. 2 here in Gen. 9, God says that He will set a new tone to the relationship between man and the animals.

Because they will become food for man, God will put an *instinctual fear* of man in the animals so that their lives can be protected.

In other words, man can eat meat – but gathering it won't be as easy as just going out and grabbing some animal – he will have to stalk and hunt his prey because the animals will run from him.

Even with the provision of meat, God wants to impress on man the specialness of life, even the life of animals.

**<sup>4</sup>But you shall not eat flesh with its life, *that is*, its blood.**

What God says here established a clear Biblical principle – the need for man to recognize the inherent value of life, all life, even the life of animals.

Even when meat is permitted to his diet, Man is to show *deference* & respect to the animal he has killed by making sure it is properly prepared before eating.

It is to be dead, and its blood is to be drained.

A man is not to consume *the life* of another – even an animal's life.

The life must be *absent* before the meat can be eaten.

In scripture, the life is in the blood - Leviticus 17:11, 14; Deuteronomy 12:23.

This is a major theme in the Bible, and something that was really

only discovered by science in modern times.

The life truly is in the blood, it carries and sustains the life of the body.

What God says here about man's respect for the life of animals gives us a proper perspective on the animal rights movement.

Man ought to exercise a posture of *care* toward creation, showing respect for life.

Even in his use of meat, moderation is called for and due respect for creatures while they live.

Now, based on the principle of the specialness of life already laid down, God applies that specifically to man -

**5 Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man.**

**6 "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.**

We covered these verse in depth last Sunday. If you weren't here I'd suggest you get a copy of the study.

In review – these verses lay down the basis of human civil government on the foundational premise of the sanctity of human life because it is created in the image of God.

**7 And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth And multiply in it."**

So we find these words about going forth to fill the earth *repeated*, meaning they are mankind's marching orders.

The population of mankind is to *grow* in the Earth.

Against the backdrop of what we find here, I find the words and rhetoric of today's social engineers and philosophers disturbing. Human life has been denigrated and mankind turned into a cancer while animal life is exalted and even the physical Planet has been given a place of priority and value *higher* than that of man.

An unborn human child can be murdered with nary a word while the egg of an eagle is protected under the law with a huge fine and long prison term for anyone who might accidentally break it.

Something is desperately wrong with the value system of our time.

**8**Then God spoke to Noah and to his sons with him, saying: **9**“And as for Me, behold, I establish My covenant with you and with your descendants after you, **10**and with every living creature that *is* with you: the birds, the cattle, and every beast of the earth with you, of all that go out of the ark, every beast of the earth. **11**Thus I establish My covenant with you: Never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood; never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth.”

This is the second time in scripture we find the word “*covenant*.”

The first was in 6:18 where God first came to Noah and gave him instructions for building the ark and using it as a refuge from the Flood.

The idea of *covenant* between God and man becomes an important one throughout the Bible.

In fact, many theologians tend to divide up history and scripture according to one of two *ordering principles*: **1) Covenants & 2) Dispensations.**

A *COVENANT* is an agreement, like a contract.

Its main feature is a promise, conditioned on certain terms.

A *DISPENSATION* refers to a set period of time that’s governed by a unique set of guidelines established by God.

There are *Covenant theologians* and *Dispensational theologians* – and oh my, how they *love* to debate their varying ways of dividing up history and the Scriptures.

What may be a more profitable way for us to view things is to see that at different points throughout history, as revealed in God’s Word, He’s established different relationships with people to different ends.

The one unifying theme through all the ages, whether you want to see them divided into covenants or dispensations, is the role of faith.

It is those who believe in and remain loyal to God who are the focus of His redemptive attention, and around whom He moves history forward to the ultimate goal of His plan.

Here in v. 9, God is reaffirming & expanding the covenant He began

with Noah in ch. 6.

Just as He saved Noah & his sons from the Flood, so now He promises to protect all of creation from such a judgment.

This covenant is *unilateral* on God, meaning it isn't conditioned on man's compliance.

**12**And God said: “*This is the sign of the covenant which I make between Me and you, and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:* **13**I set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall be for the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth. **14**It shall be, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the rainbow shall be seen in the cloud; **15**and I will remember My covenant which *is between Me and you and every living creature of all flesh; the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.* **16**The rainbow shall be in the cloud, and I will look on it to remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that *is on the earth.*” **17**And God said to Noah, “*This is the sign of the covenant which I have established between Me and all flesh that is on the earth.*”

For each of the covenants God makes with man, He gives a sign, a marker and memorial so the covenant won't be forgotten.

This promise to never bring a global flood is signed and sealed by the rainbow.

When God later comes to Abraham and makes a covenant with him; to bless & prosper him, giving him and his descendants the land of Israel, and bringing the promised Redeemer through his descendants, the sign God calls for to mark the covenant is circumcision.

When the nation of Israel was gathered at the foot of Mt. Sinai and they accepted God's offer to be His chosen people, the sign they received as the reminder of that national covenant was the Sabbath day.

At the last Supper, what sign did Jesus give to remember the New Covenant by? Communion – the bread and wine.

What “sign” do individual believers take to themselves when they first respond to the gospel in repentance and faith? Baptism. Those who are married bear on their bodies a sign of their marriage covenant – the ring.

God doesn’t forget, but He knows that we’re prone to forget, so He attaches these signs to His promises so we might be reminded of the special relationship we have with Him through faith, and then live within its terms.

God here promises never again to bring a global Flood in judgment. The sign of this promise is the rainbow, which would not have been possible before this because of the vapor canopy which covered the atmosphere.

When the final judgment comes, it won’t be by water, but by *fire*, as Peter says in 2 Peter 3:1-7.

One of the reasons why a global flood won’t come is because God acted in such a way as to set up Earth so that the conditions that led to the *necessity* of the Flood won’t be duplicated for a long, long time.

The fallen angels who’d help create the wickedness of the pre-Flood world had been imprisoned as it says in Jude 6 and the life span of man would be drastically reduced while he would spend much more of his time in the new conditions of earth, just staying alive and eeking out his existence.

These conditions slowed the spread of wickedness – but Jesus said that the last days, just prior to His return, would see a return to the conditions that marked the days of Noah.

**18 Now the sons of Noah who went out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And Ham was the father of Canaan. 19 These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the whole earth was populated.**

In ch. 10 we’ll get the primary descendants of Noah’s 3 sons, but one is singled out here for emphasis – Canaan, the son of Ham.

This is because the descendants of Canaan will figure prominently into the history of Israel.

V. 19 makes a clear and bold assertion that the entire human population of the world comes from the 3 sons of Noah.

You may have heard the recent news reports of how genetic



researchers have discovered that everyone living on Earth today descends from the one man and one woman!<sup>[1]</sup>

There was a program on this last night on the Discovery channel.

Studies of the Y chromosome, which only men have, prove we are all descended from a single-common male ancestor.

Researchers have taken blood samples from people all over the globe and found this to be the case.

Other studies of Mitochondrial DNA, which is passed only from mother to daughter, has verified the fact all people today share a common mother, and that the next link in the chain is three women from whom all descend – the 3 wives of Noah's sons!

Now, this is what the hard evidence shows – as for the conclusions drawn by researchers – well that becomes pretty murky because it's all read and analyzed through an evolutionary filter & framework.

**20 And Noah began to be a farmer, and he planted a vineyard. 21 Then he drank of the wine and was drunk, and became uncovered in his tent.**

With time, Noah settled down and began to grow crops.

One of those crops was a grape vineyard.

He prepared some of the juice and it fermented.

When he drank it, he got ripped and apparently ended up passed out and naked in his tent.

There's a parallel here to Adam's Fall.

God planted a garden • Noah planted a vineyard

Adam ate and realized his nakedness • Noah drank and became naked.

Adam's descendants were cursed • Noah's descendants through Canaan are cursed.

Commentators debate the cause of Noah's drunkenness.

Some say that fermentation of grape juice into alcohol hadn't been possible before due to the pre-Flood earth conditions and increased barometric pressure.

Others say this is just a case of Noah's mortal lapse. Whatever the cause of his drunkenness, it's pointless to speculate. The lesson is that his drunkenness led to trouble, as it inevitably does . . .

**22**And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers outside. **23**But Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid *it* on both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness.

Ham entered Noah's tent and saw him naked.

Leaving the tent he found his brothers and told them what he'd seen.

The two of them determined to take care of matters as carefully as possible so they stood side to side, put a robe over their shoulders and walked in to where Noah was and threw the garment over him.

The language is so spare here it's been the source of much debate over exactly what took place when Ham entered Noah's tent.

Let's take a look at Noah's reaction as this may give us a clue as to what happened.

**24**So Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done to him. **25**Then he said: "Cursed be Canaan; A servant of servants He shall be to his brethren." **26**And he said: "Blessed be the LORD, The God of Shem, And may Canaan be his servant. **27**May God enlarge Japheth, And may he dwell in the tents of Shem; And may Canaan be his servant."

When Noah sobered up, he realized something had happened among his sons in terms of their relationship to him.

In the ancient world, seeing one's father's nakedness was a highly offensive act.

The father was the moral and spiritual head of the family and to see him thus would degrade that authority and place of respect.

If a son did perchance glimpse something he ought not, well, he

ought to have immediately forgotten it and never mentioned it to a soul.

Ham didn't do that – he went running to his two brothers and bragged about what he'd seen.

The Hebrews word “told” in v. 22 literally means - "told with delight."

This was a terrible act of defiance, rebellion and disrespect for their father and they determined to protect and honor his role and office as the patriarch of the family by covering him.

When Noah sobered up and came out to his family, he could tell something was amiss – Ham's attitude toward him was remarkable different.

When the facts became clear, Noah hit Ham with a word that was calculated to maximize his sense of shame at trying to shame his father.

Just as Noah's son, Ham, had been a curse, so now Ham's son, *Canaan* would bear the curse.

Canaan no doubt was already following in the footsteps of his father and Noah could see the two were conspiring to usurp his leadership as the head of the family.

It's clear from what Noah says in v. 25-27 that Noah is prophesying about the descendants that will come through his three sons.

It's interesting as we track the descendants of these three sons that Noah's words here become incredibly prescient/foretelling!

Shem's descendants become the peoples of the Middle East – the Arabs and the Jews.

They are known as the *Semites*, from the name “Shem.”

Today, “*Semite*” is a term used exclusively for the Jews – but linguistically and ethnically, the Arabs are also *Semites*, as are most of the people of the Middle East.

It's interesting that Noah affixes the name of God – *Yahweh*, to Shem here.

**v. 26 - And he said: “Blessed be the LORD, The God of Shem.”**

In v. 27 Noah says –

**May God enlarge Japheth, And may he dwell in the tents of Shem**

A good number of Japheth's descendants became the Central and Northern Europeans.

For most of their history they remained a backward, barbaric people.

But all of that changed when they embraced the message of Christ, foretold in the phrase – “dwelling in the tents of Shem.”

When the pagan Europeans put off their idols and embrace the God of the Bible coming under the covering of the Word of God, their cultures exploded in a new age of growth and discovery.

In fact, we call it the *Age of Discovery*.

They launched out in their wind-driven ships and laid claim to countless far-flung places.

Japheth was truly enlarged during this time.

Even though the age of the European colony has long since ended, Western European culture continues to be one of the dominant influences on Earth.

Ham's descendants were many, spreading out across Africa, the Middle East, & Asia.

*But all* of Ham's descendants aren't mentioned here – only Canaan.

They settled in the Middle East.

They're listed as a *cursed* people who will be oppressed and dominated by the descendants of Shem and Japheth, which is precisely what happened to them.

Indeed, there are no Canaanites today – they have been wiped out and gobbled up as a distinct ethnic group.

Don't be deceived by the Modern Palestinian attempts to claim to be Canaanites!

It's a bogus claim – made to try to usurp the Jewish claim to the land of Israel.

There was no such thing as a Palestinian until the 1950's.

Until that time they were simply called “*Arabs*,” and that's what they *remain* ethnically, culturally and linguistically.

There has never been a *State of Palestine*; no unique Palestinian culture, language or national aspirations prior to 1948.

Until then, Palestine was a region of Jordanian control that held no interest or concern on the part of the Islamic world. It was a byword and backwater, forlorn and forsaken. It wasn't until the Jews began to return there and then declared themselves a sovereign nation in May of 1948 that the Arabic world showed one bit of concern for it. So, when you hear the claim that the Palestinians are the descendants of the Canaanites, don't fall for it – it's a ruse! The Canaanites were driven to extinction long ago.

**28** And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. **29** So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died.

As I mentioned, life-spans will decrease dramatically now. Noah lives a long time because he has not accumulated the harmful mutations his descendants will quickly gather and pass on to their children.

## **GENESIS 10**

In this chapter we're given what's known as the *Table of Nations*. It's called this because many of the names we find here become the names in antiquity of the people who flow from them.

**1** Now this *is* the genealogy of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And sons were born to them after the flood.

**2** The sons of Japheth were Gomer, [& Goober] Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.

You might remember Gomer – he was from Mayberry & had a TV show in the 60's.

The descendants of Japheth were the *Indo-Europeans*, settling a swath from India through Western Europe.

**Gomer** is the father of the Germanic tribes.

Most Western Europe flow from this stock.

**Magog, Tubal, and Meshech**, became the ethnic Russian peoples; in fact, these ancient names find counterparts in the naming of cities and regions to this day.

Magog was the medieval name for the Russians.

*Tobolsk* is a city in Russia and *Meshech* is the stock form which the word “Moscow” comes from.

From **Madai** came the ancient Medes. Today they are Iranians and Iraqis.

**Javan** is the father of the Greeks, whose tendency toward the marine life is elaborated in v 5.

**3The sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah.**

**4The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim [better – Rodanim]. 5From these the coastland peoples of the Gentiles were separated into their lands, everyone according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.**

Linguists see a close connection between several of these names and both peoples and locations of the ancient world.

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Now we have the descendants of Ham.

**6The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.**

**7The sons of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabtechah; and the sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan.**

**Cush's** descendants were many and moved in two different directions. Some went east and founded Babylon while others went south into Africa.

**Mizraim** is another word for Egypt while **Put** refers to Libya.

**8Cush begot Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. 9He was a mighty hunter before the LORD; therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD.” 10And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. 11From that land he went to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, 12and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (that is the principal city).**

Cush's most notable son was this guy Nimrod; which means, "Let us rebel."

Taking our clue from the "mighty men of renown" we read about in ch. 6, we can conclude Nimrod wasn't a hero of the faith but a leader of rebellion against Him.

That's the way the Hebrew portrays him here.

The words used to describe him suggest Nimrod was bold in his *defiance* of God; he was "before the Lord" in the sense that he was "in God's face."

That he was a major leader is indicated by the fact that an empire is attributed to him and he built, not one, not two, or even three, but 8 cities!

Of course, Babel, Erech, and Nineveh are all well known to archaeologists.

Ancient commentators who were closer to the sources of this say that Nimrod had inordinate skill as a hunter.

His feats in the hunt were legendary and this moved him to come in for high esteem among his peers.

He used this position of leadership to persuade men they could trust in their own skills rather than God.

This message appealed to many and the first humanist / human potential movement was born.

Working together they crafted an empire and Nimrod became their king who then used his powerbase of followers to go after other people in wars of conquest.

He went from hunting animals to hunting men.

A massive body of myth and legend rose up around Nimrod and his family which became the basis for the false religion of Babylon which will come into the story later.

**<sup>13</sup>Mizraim [the son of Ham] begot Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, <sup>14</sup>Pathrusim, and Casluhim (from whom came the Philistines and Caphtorim).**

**<sup>15</sup>Canaan begot Sidon his firstborn, and Heth; <sup>16</sup>the Jebusite, the Amorite, and the Girgashite; <sup>17</sup>the Hivite, the Arkite, and the Sinite; <sup>18</sup>the Arvadite, the Zemarite, and the Hamathite. Afterward the families of the**

Canaanites were dispersed. <sup>19</sup>And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon as you go toward Gerar, as far as Gaza; then as you go toward Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. <sup>20</sup>These were the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands *and* in their nations.

<sup>21</sup>And *children* were born also to Shem, the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder.

<sup>22</sup>The sons of Shem were Elam [Persians], Asshur [Assyrians], Arphaxad [settled the top of the Persian Gulf and became the ancestor of Abraham], Lud [Lydians of Asia Minor], and Aram [Arameans - Syrians]. <sup>23</sup>The sons of Aram were Uz [that's where Job was from], Hul, Gether, and Mash. <sup>24</sup>Arphaxad begot Salah, and Salah begot Eber. <sup>25</sup>To Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan. <sup>26</sup>Joktan begot Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, <sup>27</sup>Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, <sup>28</sup>Obal, Abimael, Sheba, <sup>29</sup>Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were the sons of Joktan.

Many scholars believe Jobab is the same as Job, of the Book of Job.

<sup>30</sup>And their dwelling place was from Mesha as you go toward Sephar, the mountain of the east. <sup>31</sup>These were the sons of Shem, according to their families, according to their languages, in their lands, according to their nations.

An interesting comment is made in v. 25 about Peleg, the son of Eber and the brother of Joktan.

It says in his days *the earth was divided*.

This refers to the division of languages at the Tower of Babel we read about in the next chapter.

This event took place at his birth and he was named after it.

His name means - *division*, and is often used to describe the



division that comes between those who speak *different* languages.

In this chapter, the genealogy follows Peleg's brother, Joktan's line, who became absorbed in the work at Babel.

In ch. 11, the genealogies of the Bible drop all lines save that of Shem, through Peleg, who leads to Abraham.

**32** **These were the families of the sons of Noah, according to their generations, in their nations; and from these the nations were divided on the earth after the flood.**

Ch. 10 sets the scene for the events of ch. 11 and the confusion of languages that took place at Babel.

This chapter helps us see that when the different languages came on mankind, they were distributed according to family groups. We would expect this since God ordained the family and would preserve the structure of the family unit when the race was divided.

## **GENESIS 11**

**1** **Now the whole earth had one language and one speech.**

**2** **And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there.**

10:10 tells us that the Land of Shinar is where Nimrod built his empire.

He was undoubtedly the leader of this movement.

**3** **Then they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and bake *them* thoroughly." They had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar. **4** **And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top *is* in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth."****

God told Noah and his sons they were to go forth and fill the earth.

This is a conscious choice to resist that command.

They decide they are going to band together and resist the command to fill the earth.

Their goal now it not to honor the Name of God but to *make a name* for themselves.

Their central project which will unite them is a tower which will tower above everything else.

It's top would be, literally – “*to the heavens*” meaning *dedicated* to the heavens.

This tower was meant to be an *astrological* observation point, looking to the sky for portents on the future.

It was man's attempt to elevate himself and give him a place in the universe independent of God.

It's interesting to discover that almost all astrology and occult science finds it's origin in the primal religion of Babylon.

Notice what they made this tower of – baked brick and asphalt!

These would have been waterproof!

Was this mankind's attempt to provide himself a way to escape the judgment of God?

They knew they were defying Him, so they made their tower waterproof so that if another Flood came, they could find a refuge.

God had promised never to flood the Earth again, but they've rejected God so they have no care or clue what He said.

Archaeologists confirm that kiln-fired brick and asphalt were used in the ancient construction of Babylon.

**<sup>5</sup>But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. <sup>6</sup>And the LORD said, “Indeed the people *are* one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them. <sup>7</sup>Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.” <sup>8</sup>So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city. <sup>9</sup>Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.**

Mankind has incredible potential for good or evil, depending on where his heart is.

Under Nimrod's leadership, the human race was once more bent on rebellion and God saw that they had the potential for building something that would forever enslave the race – so He brought about confusion that would hinder their efforts.

There's a subtle pun here that's rather fun-

**V. 3 - Then they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly."**

**V. 4 - And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city . . ."**

As is typical for people who share a common culture and who seek to define themselves by their own means, they had developed clichés.

We find one here – "Come" they say "Let us" do this or that.

This is like some young people today who will say, "Dude, let's go here or there."

God sort of mocks them.

They say, "Come, let's unite"

He says, "Come, let's divide them."

Man proposes – but God disposes!

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There's an important lesson in this for us.

We look at all the division and strife there is in the world and we lament that fact that people can't get along.

We abhor racism and prejudice and see the terrible evil it has engendered.

But in a way, it's a measure of God's grace that mankind is fragmented and divided.

If mankind were united under one language and mindset, as they were at Babel, then his potential to work evil would grow exponentially!

This is the great mystery of prejudice and bigotry – it seems so patently foolish and wrong to anyone who considers it and everyone thinks he/she sees the answer to it.

They don't.

The division of mankind dates to the Tower of Babel and has its root in Man's constant rebellion against God.

There is only one solution to racism and prejudice and that is a New humanity.

There is a new way to be human through Faith in Christ.

As Paul wrote, in Him there is no color, race, sex, or social status.

We are all one in Him.

The only way for man to be reconciled to man is if he is first reconciled to God.

Without reconciliation to God, then racism is a lesser evil to what man could potentially become in his rebellion.

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The Chapter finishes with the genealogy of Shem through Peleg.

**Shem – Arphaxad – Salah – Eber – Peleg – Reu – Serug – Nahor – Terah – then . . .**

**27** This *is* the genealogy of Terah:

Here's the phrase again which gives us the clue this is a new record.

**Terah begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran begot Lot.**

**28** And Haran died before his father Terah in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans. **29** Then Abram and Nahor took wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and the father of Iscah. **30** But Sarai was barren; she had no child.

**31** And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there. **32** So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.

This narrative makes it look like *Terah*, Abram's father is the one who initiated the move from Ur to Canaan.

It was *Abram* who made the move, taking his father and his nephew Lot with him.

But that's for our study next week.

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[1] <http://www.post-gazette.com/tv/20020419eve2.asp>  
<http://www.archaeology.org/9609/abstracts/dna.html>  
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/genes/dna\\_detectives/adam\\_and\\_eve.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/genes/dna_detectives/adam_and_eve.shtml)  
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