

Bible Stories for Adults

The Flood and the Tower of Babel

Genesis 5 - 11

Opening

- Gathering: Give an example of how God's judgment and grace have been evident to you.
- Today's Focus: To recognize that while God is just and must punish sin, He is also merciful and freely offers His undeserved grace.
- Key Verses: *All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. Romans 3:23*
- Without faith it is impossible to please God. ... By faith Noah ... condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. Hebrews 11:6-7*

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Generations (*Genesis 5; 11:10-32*)

- What was the typical lifespan during the first 1656 years of human history? = See Genesis Timeline
 - Genesis 5 = (just have class skim, don't read) around 900 years
- How and why was this changed? = Rampant sexual immorality
 - Genesis 6:1-4 = God decided to limit man to 120 years; World-wide wickedness
- Sons of God/daughters of men = angels/humans; kings/regular; Seth desc/ Cain desc; Godly/wicked
- What was the typical lifespan between Noah and Abraham and beyond?
 - Genesis 11:10-32 = 200-600 yrs N-A, 100-200 A-Joseph, 70-80 past Moses
- How many generations were born by Adam's death?
 - Genesis 5 = 9, Lamech had been born
- What is significant about the description of the birth of the second generation?
 - Genesis 5:3 = *in his own image ... likeness* – born as sinful human, original sin
- How did Enoch die, and why?
 - Genesis 5:24 = Enoch walked with God, never died, God took him away
 - Lamech, 7th from Adam through Cain was condemned as evil (Genesis 4:19-24)
 - Enoch, 7th from Adam through Seth was commended as pleasing God (Heb 11:5; Jude 14)
- How did Methuselah die?
 - Genesis 5:25-29, 7:11 = He drowned in the flood at 969 yrs old
 - NOTE: *Methuselah* means "*when he is dead, it shall come*"

World-Wide Wickedness (*Genesis 6:5-13*)

- How had the disharmony of sin affected God's creation?
 - Genesis 6:5 = *every inclination of man's heart was only evil all the time*
- What did God decide to do as His judgment?
 - Genesis 6:6-7 = *I will wipe mankind from the face of the earth*
- How did God follow this judgment with His grace?
 - Genesis 6:17-18 = He saved Noah and his family
- Why did God save Noah?
 - Genesis 6:8-9 (also 7:1) = He walked with God (like Enoch)

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Preparations (*Genesis 6:14-21*)

What preparations did God tell Noah to make? = Perfect proportions for seaworthy vessel
Genesis 6:14-16, 19-21 = Build an ark, bring 2 of each animal & bird, bring food
Wood - Hebrew says to make ark of *etz-gopher*, *etz* means wood, *gopher* is unknown word
Literal translations (KJV, RSV) just say gopher wood = Doesn't mean English gopher
If a typo (*scribo?*), could be *etz-kaphar* or resinous wood (Living Bible)
Since unknown, NIV uses cypress = typical for ships and Egyptian coffins (looked like coffin)
Pitch - Hebrew is *kaphar*, same as word for atonement (*kippur*) = Both saved mankind from death
One door to enter the ark for salvation – Jesus is the only door for salvation (John 10:9; 14:6)

Noah's Response (*Genesis 6: 22*)

What did Noah do in response to God's instructions?
Genesis 6:22 = *Noah did everything just as God commanded him*
Why did Noah build this huge boat on dry land?
Hebrews 11:7 = By faith Noah built the ark

Entering the Ark (*Genesis 7:1-16*)

How old was Noah when the flood began?
Genesis 7:6-7 = 600 years old, 8 people entered ark – Noah + 7 (1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5)
At his age, how did Noah gather all of the animals?
Genesis 7:15 = They came to Noah and entered the ark (God sent them)
How did Noah close the door of the ark?
Genesis 7:16 = *The Lord shut him in*

The Flood (*Genesis 7:17-24*)

Where did the floodwaters come from? = rain & ground, all sources
Genesis 7:11 = Springs of the great deep & Floodgates of the heavens
How long did the floodwaters come? = 40 means *generation* to a Hebrew – a new beginning
Genesis 7:17, 24 = Floodwaters came 40 days; Stayed flooded 150 days (5 months)
What is the importance of verse 20? = waters covered the mountains over 20 ft
Genesis 7:20 (18-23) = Every land was covered, there was no way to survive

The Waters Subside (*Genesis 8:1-14*)

How did God end the flood? = Reminder in Hebrew does not mean that He had forgotten
Genesis 8:1 = He sent a wind
When was dry land first visible? = Mountains of Ararat (Urartu – Turkey/Iran) – mountain range
Genesis 8:3-5 = 1st day of 10th month - 225 days from start
Why did Noah send out birds? = He did so after 40 days
Genesis 8:6-9 = To see if there was dry ground – only window was in roof (Genesis 6:16)
Ravens have great endurance over distance = Noah checking for land even in distance
What did Noah learn from the dove's next two trips? = Olive trees don't grow at high elevations
Genesis 8:10-12 = Waters had receded, plant life was growing
How long had Noah and his family lived on the ark?
Genesis 8:13-14 = Until 27th day of 2nd month - 371 days

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Back on Dry Ground (*Genesis 8:15-20*)

- How did Noah know when to get out of the ark?
Genesis 8:15-17 = God told him to come out
- What was the first thing Noah did after leaving the ark?
Genesis 8:18-20 = He built an altar and sacrificed to God
- Wouldn't Noah eliminate species by sacrificing clean animals?
Genesis 7:2-3 = Noah took 7 pairs of each clean animal & each bird

God's Response (*Genesis 8:21-9:7*)

- How did God respond to Noah's worshipful sacrifice?
Genesis 8:21 = Decided to never again curse the ground or destroy animals
- What else did God commit to sustain?
Genesis 8:22 = All creation - nature's cycles and seasons
- How did man's relation to animals change?
Genesis 9:2-3; 1:29 = Animals will fear man, man can eat animals; Man before only ate plants
- Since man could now kill, what did God command against and why?
Genesis 9:5-6 = Cannot kill another man since he is made in God's image
- What did God command to restore his creation?
Genesis 9:7 (see 1:28) = *Be fruitful and increase in number*

God's Covenant (*Genesis 9:8-17*)

- With whom did God make a covenant?
Genesis 9:8-10 = Noah, his descendants (all people) & all creatures
- What was God's promise under the covenant?
Genesis 9:11 = There will never again be a flood to destroy the earth
- What sign or signature guaranteed this covenant?
Genesis 9:12-17 = God's rainbow in the clouds
- What other covenant did God make that was symbolized by Noah's ark?
1 Peter 3:18-21 = Promise of salvation through baptism into Christ's resurrection

Family Ties (*Genesis 10*)

- What humans were left after the flood to rebuild civilization?
Genesis 8:18-19 = Noah, his wife, his 3 sons & their wives
- With all humanity descending from this small group, what is described after the flood story? = see pg 5
Genesis 10:32 (1-32) = How nations of the world arose from Noah's offspring

The Ziggurat of Shinar (*Genesis 11:1-4*)

- When does the Tower of Babel story take place?
Genesis 11:1 = Within chapter 10, one language, about 30,000 people on earth
- Where did this story take place? = Show on map; Ruins are at Birs-Nimrud
Genesis 11:2 = Shinar, Hebrew for *Sumer* (region of Babylonia); Iraq
- What did they decide to build?
Genesis 11:4 = A ziggurat, stepped pyramid with temple on top, bridge to the gods
- What were the building materials? = Used for ordinary buildings, not temples TO God
Genesis 11:3 = Brick & tar, man-made; inferior to God-made stone

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Sin Number One (*Genesis 11:4*)

What is the first reason that the people decided to build this ziggurat?

Genesis 11:4 = *Make a name for ourselves*

What sin were the people guilty of? = Pride - *An undue sense of one's superiority; arrogance; conceit*

Proverbs 29:23 = *A man's pride brings him low, but humility gains honor*

When is pride okay? = Pride in what God has done for us

Galatians 6:14 = *May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*

Sin Number Two (*Genesis 11:4*)

What was the second purpose of building the ziggurat?

Genesis 11:4 = *We won't be scattered over the face of the whole earth*

How did this oppose the command God had given Noah?

Genesis 9:1 = *Be fruitful & increase in number and fill the earth*

The Judgment (*Genesis 11:5-8*)

How effectively were the people able to build a tower that reaches to the heavens?

Genesis 11:5 = The Lord had to come down just to see it

How did God respond when He saw what the people were doing?

Genesis 11:6 = They will get out of control if they continue

What was the danger of a unified humanity at this time?

Deuteronomy 8:17-18 = You could say, I am prosperous by my own power & strength

What did God do in judgment of this sin?

Genesis 11:7-8 = Confused their language, scattered them over the earth

God's Place and Time (*Genesis 11:9*)

Why is the Ziggurat of Shinar called the Tower of Babel?

Genesis 11:9 = Called Babel because God confused the world's language

Babilu - Akkadian for = *Gate of God* (Akkadian was language of area)

balal - Hebrew for = *to mix, to confuse*

When did all of this happen?

Genesis 10:25 = During Peleg's life, 100-300 yrs after the flood (*Genesis 11:10-18*)

How random was this scattering?

Acts 17:26-27 = God decided exact times and places for all people

The Grace (*Genesis 12:1-3*)

How did God respond in grace to this incident? = Speak further next week

Genesis 12:1-3 = He blessed Abram to be a blessing, all nations to be blessed

When will this dispersion and separation be completely reversed?

Revelation 7:9-10 = In the end, men from every nation & language in one voice

Have we experienced any of this reversal yet?

Colossians 3:11 = In Christ, there are no differences

When did this begin?

Acts 11:15-18 = When the Spirit came upon the early Christians - esp. Pentecost

Closing Prayer

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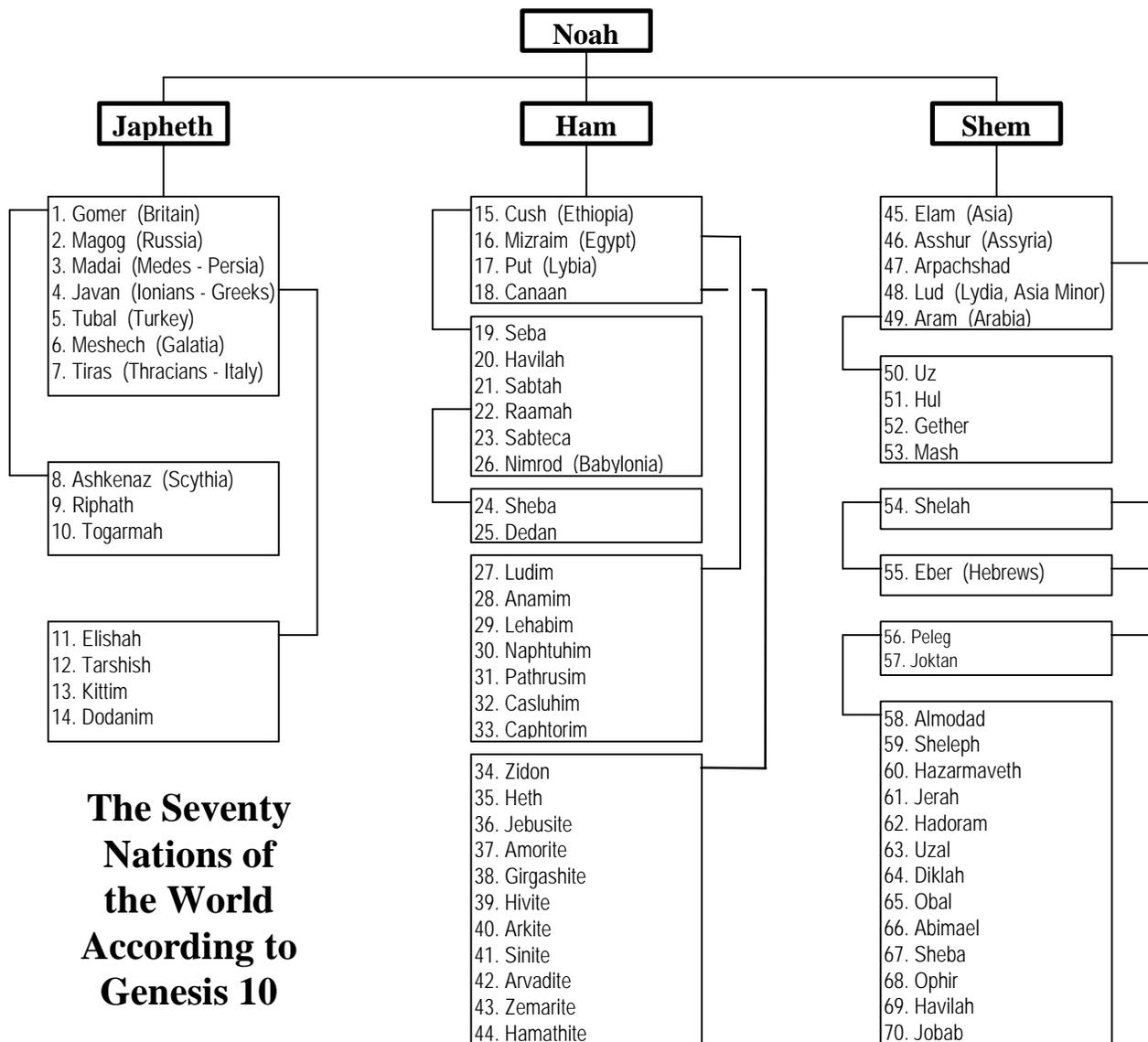
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Response

1. How does it feel to find favor in the eyes of the Lord?
(Genesis 5:24; 6:8; 19:19; 39:2-5; Exodus 33:12-23; Ruth 2:2; 2 Samuel 15:25-26; Luke 1:30)
2. What can I do to find favor in the eyes of the Lord? (Micah 6:8; Ephesians 5:8-10, 17; Colossians 1:10-12; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-2; Hebrews 11:5-7; 13:20-21; 1 John 3:21-24)
3. When have I responded to God without concern for what others might think? (Genesis 6:14-16, 22; Job 2:7-10; Matthew 6:5, 16-18; Acts 4:18-20; 5:29; 1 Thess 2:4; Hebrews 11:35-40)
4. How has pride affected my relationship with God?
(Leviticus 26:19; Proverbs 3:34; 8:13; 11:2; 15:25; 16:5, 18; 21:4, 24; Romans 12:3; Galatians 6:3)
5. Which of God's commands to me have I directly and clearly disobeyed?
(Exodus 20:1-17; Matthew 5:17-32; Galatians 3:10; James 2:10-11)

Next Week - God Calls Abram (Genesis 12 - 14)



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Jewish Timeline of Genesis

