

Genesis 10-11

The Tower of Babel: Rebellion and Judgement

God's Will Cannot Be Stopped

Section 1: Genesis 10 – Line of Ham versus the Line of Shem

We see the broken family tree of Ham in verses 6-20. From Ham's line we have the Babylonians, the Philistines, the Amorites and Sodom and Gomorrah. The sins of the fathers can directly impact future generations. You and I never sin in isolation. Our sins ALWAYS impact others. That's why it is so important for us to walk humbly before the Lord living a life of repentance.

In contrast we see in Sham's family tree leading to Abraham. But first we come to a lesser-known man named Peleg. What makes Peleg so interesting? In the days of Peleg, the earth divided (v. 25). If you remember on the third day of creation God created the dry land and put it all together in one spot. One super continent so to speak. After the flood many things have changed including the dry land. We see one of the aftershocks of the flood is the formation of the continents.

Now...we have to address the fact that there are always exceptions to the general rule. Obviously, you can have a terrible family tree and be a person who greatly glorifies God and you can come from an amazing family tree and be a person who greatly grieves God. Our purpose in contrasting the lines of Ham and Shem is to show the vast difference between those that follow God and those that follow the world.

The line of Ham that produced the Babylonians, the Philistines, the Amorites and the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were full of people who constantly chose the things of the world over the things of God on a consistent basis. We also see this in the line of Shem. But with one major difference, repentance. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob made many mistakes, but they always came back to the Lord. They lived a life not of perfection but of repentance.

Living a life of repentance is a major difference that separates believers from non-believers. It also separates true believers from fake believers.

Discussion Questions

- ❖ Why is it important to remember that your actions and attitudes directly impact those around you?
- ❖ What are some practical ways we can model a life dedicated to glorifying God?
- ❖ How important is it for us to build up the next generation?
- ❖ What are you specifically doing in the church to build up the next generation? If you are doing nothing, why?

Section 2: Genesis 11:1-9 – Disobedience and Judgement

Verse 4 clearly shows an intentional rebellion against the Word of God. What was the violation? In Genesis 9:1 God said to Noah and his sons: *Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth* (CSB). The sons of Noah decided to ignore the Word of God and build themselves a city to stay together.

Anytime we ignore the Word of God and make our own plans...we can never expect God to be pleased. We should expect God to judge, condemn and discipline. God does not take disobedience lightly. I believe that we

have developed a low view of sin because we don't see judgement immediately. If judgement followed all our sins...we'd have a very different view of sin. For example, we see the examine the story of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1-11.

It's important to remember that all disobedience, no matter how small we try to make it, to the Word of God is a big deal that deserves the judgement of God. In God's grace and mercy, He is patient with us and doesn't always bring swift judgement, which He has every right and justification to do so. Romans 2:4-5.

Two observations...(1) patience is not acceptance and (2) judgement is being stored up.

- (1) When you sin and seem to have no consequences immediately that doesn't mean God is approving of your actions or pleased with you. It means that God is graciously giving you time to repent.
- (2) Sin will always come calling. You can't expect to live a life without Christ and not experience the wrath of God. While safe from eternal consequences...believers can't expect an exemption from experiencing the consequences of their sins in this life. (As it says in Proverbs 3:11-12 and Hebrews 12:5-8).

Discussion Questions

- ❖ How can one act of disobedience lead to other acts of disobedience?
- ❖ Why is it important to have God's Word as our ultimately authority when learning who God is and following Him?

Section 3: 11:10-32

What we notice from all the ages in chapter 10 is the length of life slowly coming closer to the common 70-100 number. Just like the formation of the continents was an aftershock of the flood...life expectancy is greatly reduced as well. We see Shem living around 600 years down to Terah living 205 years. Terah is the last mentioned to live over 200 years. Abraham will live 175 years...Isaac 180...Jacob 147...Moses 120 and Joshua 110. We read Moses write in Psalm 90:10 (CSB): *Our lives last seventy years or, if we are strong, eighty years. Even the best of them are struggle and sorrow; indeed, they pass quickly and we fly away.*

The end of chapter 11 transitions us to the story of Abram who would become Abraham. The genealogy of Shem shows the faithfulness of God to fulfill the promise He gave in the garden (Gen. 3:15). What God promises will come to pass. No one can stop it or change it. A flood couldn't do it...Noah's sin couldn't do it...Ham's lineage (the Babylonians, the Philistines, the Amorites and Sodom and Gomorrah) couldn't stop it. God's Word will always come to pass.

Isaiah 40:6-8 (CSB):

6A voice was saying, "Cry out!" Another said, "What should I cry out?" "All humanity is grass, and all its goodness is like the flower of the field. 7The grass withers, the flowers fade when the breath of the Lord blows on them; indeed, the people are grass. 8The grass withers, the flowers fade, but the word of our God remains forever."

As we are seeing in the genealogies...man is like grass. Falling away from the earth. One day, if the Lord tarries, you and I will pass away. But God's Word will never pass away. Nothing can conquer, stop or change the Word of God.

Discussion Questions

- ❖ Why is it important to embrace God's Word rather than man's preferences?
- ❖ Examining the lineage of Jesus in Matthew 1...how has God shown His faithfulness to fulfill the prophecy of Genesis 3:15?