

## FINAL STUDY NOTES - GENESIS CHAPTERS 11 & 12 5/18-19/2024

### CLASSROOM LOCATION AND ZOOM – SIGN IN INFORMATION:

Phil Twente [ptwente@gmail.com](mailto:ptwente@gmail.com) cell 714 425 9221 [www.ptwente.com](http://www.ptwente.com) - Audio & notes - previous studies  
PLEASE NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE ONLINE (ZOOM) STUDY!

**MONDAY 7 PM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM DAYLIGHT SAVING** Time (US and Canada)  
THE MONDAY NIGHT STUDY WILL BE MEETING, CC LIVING WORD, 17101 ARMSTRONG, IRVINE, CA, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!

**MEETING ID# - 87858644763 Passcode: 087484**

Join Zoom Meeting -

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**Meeting ID: 878 5864 4763 - Passcode: 087484**

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**TUESDAY 7 AM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM DAYLIGHT SAVING** Time (US and Canada).

THE TUESDAY MORNING STUDY WILL BE MEETING, CC LIVING WORD, 17101 ARMSTRONG, IRVINE, CA, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!

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### OPENING PRAYER

**Review: :**

**Genesis Chapter 11:** The eleventh chapter of Genesis, endings the first section of Genesis, chapters 1-11, which tells of an event of almost equal importance to that of the great Flood. The Flood was worldwide in its effects, and so was the confusion of tongues of worldwide impact—at least *as far as man is concerned*.

#### **The Tower of Babel**

**Gen 11:1** Now the whole earth had one language and one speech.

**Gen 11:2** 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.

- So coming forth out of the flood, Noah and his family all were speaking one language. It is commonly thought that the language that was spoken was Hebrew. Journeyed from the east. There are others that would translate that eastward. They landed on Mount Ararat in Armenia, to get to the plain of Shinar would

be journeying eastward. So if they were coming from the east, then Mount Ararat is someplace else than the modern Mount Ararat today.

**Gen 11:3** *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.*

- **Not having a lot of stone there on the plains, they decided to make these bricks**, baking them thoroughly. They made such good bricks that many of the structures that were built at that time are still standing today. It is believed they have found the Tower of Babel, that after the confusion they went ahead and completed that. The intension of it was to follow the zodiac and to communicate with heaven or to understand from the heavens. It was a perversion of the astrology, which was the true message that God had placed in the stars.
- **So they made these bricks, baked them thoroughly, using them for stone and a tar-like substance**, asphalt for mortar. Now this asphalt for mortar is the thing that triggered the thought of John Rockefeller if there is asphalt there must be oil, and so that is why Standard Oil began exploring for oil over in the area of Iraq and all, finding tremendous oil deposits in the Middle East.

**Gen 11:4** *And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower (temple, likely astrological) 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."*

- **Their idea was to form a man-centered civilization; creating a community so that they would not be scattered.** Now it was God's command that they fill the earth when they came forth out of the flood, to be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth. So, this is really a rebellion against the commandment of God in their desire to form a civilization and a community to keep them from being scattered. "*The tower, whose top is in the heavens.*" They wanted to build this tower, as a place of worship, not to God, but to the stars! There are many of the ruins of these towers still standing today in the area of Iraq and Iran.

**Gen 11:5** *But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built.*

- **came down.** God was well aware of all that was transpiring, but was long-suffering, allowing ample time for repentance. The expression "*came down*" is figurative, indicating the rebellion had now gone too far and required divine intervention. A lesson, says an ancient Jewish commentator, to magistrates to examine every evidence before they decree judgment and execute justice. (**Gen 18:20-12**) *And the LORD said, "Because the outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grave, [21] I will go down now and see whether they have done altogether according to the outcry against it that has come to Me; and if not, I will know."*

**Gen 11:6** *And the LORD said, "Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do (kind of evil); now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.*

- **one language.** In God's judgment, the main problem was the unity of the people; the one most effective way of thwarting unity would be to prevent communication.
- **now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld.** Nimrod, son of Cush (*Chap 10*) with direct access to demonic intelligence and Satanic power, would be invincible without divine intervention. No doubt there was a faithful remnant (Noah, Shem), but these were helpless without God's action.
- **So soon after the flood, they degraded into worship of false gods, the development of the false religious systems,** from which have sprung out of the Babylonian area. The term Babylon is synonymous with a false religious system. In Revelation, Babylon is called the "*mother of harlots.*" God saw that their minds were against Him! They were seeking other gods building this tower. And the Lord said, "*they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do* (kind of evil).

**Gen 11:7** *Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."*

- **Come, let Us go down.** A council in heaven (perhaps mocking Nimrod's councils) decrees the **confusion** of tongues. This act is clearly supernatural, involving the divine creative power which Satan could neither duplicate nor reverse.
- **confuse their language.** In some inexplicable manner, God altered the brain/nerve/speech apparatus of the Babylonian rebels to give each family unit (possibly the seventy families of (*Gen 10:1-32*) its own distinctive vocabulary/phonology complex. With all this, however, they all remained truly human, unchanged in basic thought processes or moral character. Further, their distinctive languages were still sufficiently alike that they could, with time and much effort, learn to speak each other's languages. For some time to come, however, they could no longer communicate and, therefore, they could no longer cooperate. They were thus forced to obey God's earlier command to scatter abroad and to fill the earth with

different nations and governmental units.

**11:8** So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city.

- **scattered them abroad.** The tower had been completed and was actively in use, but the city was still unfinished. Probably all families except that of Nimrod himself departed from Babel, leaving him and his immediate family the burden of developing his own tribe at Babel as best they could. These probably became the Sumerians. The others scattered into various regions as already described in Genesis Chapter 10, some eventually developing great civilizations. This account, originally written by Shem (*Gen 11:10*), is reflected in somewhat distorted form in the legends of other nations, including a tablet excavated at Ur.
- **they ceased building.** In addition to the Babel tablet found at Ur, an inscription purportedly made by Nebuchadnezzar (sixteen centuries after Nimrod) on the base of the remains of a tower in Borsippa (a Greek word possibly meaning “tongue-tower”), some seven miles southwest of Babylon, claims that he (Nebuchadnezzar) was rebuilding the base of the ancient tower of Babel.

**Gen 11:9** Therefore its name is called Babel (confusion), 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.

- **Babel.** The Hebrew word *babel* means “mixed” or “confusion.” It was associated by the writer with the “babble” of sounds which was the last memory held by all who scattered from the city. The word “babble” is an example of onomatopoeia, a word that imitates an actual sound, and thus is essentially the same in all languages. The name Babel, therefore, does not really mean “gate of God,” as its later apologists claimed, but “confusion.”
- **all the earth.** As the people scattered, each family gradually became a tribal unit, and each had to develop its own distinctive culture as best it could. Each for a time would have to live by hunting and gathering, residing in caves or temporary shelters. The stronger families would occupy the best nearby sites (e.g., the Nile valley), while others would be forced farther away. Although they were all familiar with the arts of agriculture, animal husbandry, ceramics, metallurgy, construction, navigation, etc., each family would require time, population growth, and discovery of sources of metals and building materials. They all had known how to write, but now, with a completely new speech, each tribe would need to invent an entirely new written language, and this would require still more time and ingenuity. Within a few generations, however, all these attributes of “civilization” had surfaced all over the world, even on distant continents.
- **Unfortunately all the families carried the same Babylonian culture and religion with them.** Babylon is called in (*Rev 17:5*) *And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.* At the same time, they also carried a faint remembrance of the true God and His promises, especially remembering the divine judgment of the great Flood in their traditions. Each retained knowledge of God, and could see enough evidence of Him in both the creation and their own natures (*Rom 1:20; 2:13-15; Joh 1:9*) so they were inexcusable in their almost universal descent into the religious morass of evolutionary pantheism, astrology, spiritism, polytheism and, finally, atheistic materialism.

#### *Shem's Descendants*

**Gen 11:10** This is the genealogy of Shem: Shem was one hundred years old, and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood.

- **generations of Shem.** This marks the termination of Shem’s tablet. Apparently Terah (*Gen 11:27*) acquired the ancient records at this point, and continued them.
- **hundred years old.** Evidently Japheth was born one hundred years before the Flood (*Gen 5:32; 7:6*). Shem was evidently a few years younger than Japheth (called “the elder” in *Gen 10:21*). Ham was still younger. He was called Noah’s “younger son” in (*Gen 9:24*).
- **after the flood.** Apparently none of Noah’s sons had children before the Flood, possibly because of the universal violence and their concentration on building the ark.

**Gen 11:11** After he begot Arphaxad, Shem lived five hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.

- **Which means that Shem lived up until the time of Abraham.** So he saw his children to the ninth generation, which is an interesting thing, living as he did to a rather old age.

**Gen 11:12** Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, and begot Salah.

**Gen 11:13** After he begot Salah, Arphaxad lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters.

- **four hundred and three years.** It is obvious, by comparison of the genealogies and chronologies in (*Gen*

5:1-32) and (*Gen 11:1-32*), that the longevity of mankind began a steady decline after the Flood. Undoubtedly the vast climatological and physiographical changes caused by the Flood were the main natural causes of this. The protective vapor canopy was gone; the rich soils were gone; mutations were increasing in the inbreeding populations, and the general environment was much more rigorous. No doubt it was also providentially ordered that, in the post-Flood world, life-spans should settle at around seventy years. (*Psa 90:10a*) *The days of our lives are seventy years; And if by reason of strength they are eighty years.*

***Gen 11:14 Salah lived thirty years, and begot Eber.***

- ***Salah.*** (*Luk 3:36*) inserts the name “*Cainan*” between those of Arphaxad and *Salah*. This name is also found in some of the Septuagint manuscripts (though not the earliest), but it is not found in either (*Gen 10:24*) or (*1Ch 1:18*), in any of the Masoretic manuscripts. The weight of evidence favors the Hebrew text with Cainan’s name having accidentally been later inserted by careless scribal copying from (*Gen 5:10*) and/or (*Luk 3:37*). The inclusion of essentially the same genealogy, with no suggestion of any omitted generations, in (*Gen 10:21-25; 11:10-26; 1Ch 1:17-28; and Luk 3:34-38*), including chronological data in the second, at least places the burden of proof on any who (for archaeological reasons) would maintain there are significant gaps involved.

***Gen 11:15 After he begot Eber, Salah lived four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters.***

***Gen 11:16 Eber lived thirty-four years, and begot Peleg.***

- ***begot Peleg.*** If there are no genealogical gaps in (*Gen 11:10-17*), then the numbers add to 101 years from the Flood to the birth of Peleg right after the Dispersion. In view of the longevity of the times, plus the high advantages implicit in large families, as well as God’s command to multiply rapidly, a quite reasonable population growth model will indicate at least one thousand mature adults on the earth at the time of the Babel Dispersion, and possibly many times this amount.

***Gen 11:17 After he begot Peleg, Eber lived four hundred and thirty years, and begot sons and daughters.***

***Gen 11:18 Peleg lived thirty years, and begot Reu.***

***Gen 11:19 After he begot Reu, Peleg lived two hundred and nine years, and begot sons and daughters.***

- ***two hundred and nine years.*** There is a sudden drop in longevity here, from 464 years for Eber to 239 years for Peleg. This is the most likely spot, therefore, for a genealogical gap in the record. However, this sharp decline may also be explained by the traumatic changes in living conditions caused by the confusion of tongues and the resultant migrations and struggles. The close inbreeding since the Flood, aggravated further by the Dispersion, would also contribute to an increased mutational load carried by the population, and this would tend to further reduce the life-span. In any case, even if genealogical gaps do exist (in either *Gen 5:1-32 ; 11:1-32*), they could only involve a few generations at most; in no case could they be stretched sufficiently to accommodate the evolutionist’s imagined million-year history of man.

***Gen 11:20 Reu lived thirty-two years, and begot Serug.***

***Gen 11:21 After he begot Serug, Reu lived two hundred and seven years, and begot sons and daughters.***

***Gen 11:22 Serug lived thirty years, and begot Nahor*** (grandpapa to Nahor, brother of Abram).

***Gen 11:23 After he begot Nahor, Serug lived two hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.***

***Gen 11:24 Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and begot Terah.***

***Gen 11:25 After he begot Terah, Nahor lived one hundred and nineteen years, and begot sons and daughters.***

***Gen 11:26 Now Terah lived seventy years, and begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran.***

- ***begat Abram.*** Abram is mentioned first, probably because of his position in the Messianic line, as opposed to his being the oldest son. The same type of notation had been used for Noah’s three sons (*Gen 5:32*), the first-named son, Shem, was not the oldest, so Abram could possibly have been younger than one or both of his brothers.
- ***seventy years.*** This was the age that Terah began to father children. Abram was probably born later when Terah was 130. (*Gen 11:32; Terah-205yrs; 12:4; Abram – 75yr*). If Abram was the first born, then Terah would have had to live 60 years (205-75=60), in Haran after he “died.” However if Abram was not the first born, but was born 60 years after the first born, Haran, then we would see Abram, being 75, leaving Haran for Caanan when Terah died.

***Terah's Descendants***

***Gen 11:27 This is the genealogy of Terah: Terah begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran begot Lot.***

- ***generations of Terah.*** This statement seems to conclude Terah’s tablet, which thus consisted solely of the genealogical records from Shem to himself (*Gen 11:10-27*). If there are no gaps in the genealogies, Shem

lived until after Terah's death, so Terah could easily have gotten the earlier tablets from Shem. Likewise, he could easily have transmitted them later to Abraham.

- **Terah begat Abram.** Isaac is apparently the author of the next *toledoth*, and he seems to have keyed his record back into Terah's simply by repeating the conclusion of the latter.
- **Haran.** The names of both Nahor (named after his grandfather) and Haran are associated with cities in Mesopotamia (*Gen 24:10; 28:10*). Haran died when relatively young, evidently while visiting his father back in Ur (*Gen 11:26, 28; 11:32*). His son, Lot, soon became attached to his Uncle Abram.

***Gen 11:28 And Haran died before his father Terah in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans.***

- **Ur of the Chaldees.** Ur was an old and prosperous city in the days of Abram. Archaeological excavation has revealed a great library which has yielded thousands of clay tablets. Contrary to outmoded theories of cultural evolution, practically everyone knew how to read and write long before Abram's day.

***Gen 11:29 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.***

- **took wives.** Nahor married his niece, and Sarai was Abram's half-sister (*Gen 20:12*), a daughter of Terah by another of his wives. Close marriages were not yet genetically dangerous and so were not prohibited until the Mosaic law was established later. Perhaps they were even desirable in those families who still worshipped the true God, in order to maintain a pure faith.

***Gen 11:30 But Sarai was barren; she had no child.***

- **Abraham, not having any children of his own, more, or less adopted Lot and took care of him** after his brother died.

***Gen 11:31 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.***

- **the land of Canaan.** Evidently Terah, as well as Abram, had received God's call to go to Canaan, but Terah went north to Haran instead, perhaps intending to go on to Canaan later, after settling his deceased son's affairs in Haran. Abram also had received God's call while still in Mesopotamia (*Act 7:2,3*), and so he and his wife set out with Terah. However, Terah never left Haran.

***Gen 11:32 So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.***

- **Now we have what appears to be a discrepancy in the scripture, if we assume Abraham was the first born,** for we read that Abraham was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran to go on to the land. It would appear in verse 26, if we assume Abram was born first, that he was seventy years old when Abraham was born. "*Now Terah lived seventy years, and begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran.*"
- **In the book of Acts, as Stephen is talking about this particular incident of their dwelling in Haran,** Stephen tells us that they were there until Terah was dead, and then after his death Abraham went on to the Promised Land. But if Abraham was born when Terah was seventy years old, he left the city of Haran when he was seventy-five, that means his dad was only one hundred and forty-five years old and lived some sixty years after Abraham left. So it creates a problem, as you see. Abram left Haran when Terah died.
- **One possibility is that Abram was not the first-born, but is only listed first.** We saw the same situation in Genesis chapters five, seven, and nine, where Shem was listed first in Noah's three sons, but was not the oldest but that of being in the Messianic line. That his brother Haran was the first-born and that Abram was not born until his dad was one hundred and thirty years old. That is one possibility.
- **when his father was dead.** At first glance, (*Gen 11:26,32 and Act 12:4*) seem to indicate that Terah lived for sixty years after Abraham's departure from Haran. Terah was seventy when his first son was born (*Gen 11:26*); Abraham was seventy-five when he left Haran (*Gen 12:4*); Terah would have been 145); and Terah lived to be 205 (*Gen 11:32*). The best solution to this apparent difficulty is that Abraham was not Terah's firstborn son, but was mentioned first (*Gen 11:26*) because he was most prominent. Abraham, then, would have been born when Terah was 130.
- **The second possibility is that in Stephen, referring to his father being dead, he could have referred to the idolatry that Terah was involved in and that he was dead unto God and the things of God.** Abraham, finally realizing the spiritual deadness of his father, left his father in Haran and moved on to the land that God had promised.

***The Call of Abram The command of God***

***Gen 12:1 Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you.***

- **We see that Abraham, or Abram at this point, was not fully obedient to the command of God.** He didn't leave his father, nor his family, nor did he leave the land immediately. Haran was still in the land of Babylon, up in the northwest corner. So, he was not totally obedient to the command of God journeying with his father, taking Lot with him.
- **Faith is always marked by obedience—Failure of Abraham's is not mentioned.** The lapses of faith are not mentioned in the New Testament. When we come to the New Testament and we read of Abraham, he is given to us as the classic example of the man of faith. Faith is always marked by obedience. His faith is held up as an example to us. Failures of his faith is not mentioned. In the New Testament, God overlooks the failures, the lapses of his faith, and only tells us of the triumphs of his faith!
- **I am glad that God uses imperfect people.** If Abraham had been totally perfect, never having any wavering in his faith, was just a completely perfect man all the way through, then it would be discouraging. I would think that God couldn't use me, because I'm very painfully aware of my imperfections. And you'd be saying the same thing. "Well, God can't use me because I'm imperfect." God uses people like Abram, although imperfect! We cannot disqualify ourselves because of our imperfections.
- **God uses yielded vessels, not perfect vessels.** That is not to say that God doesn't seek to bring us into perfection, which is the purpose of God by His Spirit to conform us into the image of Christ. Not one of us could say, "I have been completely perfected in Jesus Christ, and I never get angry. I never get upset. I always have the sweetest, most pleasant disposition. I'm great to be around all the time." I do have imperfections. That there are times that I question the things of God. There are times when I have lapses of faith. I'm not trusting God completely as I should. Difficulties come, they arise, and I'm trying to figure my way out rather than resting in God to see me through the problem. My obedience is not complete obedience. I don't make the total break as God commanded.
- **It is comforting to know that God will take me in the state that I am and will begin His work in me,** by His Spirit, to change me and to transform me into that image of Christ, but He uses me though I am not perfect! And He can use you though you are not perfect! We look at our imperfections and our flaws. We're looking at our weaknesses rather than that perfection of our Creator! God wants to use you! God wants to use each of you! Abram was used of God. He's given to us as a classic example of faith, and yet, before we're through with this chapter we're going to find a horrible lapse of faith in Abraham.

**Gen 12:2 I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And .**

- ***I will make you a great nation!*** The promise of God that from Abraham a great nation would spring.
- ***I will bless you!*** Oh, what glorious promises. Now these are predicated not on Abraham's goodness, but on the grace of God! God is not going to bless Abram he's a good man. God doesn't bless us because we're good. God's blessings come to us by virtue of His grace! But because we often are of the mental frame that God only blesses us when we are good, we never expect the blessings of God. We never believe God to bless us, because we have this hang-up that God only blesses as a reward for our goodness. No, the blessings of God are given to us by His grace! It was by the grace of God that He called Abram. It was by the grace of God that He called you. It is by the grace of God that He blesses us! It is not by merit of our works, of our faithfulness, of our diligence, but by His grace I experience and I receive the blessings of God!!
- ***And make your name great.*** How interesting! Abraham's name is great to the Jews. It is great to the Mohammedan, and it's great to the Christian. All of us look back to Abraham as our father. The greatness of this man who believed and trusted God. So the three major religions of the world all honor and respect the man Abraham. "*I will bless you and make your name great!*"

**Gen 12:3 I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.**

- **Every nation that begins to persecute the Jew, shortly afterwards goes into a real decline.** Spain, after that horrible Inquisition, was reduced to a fifth-rate nation. At the time Columbus discovered America, Spain was one of the great nations. Rome, when it started to persecute the Jews, soon fell. It was after Antiochus Epiphanes, the Greeks defamed the temple and all, that they fell. Of course, Germany, of recent history, fell from a great power as a result of persecuting the Jews. "*I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you.*"
- **Part of the blessing of the United States is the fact that we have become a refuge to the persecuted Jews.** There are a lot of people with a lot of anti-Semitism! That is unscriptural, and if you have anti-Semitism, I feel sorry for you. It is a bitterness and a hatred that is not of God. It is ungodly. And it is putting you in a place of being cursed, really, "*I will curse him who curses you.*"
- ***And in you all families of the earth shall be blessed.*** The families of the earth plural. The blessing isn't

just to come upon Israel, but the blessing from Abraham is to come upon all the families of the earth. Of course, that was the prophecy of the Messiah. It is through his seed, Jesus Christ, that the blessing of God has come upon us today. We are blessed because of Jesus Christ, who was born of the Abraham's seed. So this promise of God, through him all the families of the earth will be blessed, is something that we are blessed because of Abraham and his seed Jesus.

***Gen 12:4 So Abram departed as the LORD had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.***

- **Abram is now leaving Haran, but still he is taking Lot with him.** He was to leave his family, but Lot is going along, probably sort of like a son. He is a nephew to Abram and much like a son.
- **Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran.** No young kid; seventy-five years old.

***Gen 12:5 Then Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people whom they had acquired in Haran, and they departed to go to the land of Canaan. So they came to the land of Canaan.***

- **It would seem that while they were in Haran it was a time of prosperity,** possibly related to what had been established by Haran, because they had acquired a lot of servants. They had acquired a lot of goods. We read later on that Abraham, shortly after this, armed three hundred of his servants to chase after the kings that had captured Lot. If you have three hundred servants that you can arm, you've got a pretty good retinue of servants going for you. So he was prospered and blessed there, and he leaves there now with this company and they departed, and so they came to the land of Canaan.

***Gen 12:6 Abram passed through the land to the place of Shechem (about the center of the country), as far as the terebinth tree of Moreh. And the Canaanites were then in the land.***

***Gen 12:7 Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.***

- **The LORD appeared.** This is the first mention of an actual "appearance" of God to men (that is, a theophany, a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ). Note that God's promise to give Abram the land of Canaan was largely unconditional. Abram had already met the *only* condition; that of leaving his homeland to go to Canaan as God commanded him.
- **Stephen tells us in Acts chapter 7 that the God of glory appeared to him** while he was still in the land of Mesopotamia. The God of glory appeared to him and told him to get out of the land. There are seven references here in Genesis of the LORD appearing to Abram or to Abraham as he was later known. These appearances of God to Abraham are actually progressive in their drawing of Abraham into a deeper communion and fellowship with God. It is good to study the seven appearances of God to Abraham, each one is drawing him in to a deeper, more intimate relationship with the Father, with God!
- **The first appearance in Babylon, "Get out of your country."** He was brought into the fellowship with what you might call the "discontent of God." God was not content with what was happening in Babylon. He caused Abraham to become discontent to search out another place to worship God. Now he comes into the land. It is interesting God did not appear or deal with him while he was in Haran. God didn't deal with him until he came into the land!
- **The work of God in our lives can oftentimes be sort of stalled by our disobedience.** God leads us step by step. I would like for God to lay out for me a whole plan that He has for my future. But God only gives us one step at a time. He won't give us the next step until we've taken the last step!
- **When Philip was in Samaria having this tremendous revival meeting** and many Samaritans were believing and being baptized, the Holy Spirit spoke to Philip and said, "Go down to Gaza, the desert place." I can see where Philip would have good grounds to question the sanity of God. "There's nobody in Gaza, that place is deserted. Hey God, here people are being saved. It doesn't seem to make sense, but he took the first step, and when he had taken the first step, when he arrived in Gaza, then God gave him the next step. When he got up to the chariot, God gave him the next step, and God leads us step by step.
- **To your descendants I will give this land.** Now, with Abraham God said, **"Get out of this land and go to a land that I will show you."** Abraham went to Haran and he stayed in Haran for a time. God didn't appear and speak to him until he came to the land that God had called him to go to. But now God does, giving confirmation of the land of which I will show you! **To your descendants I will give this land**
- **And there he built an altar to the LORD.** By this act, Abram made an open confession of his religion, established worship of the true God, and declared his faith in God's promise. This was the first true place of worship ever erected in the Promised Land. Isaac would later build an altar also to commemorate the Lord's appearance to him.

**Gen 12:8** *And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD.*

- **Abram does two things when he gets into the land.** He pitches his tent—that is like buying a home in a new subdivision and moving in. He “pitched his tent”—that’s where he lived. Then “he built an altar to the LORD!” That was his testimony to God, and everywhere Abram went, he left a testimony to God! How is our testimony everywhere we go? What an example for us!

**Gen 12:9** *So Abram journeyed, going on still toward the South.*

#### **Abram and Sarai in Egypt**

**Gen 12:10** *Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to dwell there, for the famine was severe in the land.*

- **It seems that this was a lapse of faith, in Abram’s going down to Egypt.** This was a test of Abraham’s faith and he flunked, just like I’ve flunked a lot of tests of faith that God has given to me. So the famine was a test of faith, “Do you believe Me, Abraham? I’ve led you to the land. I am able to sustain you in the land. Can you trust in Me to take care of you here? Paul, writing to the Galatians, said, “Hey, you started well, what hindered you?” That’s the case with lot of people. You get a good start. A test or an affliction comes. Then suddenly you think, “Whoa! What am I doing here? What am I going to do now?” So, we go down to Egypt. (*Isa 30:1-2*) “Woe to the rebellious children,” says the LORD, “Who take counsel, but not of Me, And who devise plans, but not of My Spirit, That they may add sin to sin; [2] Who walk to go down to Egypt, And have not asked My advice, To strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, And to trust in the shadow of Egypt!”

**Gen 12:11** *And it came to pass, when he was close to entering Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, “Indeed I know that you are a woman of beautiful countenance.”*

- **That’s a great thing for a husband to say to his wife, “You’re a beautiful woman.”** She was sixty-five years old, at least, at this time. Quite a compliment. The thing was she was fair-skinned, and that was considered really a mark of beauty among the darker skinned people. So when they came close to entering Egypt, he said, “You’re a beautiful woman, a beautiful face.”

**Gen 12:12** *Therefore it will happen, when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, ‘This is his wife’; and but they will let you live.*

- **they will kill me.** A papyrus document from ancient Egypt does indeed tell of a pharaoh who had a beautiful woman brought to his court after murdering her husband, which would indicate that Abram’s concern was realistic

**Gen 12:13** *Please say you are my sister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that I may live because of you.*

- **Say you are my sister.** Sarai was Abram’s half-sister (*Gen 20:12*) *And yet indeed she is my sister; she is the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife.* So this was not an outright lie. Abram’s faith was still weak. He should have stayed in Canaan in spite of the famine. Having gone into Egypt, he should have been open and consistent in his testimony, and so should Sarai. Instead, they compromised, following human reason instead of God’s Word! God protected them in spite of it, but they lost their testimony with the Egyptians, whom they might otherwise have led back to God.
- **Does this sound like a man of tremendous faith in God?** Remember, he’s the father of all those that believe. Let’s recognize he didn’t have this great faith all at once at the beginning. It was something that developed and something that grew. Don’t be disappointed if you don’t have all this great faith the moment you begin your walk with the Lord. Our expectations of ourselves are many times unrealistic in spiritual development and spiritual growth. We think if we only had the faith of Abraham, but that faith in God was something that developed over a process of time as he discovered the faithfulness of God. It came through fellowship with God, knowing God, faith grew, faith developed; even as your faith will grow and develop through your fellowship with God as you’re walking with God, as you discover the faithfulness of God. “Now grow in faith,” the Bible says. The more you know Him, the more you will trust Him, the more faith you’ll have in Him!
- **As Abram got to know God better, his faith increased. But there were failures** in this man’s life of faith, many times when he was trusting in his own devices even now with Sarah. It is good that God shows us Abraham’s weaknesses. If God only showed us the triumphs of his faith then we’d say, “Well, he’s different. He’s cut from a different bit of cloth than I am. Abraham failed too! God still used him!”
- **Your faith is not perfect yet. You have a long way to go, but you should be growing in faith.** It should



be increasing, and it does as you walk with God and experience the faithfulness of God!

**Gen 12:14** So it was, when Abram came into Egypt, that the Egyptians saw the woman, that she was very beautiful.

**Gen 12:15** The princes of Pharaoh also saw her and commended her to Pharaoh. And the woman was taken to Pharaoh's house.

**Gen 12:16** He treated Abram well for her sake. He had sheep, oxen, male donkeys, male and female servants, female donkeys, and camels.

- **Female donkeys and camels.** Contrary to the opinions of many cultural evolutionists, modern research has confirmed that all these animals had been domesticated and used well before the time of Abraham.

**Gen 12:17** But the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife.

- **So, God was faithful!** Abram wasn't, turning his wife over to the Pharaoh, because of the fear of his own life. But God was faithful. God intervened and God plagued the Pharaoh and his house. How many time has His faithfulness, in spite of my unfaithfulness, been shown?

**Gen 12:18** And Pharaoh called Abram and said, "What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife?"

- **Pharaoh calls out Abram!** - What a shame that believing Abram should be rebuked by an unbelieving king! Until he knew the truth about Sarah, Pharaoh "treated Abram well", but once God stepped in and exposed the lie, Pharaoh had to ask them to leave.
- **What a poor testimony the Christian is when he or she mingles with the world and compromises!** It has been said, "Faith is living without scheming." Abraham and all his descendants have needed to learn that lesson! Lot lived with the world and lost his testimony (*Gen 19:12-14*); and Peter sat by the enemy fire and denied his Lord!

**Gen 12:19** Why did you say, 'She is my sister'? I might have taken her as my wife. Now therefore, here is your wife; take her and go your way."

**Gen 12:20** So Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him; and they sent him away, with his wife and all that he had.

- **So he was expelled from Egypt. But an interesting insight.** Now the Bible doesn't have to tell us of this failure of Abraham, and interestingly enough, when we come to the New Testament, and we come to this Hall of Faith, in (*Heb 11:8-11*) By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. [9] By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; [10] for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. [11] By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised. This speaks of their triumphs of faith but not their failures in faith!
- **When God finally writes the records for you, He's going to write the triumphs of your faith.** But all your failures are going to be buried. With Abraham, with the Word of God lasting forever, his failures will never be buried. We'll always be exposed to the failure, but God has buried your failures. There are no records written of your failures. God accounts us righteous in and through Jesus Christ; the righteousness which is of faith through Christ. Our believing and trusting in Him, God looks upon it. Even as God accounted his faith for righteousness, so He accounts our faith for righteousness. Even though Abraham's faith may not be perfect, and ours is not yet perfected, yet God, when He makes His final account, accounts that faithfulness to Him and to His promise and to His word; and God blots out our sin and our failure.
- **Does that mean that I should go out and sin openly, freely, because God is going to blot it out?** Oh God, forbid! As Paul said, (*Rom 6:2*) Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? No way! How can we who are dead to sin live anymore...it is not a license! If you take it for a license then you don't know the Lord, you don't really love the Lord, you don't really have faith in God. It is not just a license to just to live a shabby kind of a life!
- **It is for that earnest struggling soul who's being condemned by the enemy for their failures and for their weaknesses.** The enemy says, "Hey, how can you expect God to do anything for you? How can you expect God to bless your life?" For that person that is being beaten down by the accusations of the enemy, it is a word of encouragement for you that God is faithful! And He will prove Himself faithful! God will bless you, not because you deserve it, not because you've been perfect, but He will bless you because He is

gracious, and He is loving, and He's compassionate! The blessings of God are the result of the grace of God, and not a reward for my goodness!

- **I am Yours! – I will follow because I am Yours!**

## **SUMMARY:**

### **The Tower of Babel**

**(Gen 11:4,7,9)** And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower (temple) 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." [7] Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." [9] Therefore its name is called Babel (confusion), 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.

### **Shem's Descendants**

**(Gen 11:10-26)** This is the genealogy of Shem...Arphaxad...Salah...Eber...Peleg...Reu...Serug...Nahor...Terah, ...Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

### **Terah's Descendants**

**(Gen 11:27,31)** This is the genealogy of Terah: Terah begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran begot Lot. [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.

### **The Call of Abram The command of God**

**(Gen 12:1-3; 7-8)** Now the LORD had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, From your family And from your father's house, To a land that I will show you. [2] I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. [3] I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And \_ shall be blessed." [7] Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him. [8] And he moved from there to the mountain east of Bethel, and he pitched his tent with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; there he built an altar to the LORD and called on the name of the LORD.

### **Abram and Sarai in Egypt**

**(Gen 12:10,13,18,19)** Now there was a famine in the land, and Abram went down to Egypt to dwell there, for the famine was severe in the land. [13] Please say you are my sister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that I may live because of you. [18] And Pharaoh called Abram and said, "What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife?" [19] Why did you say, 'She is my sister'? I might have taken her as my wife. Now therefore, here is your wife; take her and go your way."

## **CLOSING SONG:**

**I AM YOURS** Terry Clark (5:04/5:08)

Lord, make me a vessel, of Your Word and Your will. Speak Your words through these lips,  
Your own words of life, let them heal the broken-hearted, Lord, make me a servant, I'll wait on You hand  
and foot Draw me close, let me know You Let me touch Your heart, let me be Your prized creation  
I am Yours, I am Yours, I've been bought with life so precious, I am new; I'm brand new in You, my Jesus.  
I am Yours, yes I'm Yours, You hold all my life in Your hand, and when I hear Your Spirit calling me,  
I will follow; yes I'll follow- because I am Yours.  
Lord fill me with Your Spirit; baptize me in Your love, Take the fire from the altar let it touch my lips And  
consume the darkness around me.  
I am Yours, I am Yours, I've been bought with life so precious, I am new; I'm brand new in You, my Jesus.  
I am Yours, yes I'm Yours, You hold all my life in Your hand, and when I hear Your Spirit calling me,  
I will follow; yes I'll follow- because I am Yours. I am Yours... I am Yours... I am Yours

## **CLOSING PRAYER:**

**NEXT WEEK: Read and study Genesis Chapters 13 & 14!**