

## Lesson 4 – Genesis 11-12

Text: Genesis 11-12

Main Characters: God, “the whole earth,” Abraham

Key Passages:

- Genesis 11:9 – Man did not scatter willingly; God had to scatter them forcefully.
- Genesis 12:1-7 – God first makes promises to Abraham; those of special note are the nation of Israel (v. 2), the blessing of Christ (v. 3), and the land of Canaan (v. 7).

Main Storyline:

Noah and his family had been told to be “fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth.” They were expected to multiply and spread across the entire earth. However, after just a few generations, the people decided to rebel against God. At this point in time, all of the people in the world spoke the same language. They all decided that they would try to stay together and make a name for themselves by building a city and a tower. They did this specifically to prevent everyone from being scattered over the earth, in direct violation to what God told them.

Even though the people did not want to be scattered, it was God’s plan that they would be scattered. God knew that if He did not intervene, this act of rebellion would be just the first act of wickedness that they would undertake. He decided to curse all of the people by giving them different languages, forcing them to separate from one another, as He had originally planned. The city and tower were abandoned. They were called Babel, because there God had confused the language of the world.

One of Noah’s descendents (through his son, Shem) was Abraham (then called Abram). He and his family lived in Ur, which was a very rich, knowledgeable city. God told him to leave his home and his family and to go to a place “which I will show you.” Abraham did not know where he was to go, but he knew that he needed to obey God. God also made promises to Abraham. The promises that are of special note were regarding the nation of Israel, the land of Canaan, and the coming of Christ. Abraham took his things, his wife (Sarah, then called Sarai), other family, and immediately obeyed God. When he arrived at the place God wanted him to go (Canaan), he built an altar and worshipped God.

At some point, there was a famine in the land. Abraham and his family went to Egypt so that they could have food. Right before they arrived in Egypt, Abraham became afraid that the one of the Egyptians would want to take Sarah for his wife and kill Abraham to do so. Abraham decided to lie and tell the Egyptians that she was just his sister (though this was true, as she was his half-sister, he did not reveal that she was also his wife). Pharaoh took Sarah to be his wife, ignorant that she was Abraham’s wife already. God plagued Pharaoh and his house because of this. Pharaoh later found out that Abraham had lied to him and, after rebuking him, sent him, Sarah, and his family away from Egypt.

Lessons/Applications:

- 1.) God’s plan will always be completed, regardless of whether or not man complies (Esther 4:14).
  - a. Rebellion brought punishment (Tower of Babel) → people still scattered.
  - b. Cooperation brought blessings (Abraham) → Christ still came.
- 2.) We must be willing to obey God in faith, even when it means sacrificing physical comforts, family, or other things in our lives (Mark 8:33-38; Luke 14:26-27).
- 3.) We must be willing to obey God in faith, even when we do not understand His commands (also compare with Noah and God’s requirement for him to build the ark).
- 4.) Consider Abraham’s worship; God must be our first priority (Matthew 6:33; Romans 12:1).
- 5.) Lying is a serious sin that causes untold harm to us and others (Revelation 21:8).