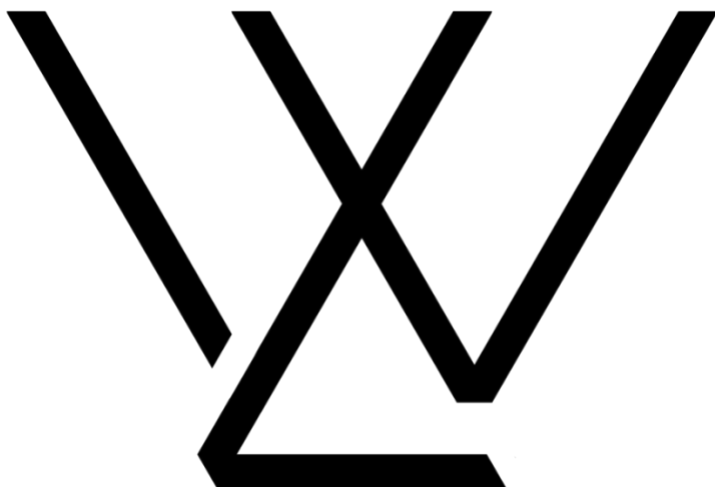


WEEKS 16 - 19



GENESIS 8:15 - 11:32





**Word to Life's** are sermon-aligned study guides, created to help the church dive even deeper into the passages we study together on Sundays.

Each week there will be five studies to help you prepare for the upcoming weekend sermon. This will also be a great discussion tool at your next LifeGroup meeting.

We hope you enjoy and grow deeper in your faith!

### **Contributors**

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## Week 16: Genesis 8:15-22

### Day 1: Exploring the Biblical Text

**READ: Genesis 8:15-22**

#### **EXPLORE:**

*Instructions:* Spend time reading Genesis 8:15-22 and complete the activities below.

- **Activity:** While reading, write your observations in the space below.
  
- **Question:** Verse 17 reintroduces a familiar phrase that we have seen several times since Genesis 1:22. What is the phrase and why might it be significant for it to be repeated after the flood?
  
- **Question:** What did Noah do after the flood had receded and the ark was vacated? What can we learn from Noah's example?

- **Activity:** In your own words, summarize how God responded to Noah's construction of an altar.
  
- **Activity:** The idea of a *pleasing aroma* is introduced in Genesis 8 and is revisited throughout Scripture. Using a concordance or an online resource, search for references to this phrase in other parts of Scripture.

## **Week 16: Genesis 8:15-22**

### **Day 2: The Daily Worship of Sacrifice**

**READ: Genesis 8:15-22**

#### **EXPLORE:**

“What are you going to do when you get home?” This is the question my (Lucas’) friends and I would ask each other as our summer in the Dominican Republic was coming to an end. We had spent weeks away from home and, at this point in the trip, we would find ourselves daydreaming of the first things we would do when we returned. Our discussion mainly consisted of what restaurants we would go to. Regardless of your life or travel experiences, we all know what it's like to plan our first actions when a day of anticipation draws near. Our passage in Genesis 8 highlights Noah’s first actions when he walked on land for the first time after the flood.

It’s important to understand that, although it rained for 40 days and 40 nights, the Bible indicates that Noah and his family stayed inside the ark for a total of about a year.<sup>1</sup> Imagine how you might feel after spending that much time on a boat. What would you anticipate doing when you were able to finally step onto land? What would your first actions be? Thankfully, we don’t have to guess what Noah’s first action was. Verse 20 tells us that he worshiped God by offering a sacrifice.

While a lot could be discussed about this sacrifice being one of surrender, submission, and atonement, today we will focus on the timing of Noah’s sacrifice. We must not miss the point that it was the first thing he did. God had not yet promised to never curse the ground or to never again strike down every living creature. Noah did not know what the next days or years would bring. Noah simply knew that God had saved him and deserved to be worshiped. These simple but profound truths must not be lost on us. Before anything else, God is to be worshiped.

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<sup>1</sup> See Genesis 8:13-14 for reference.



Worship is sacrifice! Too often we associate worship with a feeling, with our emotions, but to do so is to miss the right meaning altogether. Worship is the practice of bowing our hearts to God in reverence, submission, and obedience. Worship is laying aside our will and desires and submitting to God's will and desires. The Holy Spirit makes this clear through Paul's words to the believers in Rome when He tells them to present their bodies as a living sacrifice, calling it their spiritual worship<sup>2</sup>. It is no coincidence that Noah's worship came through sacrifice. *Worship is sacrifice. There is no true worship without sacrifice.*

Regardless of the circumstances, we can and should worship God. Every day we can and should purposefully make the decision to worship God. It requires the sacrifice of our will. But, praise God, His will is always better. Let Jesus' words in Luke 9:23 remind us of the importance of the daily sacrifice of self: *"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."*

**BIG IDEA: No matter the situation, our first action should be to worship God.**

**APPLY:**

- **Question:** Using the truths of God's Word, how would you define worship? How have you misunderstood it in the past?
- **Question:** What area of your will do you struggle to sacrifice to God?
- **Question:** Read Romans 12:1-2. How does the worship of presenting yourself to God as a living sacrifice help you better understand the will of God?

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<sup>2</sup> See Romans 12:1-2 for reference.

## Week 16: Genesis 8:15-22

### Day 3: An Aroma God Loves

#### READ: Genesis 8:15-22

#### EXPLORE:

If you've ever had the experience of losing the sense of taste or smell, you know how disorienting it can be. Whether it occurs over an evening or in the span of a few minutes, the loss of one of your senses serves as a powerful reminder of the many things we take for granted, and the manner in which God created us to experience the world. Most of us are blessed not only with taste and smell, but also with hearing, sight, and touch.

In the moments following the flood, we are introduced once again to the God who similarly experiences the vibrancy of life when He smells the sacrifice made by Noah. We read, *"And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma, the Lord said in his heart, 'I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done.'"*<sup>3</sup>

The olfactory characteristics of God may seem like a small detail in the story, but nothing could be further from the truth. We need to be reminded that God does not merely possess the fullest range of emotions, but also the fullest range of senses. In fact, our ability to powerfully experience our world pales in comparison to God's perceptive capacities. Genesis's description of God in this way is unique compared to the other religions of the ancient world. When we read about how God responded, we are meant to be struck by how near and engaged He is in the lives of those whom He has created and, in this story, had recently preserved through the flood.

Pause, if but for just a moment, and draw your attention to the fact that God was pleased by the sacrificial worship of Noah. This is a really big deal. Genesis 8 introduces us to an important theme that will run throughout the Scriptures, marking page after page in the Old Testament's Laws,<sup>4</sup> and ultimately climaxing in the person and work of Christ.<sup>5</sup> The God of the Scriptures can be pleased,

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<sup>3</sup> See Genesis 8:20-22 for context and reference.

<sup>4</sup> See nearly every chapter in Leviticus for reference to an *"aroma pleasing to the Lord."*

<sup>5</sup> See Exodus 29:18, Numbers 15:3 and Job 1:4 for some references.

and His pleasure is closely connected to an honoring sacrifice. The New Testament picks up this idea, introduced following Noah's sacrifice, and connects it to the sacrificial atonement of Christ. Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:1-2, *"Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."*

Additionally, he wrote to the church in Corinth, *"But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?"*<sup>6</sup> Ultimately, the life and sacrifice of Christ was the perfect aroma, pleasing to God in such a way that those who place their faith in Him might also live to spread the potency of His fragrance to a world in need.

**BIG IDEA: In our faith, prayer, repentance, witness, and love we have the opportunity to spread the incredible life-giving aroma of Christ in our lives.**

**APPLY:**

- **Question:** Hot coffee, new tennis balls, freshly cut grass, mahogany teakwood candles... These are some of my (Stephen) favorite smells.
  - a. What are some of your favorite smells?
  
  - b. What do you think are some of God's favorite smells in His people?
  
  - c. Why do you think smell was one of the most consistently used senses to describe what life and faith are like in the Old and New Testaments?

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<sup>6</sup> See 2 Corinthians 2:14-16 for reference.

## Week 16: Genesis 8:15-22

### Day 4: Relief from the Curse

**READ: Genesis 4:9-24; 5:25-29; 6:5-6; 8:20-22; Numbers 35:30-34**

#### EXPLORE:

The flood narrative begins and ends with a focus on man's heart and God's heart.<sup>7</sup> Man's heart was the same before and after the flood – full of evil intentions. The Lord, "*grieved to his heart,*" destroyed all flesh except those on the ark. Then the Lord said in his heart that He would never again destroy all flesh with a flood. When God said, "*I will never again curse the ground because of man,*" he was not reversing the judgment on Adam, but he was declaring that the curse on Cain was complete.<sup>8</sup>

God later declared that land is polluted by the shedding of innocent blood and can only be atoned for by the death of the murderer.<sup>9</sup> This echoes Cain being cursed from the ground, which "*opened its mouth to receive*" Abel's blood. It also echoes the post-flood institution of capital punishment. In those violent days before the flood, the ground must have been so polluted by innocent blood that it could only be cleansed by a deluge which destroyed all flesh. The curse on Cain and his murderous descendants was finally concluded by the flood, such that God would never again curse the ground in such a way. After the flood, the institution of capital punishment to atone for bloodguilt would mitigate the need for a subsequent deluge.

Although the murderer Lamech arrogantly declared for himself a 77-fold vengeance, his curse was visited on his own lineage, which was wiped out by the flood.<sup>10</sup> Interestingly, Genesis draws attention to the occupations of Lamech's offspring. They were not farmers! Perhaps they were also cursed from the ground, like Cain, consistent with the idea that this curse continued until the flood.

Another Lamech prophesied that his son would be used by God in redemptive history. Had Noah's contemporaries heeded this prophecy,

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<sup>7</sup>Compare Gen. 6:5-6 and 8:21 for reference.

<sup>8</sup>Compare Gen. 3:17, 4:11, and 8:21 for reference.

<sup>9</sup>Compare Num. 35:33, Gen. 4:11, and Gen. 9:6 for reference.

<sup>10</sup>See Gen. 4:17-24 for reference.

they would have boarded the ark. While Lamech was correct to point others to Noah, he only saw through a glass dimly. He hoped that Noah would bring relief “out of the ground that the LORD has cursed.”<sup>11</sup> Noah did provide the only available means of surviving the flood, but ironically, the “relief” he brought “out of the ground” was his own downfall. He grew grapes, made wine, and disgraced himself in drunkenness and debauchery.<sup>12</sup> His wine brought temporary relief from painful toil, until he woke up hungover, naked, and ashamed. True relief would ultimately come through Noah’s descendent Jesus, who became a curse for us,<sup>13</sup> and whose innocent blood (symbolized by wine) delivers us from all the evil intentions of our hearts.

**BIG IDEA: The flood completed the curse on Cain and his wicked lineage, but true relief would be brought by Jesus, not by Noah.**

**APPLY:**

- **Activity:** Describe how Gen. 8:21 is connected to the following passages:
  - Genesis 6:5-6
  - Genesis 4:11, 23-24
  - Gen. 9:6 and Num. 35:30-34 (*Hint: Man’s intentions were no different after the flood. How do these verses help avoid a repeat of the pre-flood violence?*)
  - Do you think Gen. 8:21 is connected to Gen. 3:17 and/or 5:29? Why or why not?
  
- **Activity:** Spend time confessing to God the evil intentions of your heart (be specific). Be cleansed by the blood of Jesus, who loves you and died for you.

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<sup>11</sup>See Gen. 5:25-29 for reference.

<sup>12</sup>See Gen. 9:20-24 for reference.

<sup>13</sup>See Gal. 3:13 for reference.

## **Week 16: Genesis 8:15-22**

### **Day 5: Moving Time**

**READ TOGETHER: Genesis 12:1, Genesis 28:20-22**

***Instructions:*** *We believe that Biblical study and spiritual growth are meant to be shared. This Word to Life has that exact focus in mind. For some, Day 5 might be a good opportunity to lead your family in a devotional. For others, this study might serve as a simple reminder to tactfully communicate your faith with those around you. Regardless, Day 5 of each week is designed to help you grow in your faith by sharing it with others.*

### **EXPLORE TOGETHER:**

I (Sabino) remember well the day my wife (Samantha) and I moved to England. We waved goodbye to our families at the airport with tears in our eyes. We were going to miss them, but we were confident that we were following God's direction. Truthfully, there wasn't much fear, but we didn't really know what to expect. We were going to be living in a different country and we had no idea what our lives would be like on a day-to-day basis. Moving is an experience we all know well and for Noah it was moving day!

Noah and his family had been in the ark for a little over a year now. I am not sure exactly what they all felt, but I think it is safe to say that they would be happy to no longer be confined in a boat with a multitude of animals. Think of all the smells, cleanups, and stresses. They were not staying on the Royal Caribbean, and even if they were, no one wants to do a cruise for a whole year. Just as Noah had to wait for the exact day to get on the ark, he also had to wait on the Lord for the exact day to get off the ark. Noah was obedient to the command to leave just as he had previously been to the command to enter.

Noah was also thankful and worshipful. As soon as he got off the boat the first item on his agenda was to build an altar to thank God for His deliverance. Out of all the families of the earth, God had spared only Noah and his family. There was much to be thankful for. We also know that animals were in short supply at the time, so for Noah to offer a clean animal was costly. Noah did not spare his best because God was willing to spare his family. God was pleased with Noah's offering and promised to never curse the ground again nor to kill all flesh again with one fatal blow.

**BIG IDEA: God is merciful to begin again with mankind living on the earth.**

**APPLY TOGETHER:**

- **Question:** Presuming you have moved before, what are the signs that God gave you that you knew you needed to move?
  
- **Question:** Based on Romans 12:1-2, what kind of spiritual sacrifices do you think we can make today that would be a pleasing aroma to God?

## Week 17: Genesis 9:1-17

### Day 1: Exploring the Biblical Text

#### READ: Genesis 9:1-17

#### EXPLORE:

Instructions: Spend time reading Genesis and complete the activities below.

- **Activity:** While reading, include some observations in the space below.
  
- **Question:** What does God say to Noah and his sons about food in verses 1-4?
  
- **Question:** Why do you think God had special instructions concerning blood?



- **Question:** According to the Genesis 6:6, how does God handle violence against one human by another? Why do you think the *image of God* is included in verse 6?
  
- **Activity:** Summarize God's covenant mentioned in this text in your own words.
  
- **Question:** Why do you think the "*bow*" was chosen as a sign of the God's covenant with Noah?

## **Week 17: Genesis 9:1-17**

### **Day 2: Understanding Severity and Significance in God's Word**

#### **READ: Genesis 9:1-17**

#### **EXPLORE:**

In order to understand the severity and significance of Genesis 9:1-17 we need to be reminded of two very important pieces of context. First, we need to situate God's word to Noah and his family as a response to the events which led up to the flood. Second, we need to view the commands following the flood within the larger arc of scriptural teaching. Hopefully, this brief study will help us to understand this biblical text well.

Before the flood, the earth and its inhabitants were described as both corrupt and filled with violence. Specifically, the excessive violence of the earth is seen as one of the most significant factors which led to the flood.<sup>14</sup> It makes sense then that God's words were designed to help preserve order in a world which had previously spiraled into brutality.<sup>15</sup> First, God's commands are clearly designed to protect against savagery. Second, God's commands worked to protect human life from human assault. Third, God's commands worked to preserve the sacredness of blood which will be a significant theme used throughout the entire Bible.<sup>16</sup>

Like a parent who wants to provide clear and protective guidelines for the good of their children, God set up clear commands after the flood in response to what happened before. I

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<sup>14</sup> See Genesis 6:11-13 for reference.

<sup>15</sup> See Genesis 9:1-6 for reference to these commands/blessings from God.

<sup>16</sup> This theme is too massive to handle in one Word to Life study, but the sacredness of blood is an important concept throughout the Scriptures which is often underappreciated in our reading of Paul's letters to the church.

(Stephen) think it is beautiful that these God-given commands are seen as blessings simultaneously. This is a profound truth worthy of our meditation. Because of the goodness of God and the fact that He made humanity in His image, His commands are fundamentally an extension of His blessings. When we situate the context of Genesis 9 as a response to the pre-flood state of the world, we can better understand the biblical text. To understand the passage more fully, however, we need to view God's words against human assault alongside other similar texts in Scripture. Allow me to do this in an insanely brief manner.

First, in passages like Genesis 9 and elsewhere, the Bible is clear that the punishment for murder is severe.<sup>17</sup> Second, Scripture sets clear guidelines on how someone could be accused and possibly of such a crime.<sup>18</sup> Third, the biblical text is clearly protective concerning cases of manslaughter.<sup>19</sup> In a case of an accidental death, a guilty party could be consigned to a refuge city until the death of a high priest. Fourth, Proverbs details how one who confesses and forsakes transgressions will obtain mercy.<sup>20</sup> Finally, Paul encourages the church in Rome to not avenge themselves for wrongdoing, leaving room for the justice and wrath of God. In so doing, they affirm God-appointed governments to execute His judgment.<sup>21</sup> Ultimately, we have the person and work of Christ on the cross which embodies both the justice and the love of God in absolute perfection.<sup>22</sup>

**BIG IDEA: Genesis 9 needs to be read in light of the arc of Scripture and the state of the world prior to the flood to be understood well.**

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<sup>17</sup> See Numbers 35:16-21 for reference.

<sup>18</sup> See Deuteronomy 19:15-21 for example.

<sup>19</sup> See Numbers 35:22-28 for example.

<sup>20</sup> See Proverbs 28:13 for reference.

<sup>21</sup> See Romans 12:9 and 13:4 within their respective chapters for reference.

<sup>22</sup> See Colossians 1:19-20 for reference.

## APPLY:

- **Question:** Genesis 9 records how God blessed Noah in giving him commands. Would you describe all of God's commands as blessings? Why or why not?
- **Question:** Blood and bloodshed are highlighted as important in our study today. How are these themes expanded in Scripture? (Note: it is okay if you do not know the answers at first, it might be a great source of LifeGroup conversation.)
- **Optional Activity:** Read Numbers 35 and consider how it helps us understand Genesis 9 and God's heart amidst of violence and death.



## Week 17: Genesis 9:1-17

### Day 3: Biblical Covenants Surveyed

#### READ: Genesis 9:1-17

#### EXPLORE:

Generally speaking, a covenant is a relationship between two parties who make a binding promise toward a certain end.<sup>23</sup> They are often closely connected to oaths and outward signs. The rainbow which marks the sky in Genesis 9 and throughout the ages since, serves as an outward sign of the oath made between God and humanity following the flood. Although we will focus more specifically on the Noahic Covenant in tomorrow's study, I (Stephen) want to briefly introduce us to some other covenants in Scripture so that we can begin to see and appreciate some commonalities and themes.

To start, there is not much consensus on the number of specific covenants which occur within the biblical text. This is a long-standing debate which will not be our focus today. Rather, we will focus briefly on four covenants which take place following God's covenant with Noah. They are the Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and the New Covenant. Each covenant has a sign.

The Abrahamic covenant can be found in Genesis 12, 15, 17, and beyond. We read the Lord spoke unto Abram, *"And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."*<sup>24</sup> As a sign of this covenant, God renamed Abram to Abraham and commanded Him to be circumcised.<sup>25</sup>

In the aftermath of Israel's divinely secured exodus from Egypt, God's people who were descendants of Abraham entered into a covenant at Mt. Sinai. This is called the Mosaic covenant and its story can be read in the book of Exodus. As its name would suggest, the Mosaic covenant was communicated to the people through Moses, and they were commanded to keep a Sabbath day of rest as a

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<sup>23</sup> Certainly, much more could be said about the nature of covenants in the Scriptures, but the aim of this study is to simply introduce the subject which will later be explored.

<sup>24</sup> See Genesis 12:2-3 for reference.

<sup>25</sup> See Genesis 17:11 for reference.

sign.<sup>26</sup> In this way, God continued and built upon His covenant with the descendants of Abraham.

At a later point in Israelite history, the people received David as their human king. Although the people struggled under the reign of their first human king named Saul, God established a new covenant with His people under King David. The Davidic covenant came with a promise of a descendant whose throne and kingdom would last forever from the line of David as the promised Messiah and deliverer.<sup>27</sup> Christ is the ultimate sign of the Davidic covenant.

Upon the eager expectations of the earlier covenants, a new covenant was foretold by the prophets and ultimately inaugurated in the kingship of Jesus Christ.<sup>28</sup> He was the promised Messiah from the line of David who inaugurated what the New Testament authors would call a newer and better covenant.<sup>29</sup> This does not mean that earlier covenants were bad, but that they are surpassed by a greater sign and a greater mediator.<sup>30</sup> For those who have experienced forgiveness from sin by grace through faith in Jesus, they are given new life Christ. They are to outwardly display this covenant through the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper. The New Testament consistently affirms that baptism is a sign of the new covenant.

## **BIG IDEA: The Noahic covenant fits within a continuous pattern formed and fulfilled by the promise-keeping God of the Scriptures.**

### **APPLY:**

- **Activity:** List the covenants detailed in this Word to Life study and their corresponding signs.
- **Question:** How might it be helpful to know and understand the covenants which were given prior to the New Covenant under Christ?

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<sup>26</sup> See Exodus 31:13, 17 for reference.

<sup>27</sup> See II Samuel 7 and Psalms 72, 89, and 132 for reference.

<sup>28</sup> Ezekiel 36:22-32 and Jeremiah 31:31-34 would be an excellent reference for the prophetic foretelling.

<sup>29</sup> See Hebrews 7:22 for reference.

<sup>30</sup> See Hebrews 9:15 for reference.

## Week 17: Genesis 9:1-17

### Day 4: Promises in Technicolor

#### READ: Genesis 9:1-17

#### EXPLORE:

Think back to the last time you caught a glimpse of a rainbow after a storm. A splash of colors painted across the sky, reminding us that even after the darkest of weather, there is always hope. In modern culture today, the rainbow has been adopted by various political and social movements as a symbol of pride, obscuring the true beauty of its original intent as a sign of promise. As a result, the significance of the rainbow to believers has been clouded by the fog of the ever-changing ideologies of today.

In Genesis 9:8-11, in the aftermath of the flood that wiped out all life on earth, God places His bow—a rainbow—in the sky as a sign of His covenant to never again destroy the earth by floodwaters. In ancient times, the bow was seen as a weapon of war, but when we see a rainbow, we see a bow that is pointed away from the earth. This serves as a powerful reminder of the transformational power of God's covenant with humanity, which turns the instruments of death and destruction into a symbol of promise and peace. It is a powerful reminder that God is faithful to keep His promises and that His love and mercy endure forever.<sup>31</sup>

The rainbow is not just a reminder for us, but also for God Himself. He says, *“When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, I will remember my covenant.”*<sup>32</sup> Although God does not forget, He uses language we can understand to emphasize the significance of His promise and its importance to Him.

Scripture tells us that rainbows don't only exist here on earth but also in heaven. It's beautiful to think that the Creator of all things chose to

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<sup>31</sup> See Psalm 136:1 for reference.

<sup>32</sup> See vv. 14-15 for reference.



decorate His throne with a rainbow—serving as a constant reminder that even as He reigns in glory, we are always on His mind.<sup>33</sup>

As we marvel at the beauty of the rainbow, may we remember that it is not just a natural phenomenon, but a symbol of God's enduring love and His unbreakable promises. In a world where hope seems to fade with each passing day, may the rainbow remind us that God's faithfulness remains steadfast and true. May it inspire us to hold on to hope, even in the midst of life's storms, and trust in the One who promises to never leave us or forsake us.<sup>34</sup>

**BIG IDEA: When we see a rainbow, we can remember God's promise to us and be assured of His faithfulness. It's a beautiful reminder of His never-ending commitment to keep His word.**

**APPLY:**

- **Question:** Have you ever experienced a time when you felt God's faithfulness in your life, even in the midst of difficult circumstances? Reflect on how the Lord sustained you during that season.
  
- **Activity:** List any verses that have been a “beacon of hope” in your life.
  
- **Optional Activity:** Create a "promise jar" filled with notes or Bible verses that remind you of God's faithfulness throughout your life. Whenever you feel discouraged or need a reminder of His promises pick a note or verse from the jar and reflect on it. Bonus points if you decorate the jar with rainbow colors to remind you of God's promise.

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<sup>33</sup> See Revelation 4:3 for reference.

<sup>34</sup> See Hebrews 13:5 for reference.

## **Week 17: Genesis 9:1-17**

### **Day 5: A New Order**

**READ TOGETHER: Isaiah 54:7-10, Revelation 4:1-3**

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### **EXPLORE TOGETHER:**

Now that Noah and his family are out of the ark a new order is established by God. The new order is not so different from the first (Adam and Eve), but it does have some upgrades. It is like a refresh or a 2.0 version of life on earth. God was gracious to give mankind this new beginning.

The first thing God does is bless Noah and his sons, which would, of course, include their wives. God looked favorably upon Noah's offering and now He looks favorably upon Noah's family. The first things God gives Noah's family is the gift of lands. The whole earth is theirs and they are to be fruitful and fill the earth. They are also gifted authority over the creatures. The beasts shall be in fear of man. This means that Noah's family did not have to fear being attacked by the animals. If it were not for God's kindness to Noah's family in this way we can imagine how quickly the animals would have killed them. Noah's family will not be food to the animals, but all the animals will be a resource of food for them. There only stipulation was that they could not eat raw flesh like the animals did. We also see that man does not have to fear man as much either because God institutes the death penalty. Neither can beasts kill a man without their life being required of them. We

can see the abundant blessings and kindness that God is lavishing upon man, but He saves His best for last.

God also institutes a new covenant with mankind and all the living creatures. None of the blessings above would be suitable if man had to fear God flooding the earth again. However, in this new covenant (Noahic covenant) God promises to never destroy all flesh again with flood waters. The sign of promise that God gives to man to remember the covenant is the beautiful rainbow. The rainbow is seen after the rain. If it were not for the rainbow mankind would probably be terrified every time it rained instead of being thankful. A bow also normally invokes fear, but this bow is not pointed toward the earth but to heaven. This tells us that God has promised to never flood the earth and it brings us comfort rather than fear.

**BIG IDEA: God is merciful to begin again with mankind living on the earth.**

**APPLY TOGETHER:**

- **Question:** What are the similarities and differences between God's covenant with Adam and His covenant with Noah? Compare this passage with Genesis 1:28-30.
  
- **Activity:** List all the good things about the rainbow that you can.

## **Week 18: Genesis 9:18-28**

### **Day 1: Exploring the Biblical Text**

**READ: Genesis 9:18-28**

**DISCLAIMER:** *this week’s biblical text has some mature themes and may not be suitable for families who are reading the Word to Life studies with children. I have worked with our team to handle these topics carefully, but parents are encouraged to use discretion. -Pastor Stephen*

#### **EXPLORE:**

- **Activity:** While reading, include some observations in the space below.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **Question:** Who was specifically listed as the son of Ham?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **Question:** How were the reactions of Ham and his two brothers different in the story?

- **Activity:** We will not spend a day in this week's study solely addressing the Bible's view of alcohol. With this in mind, read the passages below and write down what you about how the Bible talks about wine.
  - Numbers 15:5-10, Deuteronomy 14:26, Psalm 104:15, and John 2:1-11
  - Proverbs 21:17, Proverbs 23:20-21, Proverbs 23:29-35, Isaiah 5:22, Isaiah 28:7, and Ephesians 5:15-21.
  
- How would you summarize what you observed in the passages above?
  
  
- **Activity:** Canaan is very significant in the biblical story. Either from your previous knowledge or your ability to research. Write down some notes about Canaan and its significance below.

## Week 18: Genesis 9:18-28

### Day 2: A Renewed Earth and A New Covenant

#### READ: Genesis 9:18-19

#### EXPLORE:

The post-flood account of Genesis is certainly not well-known for verses 18-19. In fact, the significance of those two oft-forgotten verses at the beginning of this week's passage are often overshadowed by the infamously uncomfortable story which unfolds in the section which follows. The seemingly small details of Shem, Ham, and Japheth's descendants and their scattering throughout the earth is often lost in our reading of the biblical text. In today's study, however, we are going to work to refocus our attention on these long-lost, but significant words.

We read, *"The sons of Noah who went forth from the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.) These three were the sons of Noah, and from these the people of the whole earth were dispersed."*<sup>35</sup> Although it may not seem like it at first, these two verses represent a significant transition in the story of Genesis.

Imagine what it would have been like to emerge from the ark alongside only a few others after the flood. You had seen the obedience of your father, Noah. You had witnessed the resolve of God's justice because of evil. Now, you are walking back onto dry ground under the covenant-making God of the flood! For Shem, Ham, and Japheth, their departure from the ark was a decisive moment in time. When they stepped out of the ark, they were not only stepping into a renewed earth, but also a new covenant established by God.

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<sup>35</sup> See Genesis 9:18-19 for reference.

In our study through the first half of Genesis 9, we began to unpack the significance of the Noahic covenant in the commands, promises, and blessings of God marked by the *bow* amidst the clouds.<sup>36</sup> God commanded Noah and his descendants to be fruitful and to greatly increase on the earth. God also vowed to never again destroy the earth with a flood. It was upon these commands and promises, that the sons of Noah stepped forth from the boat, had children, and scattered throughout the earth. To reinvent an old phrase, “It was one small step for them, one giant leap for humanity that followed.”

God blessed the descendants of Noah with fruitfulness. Despite the dysfunction that is visible in the remainder of Genesis 9, we cannot afford to miss how God enabled the multiplication and dominion which He previously commanded. The sons of Noah lived and cultivated because of the graciousness of the covenant-making and covenant-keeping God.

**BIG IDEA: When Noah’s sons stepped out of the ark, they were not only stepping into a renewed earth, but also a new covenant established by God.**

**APPLY:**

- **Question:** What do you think it would have been like to leave the ark and set foot on dry ground for the first time?
- **Question:** The small details about the Noah’s sons are subtle, but they are important. It is because of the goodness of God to keep His Word that they were able to be fruitful and eventually fill the earth. What do you think we can learn from their experience?

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<sup>36</sup> See Genesis 9:1-17 for reference.

## Week 18: Genesis 9:18-28

### Day 3: A Powerful Challenge in an Uncomfortable Story

#### READ: Genesis 9:20-29

#### EXPLORE:

**DISCLAIMER:** *this week's biblical text has some mature themes and may not be suitable for families who are reading the Word to Life studies with children. I have worked to discuss these topics carefully, but parents are encouraged to use discretion.* -Pastor Stephen

There is no way around it. The story of Ham's inappropriate encounter with his drunken father is incredibly uncomfortable. It is a weird story. We do need to realize, however, that it was not unclear for the ancient audience. Ham, who was the father of Canaan acted dishonorably. The curses which followed Ham were justified, he acted tastelessly, and his father was not off the hook either. It is possible for us to see the awkwardness of the story and miss the depth of what really took place.

The backdrop of the uncomfortable story between Noah and his sons is the successful planting of a vineyard. As with the original creation, Noah cultivated the ground and yielded a good crop. Unfortunately, that which God had enabled as a blessing was sinfully applied. Instead of using the fruit of the field properly, Noah provides our first biblical introduction to alcohol in a drunken stupor. As it was noted in the introductory paragraph, Noah is not off the hook for the encounter which is right around the tent.

As Noah lay drunk and uncovered in his tent, Ham saw his father's nakedness and reported it to his brothers. There are a few things that need I (Stephen) need to clarify, or this can get more confusing. The way the original Hebrew is structured makes it clear that Ham did not accidentally encounter his father. The original wording of the sentence indicates that Ham looked searchingly and not accidentally.<sup>37</sup> Ham's entering the tent of his father would have been deemed as an invasion of privacy in the ancient contexts. He violated the dignity of his father and dishonored a man whom

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<sup>37</sup> Passages like Habakkuk 2:15 can help us understand this context more fully in the ancient mindset.



he ought to have revered. In contrast to Ham, Shem and Japheth acted honorably with their father and did not look upon his nakedness.

I want to encourage us when we read stories like this to readily consider the historical and literary context. Genesis would have been written and internalized for the ancient Israelite people who were surrounded by rampant forms of perversion.<sup>38</sup> Messy and godless practices were happening all over the ancient world and the God of the Scriptures was definitively highlighting a different way. For His ancient people and for us today, God both elevates and commands purity. From the biblical text in its proper context, we can see this truth on display. So far, I have written “academically.” Now, permit me a brief word pastorally.

First, Scripture affirms that we have all fallen short of the glory of God. We have sinned against God’s design like Ham. Second, the Scripture affirms that there is forgiveness from all unrighteousness by God’s grace through faith which is made available through Christ. Third, many reading this have been victimized because of another person’s sinful dysfunction. I want you to know that God knows, He sees, and He cares. The great God of eternal justice who we encounter in the Scriptures is also the near God of comfort and healing as well. Finally, the church which was bought by the blood of Christ is meant to be a beacon of purity and goodness in this world. We ought to long for and live in light of the redemption which was secured on Calvary.

**BIG IDEA: When Genesis 9 is read in context, it is clear that Ham acted sinfully. This story is indicative of God’s heart for purity, honor, and dignity amongst His people.**

**APPLY:**

- **Activity:** Read Titus 2:11-14 and spend time confessing your own sin. Pray that the Lord would transform your heart and renew your mind. Continue in prayer for a renewal in the church, redemption for the broken, and healing for those in need.

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<sup>38</sup> See Leviticus 18:24-30 and Deuteronomy 12:29-32 for reference.

## **Week 18: Genesis 9:18-28**

### **Day 4: Do not be drunk, but be filled with the Holy Spirit**

#### **READ: Genesis 9:18-28**

#### **EXPLORE:**

Usually, when we read other's opinions on Noah getting drunk, we immediately assume that Noah had a reputation of being a perpetual drunkard. In other words, Noah has been historically labeled as a habitual drunk. I'd (Leanna) like to encourage us to not read more into something than what is actually revealed. This is not the primary focus of the text, although his inebriation is a significant factor in the story. Let's consider the complexity of this scene after the flood.

The conditions of farming the earth would have been different after the Flood. Presumably, there would have been drastic differences in the soil, water, and the potency of the sun. As far as we are told in Genesis, it seems that Noah was the first to plant a vineyard after the flood and the first to drink from its fruit. We cannot presume that Noah already had an experience with the fermentation of grapes. The biblical text does not go out of its way to assert that Noah purposefully drank in excess. When I consider the factors in this story, I am left to wonder if the post-flood atmospheric conditions surprised Noah with the vine's potency. Could this single recorded act of drunkenness, have been accidental on Noah's part? In light of the evidence, it would seem terribly unfair to label Noah a habitual drunkard for all eternity when we do not have any additional example to pull from.

Having said this, it would seem that Noah, his family, and all those who have read and heard this story throughout time have learned a valuable lesson. The door to great shame and heartache is opened in unwise and excessive drinking. The Scriptures consistently prohibit getting drunk. Unswervingly, the authors of the Bible, inspired by the Holy Spirit, caution against the dangers of drunkenness as they do with other forms of ungodly excessiveness.

Being a godly man, I personally think it's safe to believe that Noah didn't intend to get drunk, if he even knew what that meant. Certainly, Noah doesn't deserve the bad reputation of being primarily labeled a "drunkard" for all time. It's sad that the legacy of a righteous man like Noah had to take the hit in order for a valuable lesson about alcohol to be learned by humanity following the flood.

Picking up the same themes and contrasts which we have explored today, the Apostle Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus, *"And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ."*<sup>39</sup>

Although Noah doesn't deserve the timeless label of the drunkard, this story does highlight valuable truths about alcohol which will be significantly contrasted with the Holy Spirit's work in the church under the Lordship of Christ.

**BIG IDEA: Noah's legacy should not be reduced to drunkenness, although his story does give us the opportunity to consider how temptation can be overcome by the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.**

**APPLY:**

- **Question:** To walk with God, we must walk in the Spirit. To walk in the Spirit is to be filled with the Spirit.<sup>40</sup> When filled with the Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit will manifest in your life (*Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Gentleness, Faithfulness and Self-Control*).
  - a. Does the way you eat, drink, or even do other things in excess exhibit the fruit of the Spirit?

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<sup>39</sup> See Ephesians 5:18-21 for reference.

<sup>40</sup> See Acts 13:52 for reference.

- **Activity:** Read Ephesians 5:17-21 and I Corinthians 6:9-20 and answer the following.
  - a. Do you struggle with moderation in any area of your life?
  
  - b. What is your relationship with alcohol, and does it match Scripture's teaching?
  
  - c. **Prayer:** It is of utmost eternal value to humble yourself, confess your sins to one another, and be made whole, in Jesus' name. Spend time in prayer.



## **Week 18: Genesis 9:18-28**

### **Day 5: Children and Work**

**READ TOGETHER: Proverbs 14:9, Exodus 20:12, Ephesians 5:18, and 1 Peter 4:8**

***Instructions:** We believe that Biblical study and spiritual growth are meant to be shared. This Word to Life has that exact focus in mind. For some, Day 5 might be a good opportunity to lead your family in a devotional. For others, this study might serve as a simple reminder to tactfully communicate your faith with those around you. Regardless, Day 5 of each week is designed to help you grow in your faith by sharing it with others.*

### **EXPLORE TOGETHER:**

We all know that children and work make up a lot of life. These two are gifts from God and ought not be abused as we see here in the very uncomfortable encounter of Genesis 9. I (Sabino) want us to see how the work and relationships in the line of Noah were fractured because of the fall and I want us to see how that makes a difference in our world today.

Here, we first see an abuse by Noah of the fruit of his occupation. Noah was man of the earth and planted a vineyard. One day he drank of the wine of his vineyard and became drunk. Whether this was intentional or unintentional, a gift of the ground given from God was abused and the good blessing of wine which God had provided resulted in sin. Just as Adam had done when he ate of the forbidden fruit, Noah's drunkenness loosed his mind and thoughts as he lay naked and to his shame. It should be noted that the Scriptures do not look favorably upon drunkenness regardless of the nuances in this story. This may have been the only time Noah was drunk, but we see how costly it was. His son Ham discovered his father's nakedness and instead of covering him, he gossiped to his brothers.

The disgraceful action of Ham was worse than Noah's. The reason was because Ham witnessed the brokenness of his father and added to the sin by telling his brothers. I know this may seem a bit minor, but that is because the wickedness of our own hearts does not take our sin seriously. We live in a perpetual mindset of "it's not that bad." My friends, that should never be a phrase we say about our sin. Our issue is not just that we sin, but that we look too lightly upon our own sin. For example, Adam taking a bite out of the forbidden fruit can seem minor, but all violations of God's Word are serious and ought to result in repentance.

It is not an accident that the downturn after the flood account in Genesis resulted in the fracturing of both family and work. Instead of allowing sin to corrupt these two incredibly important areas of life, we ought to rely upon God's grace for holiness as we work well and love our families under the lordship of Christ.

**BIG IDEA: Our family and work ought to be practiced under the authority of God.**

**APPLY TOGETHER:**

- **Question:** What are ways that you can value children or kids in your own life?
- **Activity:** List out the reasons why the sin of Ham was serious:





- **Activity:** Genesis 11:6-7 are interesting verses which we will discuss on Day 3 of this week. After reading it, write down what these verses mean in their context and in your own words.
  - *“Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another’s speech.”*
  
- **Question:** Genesis 11 could have moved from the Tower of Babel story directly to the Abrahamic covenant which begins to be discussed in Genesis 12. (Note: We will discuss on Day 4 of this week’s study)
  - Why do you think the genealogy was included between the two?
  
  - Compare genealogies in Genesis 11 with Genesis 5 and 10. What differences do you notice between the way they are written?

## Week 20: Genesis 11:1-9

### Day 2: Toppling Towers and Prideful People

**READ: Genesis 11:1-9**

#### **EXPLORE:**

At first glance, coming together with others to accomplish a shared goal seems commendable, but if you reread Genesis 1:28; 9:1,7 you will notice that this was a blatant rebellion against God's command to disperse and fill the earth. These people weren't naive, they were sinful, and sweet brother/sister, so are you.<sup>41</sup> There is nothing new under the sun;<sup>42</sup> this is an ancient story of a perpetual problem...human pride. Since God sees our hearts,<sup>43</sup> let's examine the sins we observe here but also that ensnare us all.

1) Rebellion – there is a clear defiance of God's will. The people wanted to avoid dispersion through building a city. God said do 'x', and they chose to do 'y'. Do you reject God's commands and ideas in order to live for your own? Do you say to God, "I don't care what you want for my life, I want to make my name great; I want to indulge in this; I want to behave this way?" We want power and prestige but do not want to depend on a deity that will require us to give up our sinful ways. Rebellion comes naturally to us until we internalize the truth that God's way, His will, His commands are the highest and best and for our good. God wants us to trust Him.

2) Another sin we see is the love of human praise. We all want approval, to be esteemed, to be the best, biggest, fastest, strongest, smartest. Often times our search for significance leads us to compromise our values. Physically and metaphorically, the construction of buildings, monuments, statues, etc. says something about the values of those who build them. Parents spend copious amounts of money and time trying to make their children great athletes, but comparatively little time

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<sup>41</sup> See Romans 3:10 for reference.

<sup>42</sup> See Ecclesiastes 1:9 for reference.

<sup>43</sup> See I Samuel 16:7 for reference.

making them Jesus followers. We seek approval through social media followers and likes when God wants us to seek His approval alone.

3) A third sin we observe is the love of security – comfort, safety, complacency. Building a city ensured power in numbers. Something along the idea of, ‘Don’t mess with Babylon.’ People spend endless amounts of effort to advance their education and career in order to have a comfortable life and to enjoy retirement with little regard of building treasures in heaven. We want a plan, timeline, and assurance, without any discomfort or uncertainty. Investing time and effort in things unseen or unknown can be discouraging and scary, but we walk by faith and not by sight.<sup>44</sup> God wants us to find comfort and security in Him.

Ambition, competition, building, and trying are not wrong in and of themselves, but pride is subtle and always lurking. There is nothing wrong with wanting a good reputation, excelling at what you do, or working as a team, but when fueled by arrogance, it becomes evil. Towers will topple and man’s plans will fail. God warns us that pride goes before the fall, so let us be a people that declare, not my will but yours be done.<sup>45</sup>

**BIG IDEA: We are called to be united in Christ for His Glory.**

**APPLY:**

- **Activity:** Examine your heart. What areas of God’s word are you rebelling against? Are you building your own kingdom or God’s? Examine your career, finances, family, hobbies, and spare time.
  
- **Question:** What steps can you take to stop seeking human praise above God’s approval?

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<sup>44</sup> See II Corinthians 5:7 for reference.

<sup>45</sup> See Proverbs 16:18 and Luke 22:42 for reference.

## Week 19: Genesis 11:1-9

### Day 3: The Benefit of Frustration

**READ: Genesis 11:1-9**

#### **EXPLORE:**

On very rare occasions I (Stephen) muster up the strength to join someone in completing a jig-saw puzzle. Now, it may not seem like true bravery to you, but it takes incredible levels of fortitude for me to willingly embrace collaborative puzzle building. You might ask, “Why?” The simple answer is that I am awful at puzzles. I don’t easily see the shapes, I seldom see the color variations, and most importantly I lack the patience required for all good puzzle masters.

I often find myself in the disheartening position of trying to make a piece fit in a certain space only to later realize it belongs elsewhere. It is discouraging at first, but through this experience a valuable lesson can be learned. Frustration is often encountered when things are out of their proper order. In the completion of puzzles, or lack thereof, it is a good thing for me to see how my ill-advised actions are connected with the frustration that follows. The story of the tower of Babel introduces us to a good and necessary moment in which God frustrated the prideful attempts of humanity. Let’s take a look again at Genesis 11.

In ways which are reminiscent of God’s creation of the world in Genesis 1, the people said, *“Let us make bricks, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves.”*<sup>46</sup> They were supposed to be humble before the Lord and they turned to pride. They were supposed to fill the earth, and they sat stationary. Their words do not

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<sup>46</sup> See selected sections from Genesis 11:3-4 compared to Genesis 1:26 in God’s creation of man and woman.

represent innocent ambition, but a continual desire of the human heart to take God's place and steal God's throne.

The text is clear that the people of the plains in Shinar believed falsely that they could reach heaven. Ironically, God had to *come down* to see the city and the tower they were making.<sup>47</sup> God chose to confuse an otherwise shared language, saying, "*Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them.*"<sup>48</sup>

It is important to clarify that God was not worried about them catching up to Him. Instead, "God was wisely and mercifully mitigating the threat of human ingenuity to humans and to the rest of creation."<sup>49</sup> More often than not, when the Scriptures use the Hebrew word which is translated in Genesis 11:6 as "propose" it is either referring to the evil intentions of humanity or the unstoppable plan of God which cannot be thwarted. With this framework and context in mind, we be free from reading this passage as though God is some vindictive bully. His desire to confuse their language was both a penalty for their pride and a preventative measure against unwise inventiveness.

You may not have thought of it before, but the fact that God is willing to actively frustrate our sinful intentions and our unwise actions is an incredible blessing. Certainly, frustration occurs because we live in a broken world. However, often the frustration we experience is a divine blessing which is given not only in a punitive sense, but also in a preventative sense.

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<sup>47</sup> See Genesis 11:5 for reference.

<sup>48</sup> See Genesis 11:6 for reference.

<sup>49</sup> See John Bloom's article titled, "The Wisdom of God in the frustration of Man" for this quote.

**BIG IDEA: The fact that God is willing to actively frustrate our sinful intentions and our unwise actions is an incredible blessing.**

**APPLY:**

- **Question:** Have you ever had an experience with frustration for which you are thankful?
  
- **Question:** We tend to think of human ingenuity as a good thing and overall beneficial. What are some examples of the pros and cons regarding human ambition/invention?
  
- **Activity:** Read and meditate on Job 42:2. List ways that this biblical text might help you reframe your frustrations.



## **Week 19: Genesis 11:1-9**

### **Day 4: Observing the Often-Overlooked**

**READ: Genesis 11:10-32**

#### **EXPLORE:**

In the weekend's sermon, we will focus most of our attention on the Tower of Babel story which is found in the first portion of Genesis 11. With this in mind, our goal today is to observe some often-overlooked, but deeply significant aspects of the genealogies in verses 10-32. The goal of this Word to Life study is to give you a brief overview of why the genealogies are helpful and even beautiful as we consider the flow of Genesis.

Genesis 1-11 is the first section in the book which is often called the Primeval History.<sup>50</sup> Functionally, the genealogy we are studying today is a necessary transitional piece in the overall structure of the book. Specifically, we need to see *the way* in which the story of the world's existence told in the Primeval History is transitioned to God's faithfulness with the Patriarchs who would follow.<sup>51</sup> Without the genealogies, we would miss how beautifully interconnected ancient history is with the patriarchal period.

If Genesis 11:9 was the last verse in the chapter, we would be left with a resoundingly somber note. Once again, pride had taken over the hearts of humanity in the land of Shinar, their languages were confused, and the people were therefore scattered across the earth. Instead of closing with that heartbreaking story,

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<sup>50</sup> The Primeval History is a term often used by biblical scholars to discuss Genesis 1-11 and the way that it details the existence of everything and the early phases of human development.

<sup>51</sup> The historical period and biblical text described as the Patriarchs details the stories of God's faithfulness in the line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.



however, the backend of Genesis 11 reinserts us into the descendants once again. There are a few reasons that these genealogies are both helpful and unique.

The genealogies are helpful because they seamlessly connect the descendants of Noah with Abram and the covenant which was yet to be made. Reaching back to Adam and to Seth, Shem's genealogy graciously and quickly moves from the messiness of the Tower of Babel to the hope that will spring forth in what will become the Abrahamic covenant and blessing.

We have all had the feeling of having a difficult or sad experience linger for a long time. Maybe it was something you did or something that was done to you, but there is little doubt that you have experienced disappointment and pain that seemed to stick around. Well, the way that the genealogies are written help us to move quickly from a moment of punishment to a reassurance of His redemptive purposes through the eventual descendants of Abraham.

Genesis 11:10-32 is unique in a few different ways that help to drive these ideas home. Unlike the previous genealogies, the descendants of Shem into Abram include almost no direct reference to death. This is a stark contrast to Genesis 10 in which nearly every line is marked with a death. Additionally, no lifespans given for the individuals of the genealogy in Genesis 11. Now, there are ages which are detailed, but total lifespans are absent from the descendants represented in the text. This means that the genealogy is designed to flow quickly in the generations which preceded Abram. The briefness of the generations is not accidental.

Hopefully, this study is not too dense or abstract. The aim of observing the often-overlooked genealogies of Genesis 11 is to

see the goodness of God in and through even the seemingly insignificant aspects of the biblical text.

**BIG IDEA: The genealogy of Genesis 11 is intentionally designed to quickly transition from the sadness of the Tower of Babel to God's goodness with Abram.**

**APPLY:**

- **Question:** How many other genealogies can you remember from earlier sections of Genesis prior to chapter 11?
  
- **Activity:** Read Genesis 12:1-9. How is it helpful to see Genesis 11 as both distinct from and yet connected to the later Abrahamic Covenant?



## **Week 19: Genesis 11:1-9**

### **Day 5: The Tower of Confusion**

**READ TOGETHER: Psalm 55:9, Job 40:11-14, and Acts 2:1-4**

***Instructions:*** *We believe that Biblical study and spiritual growth are meant to be shared. This Word to Life has that exact focus in mind. For some, Day 5 might be a good opportunity to lead your family in a devotional. For others, this study might serve as a simple reminder to tactfully communicate your faith with those around you. Regardless, Day 5 of each week is designed to help you grow in your faith by sharing it with others.*

### **EXPLORE TOGETHER:**

As man began to multiply on the face of the earth once again, sin also once again began to multiply. This time it manifested itself in unity unto evil causes. God had already spoken to mankind to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. However, this is not what the people desired to do and they chose to fight against God. They had unity but they were not thinking properly.

The people had one language which made them not want to disperse from one another. This is quite natural, but God was calling them to do the difficult thing for their good and His glory. Instead of dispersing, they found a large plain to settle in. They thought this plot of land could support all of them especially if they built a city and tower. God was telling them to spread out, but they started to build up. They wanted a tower with its top in the heavens. They wanted to be like the Most High God and they wanted to make a name for themselves. This was all the height of hubris. They falsely believed they could defy God and even compete with Him in their own little way.

God came down to take a look to demonstrate his justice and fairness. He saw their disobedience and knew how much of a

blunder they were setting themselves up for. Imagine the evils that would heap up in a God-defying city. One of them would have seized power to rule over that wicked city sitting atop its tower. Because the tower was in the heavens the people would have soon begun to worship that ruler as God. Then man would have been worshipping man and there would be no end to their foolishness. So, God graciously gave different groups different languages to prevent them from carrying on their work. God made it clear to them and us that His word will stand and not man's.

**BIG IDEA: God's plans are way better than man's.**

**APPLY TOGETHER:**

- **Activity:** List the reasons why you think the people did not want to disperse.
  
- **Activity:** List the reasons why you believe God wanted the people to disperse and fill the earth.





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