

Bible Basics Conference 2012: “Genesis 1-12”

Part 12

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[00:00:00] Good, can we continue by reading a verse in Genesis 7, verse 11.

In the 600th year of Noah's life, the second month, the 17th day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up and the windows of heaven were opened. In 2 Peter chapter 3, the world that was before the flood, the world that perished, is contrasted [00:01:07] with the heavens and the earth that are now.

And I want to consider, first of all, some of the differences between these two worlds.

We've already noticed some of them that I'll come on to refer to that Nick has brought before us in the previous session. But I wanted to begin by noticing verse 11 in chapter 7 because it shows us, first of all, in the statement that the fountains of the great deep were broken up, that there [00:02:08] was, at the time of the flood, great geological activity and water that was trapped beneath the surface of the earth was released.

And at the same time, we've read that the windows of heaven were opened and the mass of water that was above the firmament that we read about in Genesis chapter 1 was released and fell upon the earth as rain in the 40 days and 40 nights of the earth.

[00:03:01] So that, first of all, there were these great geological changes. There was the flood itself and these two things had a great effect upon the physical geography of the world.

So first of all, in that respect, when we compare the physical earth before the flood with the physical earth after the flood, there was a very great change. But there were other changes too that Nick has brought before us. And the first is that the fear and the dread of man came upon the other creatures upon [00:04:10] the earth.

I take it that before the flood, there was not this fear and dread of man. That before the flood, animals were tame.

But since the flood, those animals that are not domesticated have become wild. And we can understand why the fear and dread of man is felt by these creatures because as our second point makes clear, many of them are now on our menu.

[00:05:02] I don't know what you had for lunch today. I know what I had. It did include meat. And very enjoyable it was.

So mankind is no longer vegetarian but we eat meat now as part of our diet.

And in addition, as Nick has mentioned, we have government committed to Noah and through Noah to others with authority to put to death, to deal with the worst excesses of the behaviour of men.

We've learned too that we're not to eat blood.

[00:06:03] We're to respect the fact that life is in the blood and God claims that life for himself. All life comes from God. He is the one who gives life. We don't have that ability and we respect that by not eating blood and we should be careful to do so, to observe this in our day.

In Acts chapter 15, as a result of a discussion about certain questions by the apostles, they [00:07:01] wrote to brethren everywhere to settle a certain dispute and what they, one of the things that they insisted upon is that even today we refrain from the eating of blood. So that's something that we should be careful about in our time.

There are other changes that come before us in chapters 10 and 11 that I'll now refer to. And the first, of course, is the introduction of different languages that chapter 10 brings before us.

[00:08:02] Before the confounding of the language, verse 11 verse 1 tells us that the whole earth was of one language and of one speech.

Darby says the whole earth had one language and the same words. So before the confusing of the languages that we have explained in chapter 11 and the consequence of that confusion brought before us in chapter 10, before us every human being spoke the same language and there were no variations. There were no dialects within the language that was spoken. [00:09:01] As a consequence of the confounding of the one lip, one language, there was the division of mankind into nations that chapter 10 brings before us.

And a third major difference between the world before and after the flood that comes to our attention in the second half of chapter 11 is that there was a major reduction in the average length of men's lives on earth. Noah lived to be 950, but by the time we reach Nahor, the length of a man's life was down to 148 years.

[00:10:01] And we know that by the time that Moses wrote Psalm 90, that span had been further reduced to three score years and 10 or where there was a particular strength, someone might live to be 80.

And this reduction in the length of a man's life, the creationists explained to us, was attributable to the major climatic change that occurred at the time of the flood. When the belt of water that was in the upper earth's atmosphere came down as rain upon [00:11:03] the earth and wasn't replaced, that belt

of water that formerly had filtered out many of the harmful effects of the rays of the sun ceased to do so with the marked reduction in the ages of men, the consequence. So we can see that these differences, differences three and four in our list here were attributable to the flood, but the first two differences were due to the subsequent judgment that fell upon mankind because of their desire to make themselves a name, the desire to be great.

[00:12:07] If we then look at chapters 10 and 11 in order, chapter 10 sets out the genealogies, the descendants of Japheth, first of all, then of Ham and then of Shem and shows us the parts of the earth that were given to them to be their territory.

In forming the nations, God always had in view that the children of Israel were going to occupy the land of Canaan and accordingly when he was setting the bounds of the nations, [00:13:13] he did so according to the number of the children of Israel. Father Simon yesterday was telling us how the earth today is able to sustain a population of eight billion people and when God determined that he would give the children of Israel the land of Canaan, he knew that that land would be able to sustain them. I've mentioned these references in Genesis 9 and 10 because in these three places and [00:14:05] I think actually in every place where we read about Shem, Ham and Japheth, that is the order in which their names are given to us.

But in chapter 10 verse 21, we read that unto Shem also the father of all the children of Eber, the brother of Japheth the elder, even to him were children born.

I had a chat with Nick about this in the interval and Darby has a footnote for those [00:15:02] of you who have his translation, a footnote on this point that suggests there may be a question as to whether Japheth was the elder or whether in fact Shem was the elder. From our authorised translation, which I think is the preferred translation if you read Darby's footnote, it appears that Japheth was the elder. But in every place where the three brothers are named, Shem is the first one mentioned. And this shows us I think that from the very beginning, it was Shem and his descendants who were especially before the mind of God. [00:16:01] And I'm sure that the primary reason why it was so is that in that line, according to the flesh, Christ came.

If we read the genealogy in Luke chapter 3, we can trace the genealogy of the Lord Jesus back through Shem to Adam.

So it was always God's intention that Israel would be his chosen nation. The assembly or church is a called out company.

It's a company that belongs to heaven and that linked to its glorified head in heaven [00:17:06] now should be heavenly in character.

It's composed of believers who have been called out from the descendants of Shem, Ham and Japheth.

As far as the place of Israel is concerned, this distinction that Israel has, it's a distinction that will be maintained through until the end of the millennium.

Again Nick was showing us that God intends to govern the earth through Israel and when [00:18:04] Christ in the millennium takes up the reins of government, he will do so through Jerusalem and

through Israel on the earth. And Isaiah chapter 2 verses 2 to 4 make this very clear where the nations go up to the mountains of, to the mountain of Jehovah's house.

That is the earthly center.

They will acknowledge that Israel are God's earthly people and make that pilgrimage. But this distinction between Israel and the nations will disappear in the eternal state whilst the church will always retain its distinct identity.

[00:19:08] If we read in Revelation 21 verses 1 to 4, we read about God's tabernacle which is the church, the assembly being with men. There will be no more sea.

There will be mankind upon the earth, no distinction between them and there will be the assembly. And Ephesians 3 verse 21 speaks about the glory that there will be to God by Christ Jesus throughout the ages of ages.

Here's a map that shows us how the Middle East was populated.

[00:20:02] The area in green gives us the portion of the descendants of Shem and what you might notice is that in the middle of that portion there is Nimrod and we'll come back to that. To the north of the green area there is Medei.

To the west of it there is Javan which is Greece and way up in the northeast we have Magog.

We'll go through the genealogy. We won't speak about everyone that's named but we'll pick out certain ones. [00:21:09] First of all Medei, the Medes.

What's interesting about this study is what a prominent part these nations play in the future of Israel. If God has determined that they will be his chosen people and that they will populate the land of Canaan, we then find in these various genealogies those who in various prominent ways become involved with Israel in its history.

First of all we have Medei the Medes who together with the Persians formed the second [00:22:02] of the four Gentile empires that are referred to by Daniel. Javan, Greece, referred to in Daniel 8 verse 21. The name Javan is the word that is translated Greece in Daniel 8 verse 21.

The rough goat which was Alexander the Great. The rough goat is the king of Greece and the Grecian Empire was the third of the four Gentile empires in Daniel.

And then we have Magog which is Russia or greater Russia. The descendants of Ham and here we have the more immediate enemies of Israel.

[00:23:07] We have the Canaanites whom we are familiar with. We have five of the other enemies that were children of Canaan, the Jebusite, Amorite, Girgashite, Hivite and Hittite.

The seventh, if we include Canaan, the seventh the Perizzites are mentioned and their origins according to the Moorish's new and concise Bible dictionary are not known. The Philistines weren't descendants of Canaan they were descendants of Mizraim through the Patrasim and the Kaslehim.

[00:24:02] We then come to Nimrod and you remember that Nimrod had his territory in the heart of the territory that was occupied by the descendants of Shem. Nimrod means a rebel.

He was a mighty hunter of men.

This is remarkable. We're told he was a mighty hunter before Jehovah and immediately the scripture goes on to say and the beginning of his kingdom was Babel. So that he was not merely a hunter of beasts but a hunter of men.

[00:25:04] When Cain went out from the presence of Jehovah he built a city and he called the city after the name of his son.

But Nimrod if we read the appropriate verse in chapter 10 was not content with building one city, the city of Babel, but we read that he built four cities within the territory allotted to him.

And not content with that.

He invaded part of the territory that was within the allotted sphere of Shem and he [00:26:06] built four more cities there including the city of Nineveh.

And then the descendants of Shem we have Asher or Assyria which we know were a people extremely hostile to Israel.

They became the rod of Jehovah's anger when the nation of Israel fell into idolatry. They were the people that we used to chastise the children of Israel. Shem were sons born he is the father of all the sons of Eber and with Eber we get the [00:27:04] idea of being a pilgrim.

Instead of building a city we get the idea of faith looking up to God looking for a city that has foundations whose maker and builder is God.

Faith that is patient, faith that is prepared to suffer at the present time and to leave everything in God's hands. So Eber were born two sons the name of the one was Peleg for in his days was the earth [00:28:01] divided so we now come to that point in time after the flood when God confounded the one language that was spoken by all men. And what is striking is that Peleg was born only 101 years after the flood so that we can see that there was this rapid departure from God and men sought to make a name for themselves, sought to make themselves great without any reference to God and as a consequence God had to step in and confound the language so as to hinder mankind in the projects that [00:29:11] he proposed Peleg was the father of Eber.

So there was only one language and men formed this union without any reference to God in order to exalt themselves and God intervened as a judge.

We thought of Babylon being the beginning of Nimrod's kingdom and really from that point of view we have thought of it as a political entity but now we want to think about Babylon [00:30:06] in another way and that is from a religious point of view and Babylon in fact as Zechariah 5 the end makes plain became the source of idolatry in Israel and it was out of such idolatry that Abram was called by God so that those who were of the seed of Shem were also affected by this terrible departure from God. If we turn back to Genesis chapter 6 we would find that the reason that God brought the [00:31:05] flood

upon the earth was because there was in the earth violence and corruption and here for all the differences that we've noticed between the world before the flood and the world after the flood we are discovering that morally the world is just the same. The world is just the same morally after the flood as it was before because men's hearts are just the same. We've seen violence in the case of Nimrod and his aggressive policy towards Shem and now we see in Babylon corruption. The idolatry that would corrupt even those [00:32:04] who were the descendants of Shem and sad to say idolatry played such a great part in the history both of Israel and of Judah and in both instances they were deported by invaders because of that idolatry. Coming back to the matter of the confounding of the language there are apparently at the present time between 6,800 and 6,900 distinct languages that's without taking dialect into account and English is the third most commonly spoken but [00:33:07] the most commonly spoken and this is supposed to be hello in that language is Mandarin. Mandarin apparently is spoken by 15% of the world's population whereas the other four that I list here is spoken in each case by about 5% of the world's population and that the Mandarin word there that is supposed to say hello my software had great difficulty in copying and pasting it across I fear I've only got half of hello so you know don't try it. The fourth is Hindi and the fifth is Arabic and I've had to put it back to front because again my software insisted on [00:34:06] writing from right to left so all I'm all I'm all I'm indicating is that when God confounded the language he did a good job. There were the three brothers Abraham, Noah, and Hiram.

God appeared to Abraham and he was called to get out of his house initially he left Ur which is at the northern tip of the Persian Gulf but under the influence of his father he only got as far as Hiram and dwelt there. When you read the sort of history that's given us at the end [00:35:06] of chapter 11 you would think that Terah was the prime mover in the matter it's only when we come to other scriptures that show that it was when Abraham was in Ur that the God of glory appeared to him and he was called out he got as far as Hiram he was held up there until the death of his father and after that he continued to Canaan taking Lot with him and that turned out I think to be a very great mistake. It was a disaster for Lot, for his family, for his subsequent history. Lot was a real believer but he became entangled with Sodom as we know and his wife whose heart [00:36:12] was always bound up with that city when she looked back was turned into a pillar of salt. To his shame Lot by his own two daughters fathered Moab and Ammon who as we know in turn became very hostile to the children of Israel. I'm already over my time I apologize for that Andrew over to you.