

# Dr. Elaine Phillips, Old Testament Literature, Lecture 5, Genesis 6-11, Noah, Flood, Babel

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Well, good morning to you. If you're wondering why on earth I'm sort of looking at you and smiling, it's because I'm giving myself a test to see how many names I know. I'm still getting about probably 60%, which is a D in my book.

So, if you think I don't know your name, please make sure that I do by the time we get to the end of this week or next week. There are a couple of announcements up here. As you can see, Carrie's review, Matt's review, take advantage of them.

Matt's will start for the first time tonight. And Carrie, you've already had one, right? Okay, good. Let me also apologize, I suppose we could say.

I am supposed to be over in the chapel by about 10 o'clock this morning. So for me to get there and get packed up and so forth, we'll stop at about 10, 10. Sorry, that's wrong, 10 of 10.

That gives you an extra 40 minutes to have a nice cup of coffee. Then, you'll be wide awake for chapel. I hope you'll be praying for me. My voice still isn't in really great shape, but Lord willing, we'll make it through that.

The third thing up here, as with the last open forum, is that this one is entirely voluntary and optional. But if you've got questions that we're just not having time to deal with in class, and I realize this is a survey, so we go fast, but at any rate, I'll be in the Martha Lewis room on Wednesday evening from 7:15 to 8:15. This is a come-and-go thing.

If you can't be there for the whole time, that's fine. But just to have some forum within which to deal with your questions. So, I think with that, I'm going to try an experiment, which is actually to teach you to sing this morning.

But I'm going to turn the microphone off, and Ted, you can just excise this part from the tape, all right, is that fair? Because I still sound horrible, and you may not learn the right notes. Especially if the words don't come up. Oh dear, this is supposed to be, there we go.

Right. Carrie, help me out, loud and clear back there, all right, on typhonal singing, here we go. This is how it goes.

♪ Sings song:

Now, I promise you that's going to sound, at least from my side, a little better when I can sing. Say nothing, I'm talking. But did you get it? Thanks, Carrie, that was wonderful back there.

Did you get it? You want to try singing it? Please drown me out as fast as you possibly can. Here we go. Sings song 🎵

And it goes faster than that. And it has drums and, you know, symbols and things when you really do it right. And you can drum on your seat in front of you. We're going to do it once more.

Of course, the main point is not to forget the meaning behind this. But it's kind of fun to learn to sing in Hebrew, don't you think? Let's try it once more. And then that'll be just about it. Sings song 🎵

And that was probably all I better do for a while. Let's take some time to pray together as we start. And then we'll get on to the business for the day.

Gracious Heavenly Father, we are so thankful for your loving kindness, your covenant loyal love to us, for your faithfulness. We're thankful to be able to get up this morning to have health and so many things that you shower so richly upon us. And so, we offer you our thanks.

We pray that your spirit would be working through us, in us this day by your word. Teach us, we pray, that we might better be servants in your kingdom. We ask these things in Christ's name with thanksgiving. Amen.

Well, we're going to kind of do a little review among other things. Questions from last time? Any questions that we didn't? I mean, you know, I know we did a lot of things, and I'm sure that there are lots of questions, but is there anything that you can think of that's burning through the end of Genesis chapter four that we didn't address? Tim.

I was at the end of Genesis four. Right. Today, you will be driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence.

I will be a restless wanderer in the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me. And my question is, just who is it that you worry about? Yeah, good experience. Good question.

And of course, you know, related directly to that is the one that I usually hear and was sort of expecting, which is where Cain got his wife? So, there are two things to say, and maybe there's a lot more to deal with here, but at least two things to say.

The first thing you can think of is Adam and Eve are having lots and lots of children. God has told them to be fruitful and multiply.

Maybe that's what we're talking about. I think, however, that there's another way to look at it. Again, this is going to trample on some thoughts and feelings, and I don't mean to do that, but my suggestion would be that even as you look at the fossil record, there's a long history of human-looking creatures.

You know, people, creatures that seem to be on two feet and perfectly capable of engaging in some kind of hostility or other. But it's into one particular line of those then in Genesis two that God has breathed his spirit, and Adam is the result of that, and Adam is in the image of God, but that doesn't rule out necessarily. And again, you know, I'm going to end up saying, I don't know, but this is a suggestion.

That doesn't rule out that maybe some of these other things were going to be capable of taking him on. Again, I realize that probably raises more questions than it answers, but those are the two main ways of solving this very clear indication at the end of Genesis chapter four that we have other things that look human, at least anatomically modern human, on the scene. So, thank you; good question.

Is there anything else before we move on?

I have a couple more review questions for you. Here's the first one: What's an adumbration? You're going to wake up in the middle of the night, and you're going to be able to say this.

An adumbration is, tell me your name again. Lynn? Ellen, thanks. Yeah, foreshadowing is something that looks ahead to an event that's going to happen later on.

Maybe later on in the First Testament, maybe all the way into the life ministry of Jesus as well. So great. All right, another question for us.

Which of the following does not appear in the narrative of Genesis 3?

Maybe this is a review as an expression of mercy on the part of God. Here's the first option. Providing coverings of skin for them, which is both protective and symbolic of God's keeping them in the family.

The second option is promising redemption by means of the serpent's seed being crushed or stricken.

The third option is banishing them from the garden so they can't eat from the Tree of Life and live as sinful creatures.

Fourth option: it's up there somewhere.

All of the above are evident in the narrative of Genesis three; what's your answer? Nick, is that a hand-up? Are you Nick? Or have I got the name wrong? You're Matt. No wonder you looked so puzzled. Were you going to guess an answer here? Or was your hand just sort of up there in the air conducting a choir? You'll say number three, okay? Anybody else? Here comes another Matt, just to confuse me, yeah.

The second one, okay. We got vote for two, we got vote for three. Trevor, the fourth one.

And the answer is the fourth one. Right, because remember that as we're talking about these things, God has specifically said in the curse pronounced against the serpent that the seed of the woman is going to indeed crush the seed of the serpent. So that's going to be clearly within this whole thing of mercy.

The third one, well, being banished from the garden and not being able to live forever as sinful creatures, is, as I said very briefly last time at the end, truly indicative of God's mercy. Forever increasing sin on the part of increasingly decrepit humankind is not a nice prospect. So, at any rate, let's suggest that all are evident there.

And let's carry on a little bit. I promised that we would pick up with just a couple of notes and comments with regard to Old Testament genealogies. You read them in chapter five.

You also, excuse me, read them in chapter 11. And so, here are just some suggestions on purposes and then observations about genealogies as well. And actually, one goes with two.

So, let's put them together at the same thing, same place. God's people in the past are not a nameless mass. Already, already, even in these early chapters of humankind, God shows his concern for people, named people.

Names are awfully important. We're going to see that throughout the entirety of the First Testament and already here. Names and relationships.

There's going to be relationships established among these descendants as well. So that's going to be important. Individuals are indeed valuable in God's eyes.

That's going to be an important thing to keep in mind too. So, hang on to that. And we have another one forthcoming, we think.

Let's see here. There we go. Two leads to three.

Here's why I quizzed us on adumbration a moment ago. There is this marvelous promise with regard to our place in God's family. With regard to the fact that we still are inheritors.

Remember that figure of the garments being placed on Adam and Eve indicative that they are his children in spite of their sin? Well, likewise, there's that wonderful figure of being written into the Book of Life. And so the suggestion is that even as these genealogies are being written and names are being named, and the importance of individuals in God's eyes is being stressed, we also have an adumbration of God's people being written into the Book of Life, which is a wonderful promise. And then, of course, it's going to set the stage so that people like Noah don't just drop out of the sky and people like Abraham have a heritage.

Those are going to be important things. Of course, the thing to keep in mind is that these are not intended to be comprehensive. Even the genealogies, for example, if you read Matthew chapter one, there's a genealogy there.

That's not even comprehensive. There are some things that are missing from that. So, these genealogies are not intended to give us a sequential, chronological, added-up kind of idea.

So just to kind of keep that in mind, that's a bit helpful. And then the other thing we want to make a note of, and you probably noticed this as you were reading these sections, is the ages in Genesis five, approximately what, with one major exception? How many years do these, how many hundreds of years do most of these guys live, as mentioned in Genesis five, Chelsea? Yeah, somewhere in the 900s. Now, who's the exception? It's a fascinating exception.

His name starts with E. Enoch, right, Enoch, who only lives, interestingly enough, a symbolic 365 years. Enoch, who walked with God and was not, which raises all sorts of interesting questions in terms of what that means and why God took him so early. But at any rate, all the rest of them, by and large, are living into their 900s in Genesis five.

That's not going to be the case by the time we get to Genesis 11, all right? They had children earlier, and they didn't live nearly as long. So, kind of keep that in mind. Number of suggested reasons as to why that might be, by the way, and I'll just pose one for you.

I'm sure there's others that are equally valid. But the suggestion possibly is that over the millennia, and however many of those are, we don't know that are incorporated in these genealogies, there are the cumulative effects of sin on the physical body,

mutations, and so forth and so on, disease being more and more able to access and affect the human body, and that may be one of the reasons why the age decreases a little bit, or significantly, I should say, by the time we get to the end of Genesis 11. Okay, we're going to move along to probably the thing that most of you have the most questions about because I heard some already last time, and that is this fascinating scene at the beginning of Genesis chapter six.

Let me read it for you, and then let's talk about it a little bit. When men began to increase in number on the earth, and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful, and now I'm going to change the NIV just a little bit because the NIV says they married any of them, a more literal rendition is they took as women, or they took as wives, same Hebrew word can be translated, women, wives. So, the point is that the sons of God are taking them. Did they get that? Any that they chose, then the Lord God said, and my spirit will not contend with Adam forever; he's mortal; his days will be 120 years.

Verse four, the Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God went to the daughters of men and had children by them, they were the heroes of old, men of renown. What are your questions? What's going on, right? Who are the sons of God? Generally, those are the ones that surface right away, and of course, I think if you've downloaded the lecture outline, you may have some ideas. Oh, let's just do those all together.

There are three main ways to think about the identity of these sons of God who go take the daughters of men. The first suggestion is that they may be the godly line of Seth. In Genesis chapter five, we read about the descendants of Seth, and there are some important things that are being made in terms of those names as I should say, if you look at those names, there are some interesting comparisons of those names with the line of Cain before, and so some people say, the line of Cain being at the end of Genesis four, some people say, what you've got happening here is this line of descendants from Seth, chapter five, godly, after all.

The beginning of chapter five says he's made in the image of God. But now they're taking daughters of Cain in that whole line and bringing these two lines together then. That's one way of looking at it.

The second way of looking at it, and you'll see very clearly where I come down by the time we're done with this, as you read other places in scripture, and notably Job chapter 38, verse seven, which uses the term sons of God in parallel with morning stars singing together, clearly representative of angelic creatures. And by the way, to take it even a little bit further, in Job chapter one, we learn that the sons of God are coming right into the presence of God, and Satan's with them, and of course, God and Satan have this exchange about the character of Job. Sons of God is used in that context as well.

So, you've got those two things. You've also got 2 Peter chapter two, verse four, which talks about sons of God being held in judgment. All right? So basically, the idea here is that what's going on is something absolutely unthinkable.

Absolutely unthinkable. And that is that fallen angelic creatures, whenever they might have fallen, and we don't know that when issue, but angelic creatures who have stood up on their hind legs and defied God are now involved in an attempt to invade God's creation and thwart God's plan for redemption by doing something as odious and as heinous as this. Interestingly enough, when you read a fair number of Jewish literature pieces from the time between the close of the First Testament and the beginning of the New Testament, notably First Enoch, there is a major area there, but there are other texts as well, very clearly read it this way.

And it may be that the New Testament is kind of picking up on that, particularly with reference to what 2 Peter has to say. So, you've got, in this case, something that is just unthinkable, as I said, introducing heinous evil. And we'll talk about the nature of that evil in a moment.

The third way of interpreting this has kind of come up in the last, oh, I don't know, 20, 30 years or so with a little more force because there's a primarily sociological emphasis in terms of people's reading scripture. And so those who are doing this are saying, this is kind of a myth or a legend, if you will. They're not taking it as having historical value.

It's a myth or a legend, and basically, it's referring to the fact that there are boundaries, sociological boundaries being crossed, and royal lines intermarrying with commoners. And we say, oh, that's great, good, no problem. Back then, that was something you just didn't do, okay? So those are three possible ways of reading it.

I think it helps us a little bit, as we try and plumb this, to explore the expression nephilim. Now, I'm not sure what translation you're reading. The NIV kind of leaves it as nephilim.

It simply transliterates the Hebrew word. This is the Hebrew word. Some translations use the expression or the word giants.

The Hebrew word nephilim is probably related to the verb naphal, which simply means to fall. And so, therefore, then we're going to try and figure out, okay, what are we talking about when we're talking about fallen ones? Are they, as I put up here, morally fallen? In other words, fitting our interpretation that says angelic creatures who have gone totally astray and are now intent on leading humankind away from God's redemptive plan. Are they morally fallen? Are they fallen from heaven? Kind of even picking up on that more.

Or, remember what it says as we read on in this text. There's lots and lots of violence here. Verse 11, the earth was corrupt in God's sight and full of violence.

Some people read these Nephilim as large creatures who are oppressively violent. Now, how do we know they're giants? It doesn't say so here, does it? Nope, heroes of old, men of renown. How do we know they're giants? Some of your translations actually go that route.

Excuse me. And there's a fascinating reference in Numbers chapter 13. Can look at it later.

We'll look at it in about three, well, four weeks. In Numbers chapter 13, where the spies have been sent by Moses to explore the land. And they go and they see a wonderful land, but what do they see? They see the descendants of the Anakim who are related to the nephilim.

And they all, these spies, feel like grasshoppers in their presence. In other words, they're huge. They're frighteningly huge.

So, we know that we're talking about some great kinds of creatures here. Well, I've just got one other note on here. As I suggest, whatever this is, and I think you've probably gathered I tend towards the second of the explanations.

Whatever this is, whatever means Satan is using, it's clearly an attempt to derail or sidetrack God's redemptive plan. Okay, you've got a godly line of Seth, but now things are going to happen that are completely awry, and we have a terrible situation on the earth. Notice that it says, verse five, the Lord saw how great human wickedness was on the earth.

Every inclination of the thoughts of his heart, Adam's heart, humankind's heart, was only evil all the time. Okay, horrible evil. And let me make one other comment in that regard.

When you look at verse 11 and following, the earth was corrupt, full of violence. God saw how corrupt the earth had become. The Hebrew word there, take my word for it, and then take Hebrew, and then you can test me out and make sure this is right.

The Hebrew word there is exactly the same as the Hebrew word in verse 17 when God says, I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to, your NIV says destroy, but it's exactly the same Hebrew word. In other words, it's measure for measure justice. Humankind has corrupted the earth, and therefore God is going to corrupt the whole situation.



Measure for measure, measure for measure. It's the same word as indicating that. All right, well, what do we have? Noah's told to build an ark, and I'm not going to say a whole lot about this.

We'll talk about the Gilgamesh epic in a moment. But the thing I'd like you to just note is another Hebrew word. Isn't that great? You get to learn a little Hebrew in here.

This Hebrew word is teva. That's the word that is translated ark, this craft, this boat. I want you to hang onto that word.

Put it somewhere where you're going to be able to drag it back out again, because we're going to need it again and make a very interesting comparison, and I'm going to leave you in the dark now in terms of what that comparison's going to be. But just hang onto it. In about three weeks, we'll get there.

Four weeks. Okay, Noah makes a teva, and in it he puts, noting here, two of every kind of animal and seven of those who are clean. Generally, this distinction is thought to refer to the fact that, and I don't know how many species he got on there and so forth and so on.

You can guess as you wish. Keep in mind that this is a preservative measure. He's preserving the major animal classes.

Why the seven? Two of everything, but now seven of clean. Notice that he knows something about clean and unclean animals. God seems to have instructed him on this, or you can say later editors are reading it back in, but even Cain and Abel know something about sacrifices, so I'm willing to say God instructed him.

Why seven? Lucky. It's more like that to seven. Possibly something symbolic about God.

True. Anything else? If it's clean animals. Becca.

They're gone. Yeah, very possibly this is in order to keep on some sort of a sacrificial process going. Noah is a righteous person.

We learned that earlier on in the chapter, and so perhaps this is what's happening here. They're going to be used as sacrificial animals. They're clearly, or I should say pretty clearly, not used for eating.

How do we know that? Is it Becca again, Rebecca? Kate? All right, I tried. Go ahead. Yeah, it's in chapter nine that the Lord says, and I give you animals, basically, living

creatures to eat, and therefore, the fear and the dread of Adam falls on those creatures.

So, you're absolutely right. It appears then that they're not eating them prior to that time, so we probably do need to be thinking of them in terms of sacrifice, which could go right along with the symbolic import of what Lucky was saying as well. Well, just a couple of points that I want to make in this regard.

This is always a bit of a challenging one. We can get a fairly clear understanding in terms of the time. We know that it rained for 40 days and 40 nights, and of course, if you've been reading your scriptures carefully, you're well aware that that use of 40 is a very symbolic one.

It's going to show up over and over and over again, but it rains for that extent, therefore, utter destruction. And then, of course, the floodwaters are there for 150 days, and then it's after about a year that they recede. So, the time extent is not a challenge so much.

Again, we can map that out from the scriptures pretty well. In terms of geographical extent or geographical range, we run into a little bit more problem. First of all, we don't know when this thing happened, how far back it is.

It does say it covered all the mountains. It does say it covered all the earth. Now, please don't think I'm a heretic as I say my next sentence.

As you read the rest of the scriptures, all sometimes means all in a particular location, not everything everywhere. And there are other references to that if you're interested. The end of Genesis does this with the Joseph narratives and the famine.

You see it in Samuel as well. So maybe we're talking here about all of the habitable land in the Mediterranean basin. Maybe.

Part of the problem is, and again, I can only speculate at this point. I don't know all the answers to all the questions. But as you look at your geological timeframe, which is stacked up in sediment, we don't have evidence for a flood that is universal and comprehensive at the same time throughout the whole of the earth.

You simply have evidence of lots of things happening, and you have narratives from various cultures that talk about disastrous floods, interestingly enough. Geologically, at least yet, we haven't found that. So maybe, and again, I'm only maybe-ing here. Please don't think of me as somebody going way far away from scripture.

Maybe we're talking, when it uses the term all, of simply referring to some place that is the habitable land. Another thing to throw in here is how long ago this happened

and issues such as continental drift, which is a very real issue as well. Maybe this is way, way, way, way, way back.

Who knows? Yeah, Kalyn. That's another great question that I don't have an answer to. Some people, the question, in case you didn't hear it over there, is how do you have descendants of the Nephilim, Numbers chapter 13, living there in Canaan and Nephilim is a known concept if everything gets destroyed? Don't know, can only make a suggestion.

Can make two suggestions. One is they have a corporate memory of Nephilim even though the Nephilim aren't there, the Anakim are. That's one possibility.

The second possibility that some people have is to say that again, yeah, go ahead. Yeah, I can say it again. If these gigantic creatures that are in Canaan, they are the Anakim or the Anakites.

They're related to the Nephilim. Maybe what these folks, these spies are seeing when they go up there are these Anakim and somewhere behind that is a epic memory of Nephilim, of huge gigantic fallen creatures. That's a possibility.

Second possibility, and again, take or leave these and chew on it yourself and go look up commentaries. Second possibility is depending on the nature of the Nephilim, maybe somehow they managed to avoid the flood. Heroes of old, men of renown.

Who knows what kind of capacities that might have meant. Or if you don't like that, I don't like this third one, but I have to put it out there. It's myth.

And remember our definition of myth. A story that's not factually accurate, but has some truth component built into it. I'm not going in the third direction, but I honestly don't know the answer to the question.

All right, the next thing we need to say is about this narrative. Once it's over and done with, at the end of chapter eight, Noah builds an altar to the Lord and sacrifices burnt offerings on it, and the Lord, in response, says, never again will I curse the ground because of Adam. Interestingly enough, it's in this context that the term Brit, which is the Hebrew word for covenant, is first used.

Now, we've already had a very clear declaration in chapter three of God's promise that the woman's seed will crush the serpent's seed. That's a promise, but it's here in this post-flood narrative that we first have the use of the term berit or covenant. I'm hoping that you've read the 11th tablet, which is the flood narrative in this larger epic of the Gilgamesh epic.

Fascinating stuff, explore it a little bit. When I ask you a question on your exam about who's the hero of the flood thing, don't say Gilgamesh, it's Utnapishtim. He's the counterpart to Noah here.

And just a couple of things that I want to say in regard to this. Yes, there are interesting parallels. This is one of the narratives that indicates to us that there are cultures that do indeed have significant flood narratives.

But having said that, did you notice anything different between the Gilgamesh account, in other words, Utnapishtim's story and Noah's story? There's at least two really distinctively different things. There are others as well. Sarah.

Yeah, you know, there's some communication behind the walls there in terms of how this all happens, but there's some manipulation going on as well. Good, what else? Do you notice the shape of the arc that Utnapishtim builds? What is it? It's a cube, isn't it? I'm starting to think about a cube being out in rough water; it's going to be rolling around like crazy. It isn't going to work at all.

It's not a seaworthy vessel. So, you can just see in its design, it's not very good, whereas Noah's ark at least has some capacity to float and actually preserve its people. Third thing, I said two, I'll go for three.

Do you notice that God commands Noah to save creatures? Okay, he's saving creatures. What is Utnapishtim very careful to take with him onto the arc? Valuable things like silver and gold, et cetera, et cetera. I mean, this is a very self-serving kind of preservation on the part of Utnapishtim, quite different from the things that Noah did.

Again, there are other things that we want to think of in terms of comparisons and contrast, but we need to be moving along since we're going to be stopping in about seven minutes or so. At the end of chapter nine, we do have a reference to the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And of course, then we're going to have later on, particularly in the Table of Nations, where these characters live.

Territorial affinities are going to show up here as well. But we also have the incident with Ham. I want to just read this and make a couple of comments on it if you've been reading it and if you think this is another one of those challenging issues.

In verse 20 of chapter nine, Noah, a man of the soil, proceeded to plant a vineyard. When he drank some of its wine, he became drunk and he lay uncovered inside his tent. Verse 22, Ham, the father of Canaan, saw his father's nakedness.

Now, what does that mean? Well, let's go on. He told his two brothers outside; Shem and Japheth took, interestingly enough, the Hebrew says, the garment, not just a

garment, something specific about it, and laid it across their shoulders. They walked in backward and covered their father's nakedness.

Their faces were turned the other way so they wouldn't see it. When Noah awoke from his wine and found out what his youngest son had done, he said, cursed be, Ham? What does that say? Is he cursing Ham? No, he's cursing Canaan, isn't he? One of the sons of Ham. But then, in contrast, he blesses both Shem and Japheth.

So, what's going on here? When was the last time you had a sermon on this passage? Probably not too recently, right? Is this one of those that folks don't preach on too often? Let me make a couple of comments and then maybe a couple of interpretive suggestions. And again, for you to think about further. Interestingly enough, the expression, see the nakedness of, the expression see the nakedness of, is used 10 times.

And a lot of those show up in Leviticus, uncovering the nakedness of. And it has to do with something unseemly. Now, how do we interpret that? Is our next step.

But at least knowing what the text is saying. Has something to do with something that's unseemly. Not always, by the way, sexually problematic.

The same idea of seeing the nakedness shows up in Genesis when Joseph accuses his brothers who are coming down, he accuses them of being spies and saying, you want to see the nakedness of the land, okay? Spies are doing that kind of thing. Two possibilities that I'll pose for you. The first one is probably the least ugly.

And that is, simply seeing the nakedness of his father is, in that culture of honor and shame, a very shameful thing. It's just very shameful. It's one possibility.

And again, it does recognize that we're dealing with cultures here that have a much more great emphasis on honor as opposed to shame. Yeah, Trevor. But isn't it so terrible? I mean, it's his fault in the first place.

He got drunk and self-injured; what's he going to say? It seems like his sons are doing the honorable thing. Well, his two sons are doing the honorable thing. The question is, what has Ham done? And here, thank you. That's a segue; this is the second suggestion.

And again, it doesn't knit everything together as carefully as we might like it. But the suggestion here is that maybe what Ham has done is to engage in some kind of aberrant sexual activity against his father. So, seeing the nakedness is uncovering the nakedness, which again, the expression that is there is also used in Leviticus when God is saying, don't uncover the nakedness of, of, of, and all these patterns that they're not supposed to engage in terms of aberrant sexual behavior.

If that's true, and again, big if there, but if that's true, that might explain why the curse comes on Canaan here. Canaan's going to be the group of people that the Israelites will encounter once they go in to take the land. And what God says about the Canaanites is they have polluted the land.

They've polluted the land. He says it in the context of Leviticus, where we have those various aberrant behaviors described. I'm going to say more about that when we actually get into the time of the conquest and some of those unseemly things.

That's one suggestion. And there's a lot more, believe me, there's a lot more that I probably should be saying about that. But guess what? We need to keep moving.

Chapter 10, the descendants inhabit the earth. Again, this is the spreading out. And then, we need to move on very quickly to what we have in chapter 11 with our famous tower at Babel.

The whole world, verse one, had one lip, technically, and several words. That's being a literal translation, okay? I got one way of common speech speaking. But of course, what they decided to do was build this tower.

How many of you know things about ziggurats from your ancient Near Eastern history classes? Okay, Katie, tell us something about ziggurats. Yeah, these were all multi-level, actually step-leveled things that almost had a pyramid shape, sometimes upwards of seven to 10 levels, sometimes 100 feet for each level, with ramps going up them. And presumably, the priests met with the gods at the top.

Okay? Now, this is an artistic representation. The next thing we have here is a ziggurat that has been excavated and reconstructed to a degree, which is dating approximately 2100 BC, which will, I will suggest, be at least somewhere in the ballpark with Abraham, with our father Abraham. And you'll notice the extensive ramp getting up there.

Now, clearly, the problems here are, as I indicated to you earlier, a sense of pride and self-sufficiency on the part of the people mingled with, interestingly enough, fear. Okay, both motives are going on there when you read this text. If I can find it.

Let us make ourselves a city. Tower that reaches to the heavens. We make a name for ourselves.

That's the pride thing. And not be scattered over the face of the whole earth. That's the fear thing.

Now, let's hang together and stick around here and have our gods being able to be met up at the top. And so, God will indeed address this by scattering them—kind of a measure-for-measure thing.

They don't want to be scattered. He scatters them. And at the same time, it will confuse their language as well.

I'm going to say more about that later on, too. Not today. One last thing we're going to do today.

And that is talk about setting the stage for Abraham himself. When we get to genealogy number whatever it is, chapter 11, verse 26 and 27, it says, after Terah had lived 70 years, he's the father of not just one person, now there's three, and three very important people. Avram, Nachor, and Haran.

And, of course, Abram is going to be our focus. Notice that we've got the line of Shem noted twice in this whole system of genealogies. That's going to say something about its importance.

Okay. And on that happy note, we're going to stop for today. We'll pick up our whole business with geography.

I think that was the last thing I need to say, yep. We'll start geography next time, Wednesday, Lord willing. I'm going to have to move a little bit more quickly since usually I allow an hour and a half for that.

We'll have one hour. But we'll see what we can do. Have a great day.