

Genesis 6:8 - 11:32 - “But Noah found grace in the eyes of HASHEM”

Introduction:

As we closed out the previous study we discovered the world was in a wreck. Man’s pursuit was totally focused on evil. Whether evil, powerful men fueled this corruption, or fallen angels, the world was not worth saving in the eyes of God. But one man stood against the influences of evil, Noah, of the lineage of Seth. Noah is the 10th generation from Adam and represents completeness in the process of creation. At a time when there is complete corruption of the beautiful creation of God, there is one righteous seed available to form a “restart” on creation.

Ch 5:32 “Noah was 500 years old when he begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth”.

- “The Book of Jasher” records this story with these highlights:
 - Noah refrained from taking a wife because the state of the world was evil and the prospects of finding a righteous woman were slim.
 - When Noah was 498 years old God instructed him to take a wife and raise righteous seed.
 - Noah obeyed God, took Naamah, daughter of Enoch (Noah’s great grandfather), as a wife. Naamah was 580 years old. Over the next 4 years the sons were born.

Chapter 6:9-22 God chooses righteous Noah as the savior of the world

Vs. 9-10 Noah was a righteous man who walked with God. Whether he was righteous just compared to his peers, or truly righteous in the same way of Enoch or Abraham, God inspired scripture to record for all time, Noah was a righteous man. He walked with God. Previously, scripture tells us Enoch, the 7th from Adam, and Adam himself walked with God. I think this single statement tells us all we need to know in regard to Noah’s righteousness and the fact that God was planning to “recreate” the world using Noah as the progenitor for human kind recreation.

Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, and all three are married as well.

V. 11 “All flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth”. All flesh could indicate the animal kingdom had become corrupted just as the humans had.

V. 13-16 Build an ark.

- Design dimensions using the “golden number” or “golden ratio”; 1.618033; also known as the Fabonacci Number, named after the Italian Mathematician, Leonardo Fabonacci (1170-1250). Fabonacci’s Number is a well defined mathematical ratio found throughout all creation, forms the basis of most great architecture and art, and will be found extensively when God commands man to build something; 300 cubits (l) x 50 cubits (w) x 30 cubits(h); or approx.

450'(l) x 75'(w) x 45'(h). The height and width aspects are very close to the "Golden ratio" of 1.618033.

- I have heard scientists lecture on the design of the ark providing just enough lift or flotation to allow the ark to sail safely over the tops of the highest peaks submerged by water.
- Gopher wood is an unknown wood. There are speculations that it might be cedar, or it might just mean "squared" wood; "planked" wood or even pitched wood.
- Gopher Wood - this is the only place in scripture citing "gopher wood". It is an unknown species, if it is a species at all. Keep in mind there may have been species available pre-flood that did not survive into the post-flood era.

V. 17-20

- "I am about to bring a flood"; nothing like a flood has ever been experienced on earth before. No rain to this point.
- Everything that draws breath will die; **EXCEPT: Noah and his family and the animals God brought to Noah for preservation in the ark.**
- A covenant will be established with Noah as he enters the ark. Covenant described in Chapter 9.

V.22 "Noah did according to everything God commanded him". Obedience is a hallmark of righteousness. God's grace is abundant, He is a forgiving and merciful God, but He does require obedience.

Messianic Implications found in Noah

- One righteous man
- Small remnant of the world saved
- Flood represents baptism - the earth and man is cleansed by water
- Noah was obedient against the pressures of the world
- 10th generation from creation - completeness; end of time representation
- A new world was formed.

Chapter 7 - "Come to the Ark"

Ark means "word"

According to Rabbi Israel Baal Shem Tov (1698-1760) of the Ukraine, one of the most revered rabbis of all time and founder of the Chassidim sect of Judaism, the Hebrew word used for Ark is "*teivah*" which means "word". When God commands Noah to enter the ark, He is saying, "come into the Word, says G-d; enter within the words of prayer and Torah study. Here you will find a sanctuary of wisdom, meaning and holiness amidst the raging floodwaters of life." In synagogues all across the world and throughout all time, the case where the Torah scroll is kept is called, "The Ark". It is the house of the "word".

The Ark; Torah or Word of God is:

- Deuteronomy 6:6,7
- Joshua 1:8
- Psalm 119:9; 12; 97; 105
- Proverbs 6:23 “Your Torah is light”

An ancient prayer of the righteous:

“Please, O Compassionate One, our God, sweeten the words of Your Torah in our mouth and in the mouth of Your people, the family of Israel. May we and our offspring and the offspring of Your people, the family of Israel - all of us - know Your Name and study Your Torah for its own sake. Blessed are You, O Compassionate One, Who teaches Torah to His people (spiritual) Israel.”

In 8:16 Noah and his family will be directed by God to “go out of the Ark”. There is a time to retreat within the sanctuary of peace and Torah, and there is a time to enter the world of chaos and carry the shalom of Torah, order, structure and peace, to a lost world. It is what Jesus would call being salt and light.

V. 1-5 “Come to the ark”. God calls Noah to the ark, then, He brings the animals to be saved to Noah. Noah does not round up the animals.

- Animals to be saved:
 - Clean animals - 7 pair
 - Unclean animals - a male and his mate (1 pair)
 - Birds - 7 pair
 - Creeping things upon the ground - 1 pair (v. 8)

Questions:

1. How did Noah know which animals were considered clean?
2. Why 7 pair of clean animals?

V. 4 - God announces the rain will fall for 40 days and 40 nights. 40 is the number representing trial and testing. We will see the number 40 throughout the Bible, New Testament included, always connected with testing and trial for man.

Can you name some other trials or tests that lasted some measure of time recorded as “forty”?

V. 5 - “And Noah did according to everything that Hashem had commanded”. (Obedience/righteousness)

V. 6 - Noah was 600 years old when the flood began. “The Book of Jasher” reports that during the 100 years between the time God first informed Noah of the impending

flood, commanded Noah to build the ark, and the beginning of the rain, Noah and his grandfather, Methuselah, preached “repent” to the people of the land.

V. 11-12 The fountains of the great deep burst forth; the windows of the heavens opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

- We have no concept of the magnitude of the power of the flood. Perhaps if we consider the power of current day floods, typhoons, tsunamis, hurricanes, volcanoes; etc.

V. 17-24 The waters rose to 15 cubits (about 22.5 ft) over the mountain tops. The design of the ark allowed it to safely float over the tops of the highest mountains without being torn apart upon the mountain tops. God used His “golden ratio” to design the ark so its floatation would be sufficient to keep the ark above the mountain tops.

- Death covered the earth. Every living thing outside the ark died (except the fish of the sea)
- The surface of the earth changed because of the forces of the flood; the fountains of the deep; rain; massive water and wind;
- Garden Eden was destroyed.
- Chaos prevailed once again. **God reversed the process of creation by taking what He had created and returning it to chaos and death(Gen. 1:2)**

V. 24 The water prevailed on the earth 150 days including the 40 days and nights of rain.

Chapter 8 God remembered Noah and all the beasts

V. 1-12 As the 40 days and nights of trial came to an end, plus the additional 110 days of water on the earth, God sent His Spirit over the earth and the water began to subside. In the Hebrew, this “Spirit” is recorded as Aleph-Tav, or “es” as discussed in Genesis 1:1 - Messiah. God, Jesus, Holy Spirit are all representative of YHVH, the Creator and King of the universe.

- The water continued to recede and in the 7th month, 17th day, the ark rested on Mt. Ararat.
- On the 1st day of the 10th month the mountain tops became visible. 40 days later, 11th month, 10th day, Noah opened the window and sent a raven out into the world. (40 days - trials, think of how impatient everyone must have been after the ark settled on Mt. Ararat, and yet, there was still so much water.)
- After the raven returned Noah sent out a dove, 2 times. The first time the dove came back with an olive leaf it had plucked from a tree.

- Noah waited 7 more days then sent the dove out again and this time it did not return.

V.13, 14 Exactly one year after entering the ark Noah opened the door and the ground was dry.

(601st year, 1st day of the 1st month.)

- 57 days later, the earth was fully dried. And the family came out of the ark. (1 year, 1 month and 27 days)

V. 15-19 God ordered Noah and his family to leave the ark, and God ordered Noah to release all the animals to run free and re-populate the earth. And every living thing left the ark, according to its family (kind) and began to repopulate the earth.

V. 20-22 Noah built an altar to God and sacrificed of every clean animal and every clean bird, a burnt offering to Hashem. It was a pleasing aroma to Hashem and Hashem pronounces a blessing on the earth and its inhabitants and the beginnings of the covenant promises He is to make with Noah.

Question: How did Noah know to sacrifice to Hashem and how did Noah know which animals were clean and would provide a pleasing aroma to God?

In the Hebrew text two different appellations for the name of God are used. In v. 15 the appellation “Elohim” is used, signifying “God of justice or Judgment” The “God of justice/Judgment” is commanding Noah and all living beings to leave the ark. In v. 21 the appellation used is “Hashem”, or the “God of mercy”, is receiving the burnt offering as a pleasing aroma.

V. 21 Elements of the covenant are given, though not all the elements are given in this verse:

- “I will not continue to curse the ground because of man...” Gen. 3:17 (Adam); Gen. 4:12 (Cain)
- “Nor will I again smite every living being, as I have done”. The days and annual processes of the earth will be allowed to maintain themselves just as God designed them, for all time.

Chapter 9 God pronounces blessings and establishes a covenant

V. 1-7 God blessed Noah and his sons and commanded them to be fruitful and multiply.

- The fear and dread of you will be upon the animals: change in the balance of nature.

- You are given animals to be food just as previously every plant was meant for food. **(Does this mean Noah and his sons are allowed to eat all meat, whether from clean animals or not? No, unclean animals are not considered as food.)**
- While you may eat of the meat of animals, you may not eat the blood of animals. The life or soul of the animal is in the blood. This is the beginning or first prohibition of eating blood, a prohibition we read again for the new Gentile converts to Christianity - Acts 15. There is a sanctity to blood; it is the life force for a living creature, man or animal. It is an abomination and a disrespect to The One who gives life, to eat the life force. Eating blood is a core pagan ritual in almost every tribal culture across time. It is one of the things that separate pagan practice from the practice of God's people.
- V. 6 takes this further to add that man does not have the right to kill or murder his fellow man. There is a correlation to the blood of man and the image of the Living God. The blood of a murderer will be required of him for payment for the blood he has shed. (Capitol Punishment)

V. 8-17 Elements of the Covenant

- Never again shall all life be destroyed by flood
- Never again shall the world be destroyed by flood waters.
- I will set the rainbow in the sky as a symbol of my covenantal commitment that I will not destroy life and earth by flood again.

V. 20-28 Even righteous men will occasionally do dumb things.

- Noah plants a vineyard, made wine, got drunk, and wound up naked in his tent.
- Ham entered the tent observed Noah in a drunken state, and did something reprehensible. What it was we don't really know for sure. Some sages report Ham had sexual relations with his father. Others report it was shameful that Ham observed his father's nakedness and made fun of him, showing no respect for his father. This is especially demonstrated when he reports Noah's condition to his two brothers.
- Shem and Japheth take the moral road and walk backwards with a blanket to cover their father so as to preserve his dignity and honor.
- Whatever Ham did, it was bad and it brought a curse on him and his descendents for all time; "Cursed is Canaan; a slave of slaves shall he be to his brothers". "...And let Canaan be a slave to them (sons of Shem)"

Curses and prophecies:

- There are interesting elements to the events and prophetic curses pronounced in these passages:
 - V. 22 reports it is Ham, the father of Canaan, who committed the indecency, yet it is Canaan who is cited for the curse. Either, Canaan actually committed the offense and Ham is implicated because he knew of it and did not stop it, or, this is a protraction of curses of man that fall on his children to the 3rd and 4th generations (Exodus 20:5).
 - Vs. 25-27 The prophecies related to blessings and slavery are significant in the future of the world. Canaan settles in the land that will be deemed the Promised Land, and the descendents of Canaan will become slaves to Shem's descendents, the Israelites.
 - Ham's descendents settle Egypt, Ethiopia and throughout all of Africa. The world's history is very clear on the significant slavery role played by the descendents of Ham throughout Europe, and the New World.
 - Japheth, too, will dwell in the tents of Shem. This may be more of a Biblical prophecy. The "tents" of Shem may very well represent Torah and the foundation of God's relationship with man. Following the resurrection and the gift of the Holy Spirit as recorded in Acts 2, the descendents of Japheth, Europeans, come to God through the spreading of the gospel to the Western world (Mission journeys of Paul).

V. 28 Noah lived another 350 years after the flood and died at the age of 950 years. We will see throughout the text that when God is through with the part of the story played out by a key figure, He simply records his ending, almost as abruptly as an engraving on a tomb stone citing a person's Birth-Death. His part of the story is over.

Chapter 10 The Descendents of Noah

V. 1-7 Scripture records the names of the sons of Shem, Japheth and Ham. Some of the names will sound familiar and most will not. These are the beginnings of the 70 nations of the world. There is a lack of clarity on the dispersion from the 3 sons of Noah and the dispersion that takes place following the tower of Babel.

Essentially, it can be said in general, Japheth's descendents became the settlers of what we know as Europe; Shem's descendents became the settlers of what we know as Asia; and Ham's descendents became the settlers of Africa. This cannot be totally precise or absolute but is a generalized concept.

Getting a Perspective on Time

The Flood took place in 1656. The tower of Babel story, Genesis 11, took place 340 years later, 1996. Keeping these times straight helps understand that Genesis 10 deals specifically with the descendents of the 3 sons, Shem, Japheth and Ham.

V. 8-12 Introduction of Nimrod, son of Cush, son of Ham. Nimrod settled and ruled with a mighty hand the land of Babylon and Shinar. By reading the way most scripture is written, we might get the idea Nimrod was a good and righteous leader. He was not. Josephus paints Nimrod as ruthless, a mighty hunter of both animals and men. He hunted men for the purpose of slavery. Nimrod built mighty walled cities and created great civilization. In chapter 11 it is understood that Nimrod is behind the building of the great tower in open defiance of God and as a protection against another world flood.



As we study the map we can see the broader regions of the world occupied by the descendents of each son.

The following map shows us where each son or grandson of Noah generally settled in a format that may be easier to read.

The chapter begins with Japheth and his sons, then Ham and his sons. The Bible often focuses briefly and then

dismisses individuals or groups who will not play a role in the following plan of redemption story. Generally, we will not read of descendents of Japheth again in scripture till the New Testament when the Western world is brought into focus as recipients of the plan of redemption. The sons of Shem will be central in the plan of redemption as Messiah will come through this lineage. At the same time, the sons of Ham will be constant antagonists in the lives of the sons of Shem, the Israelites, in the form of Egyptians, Canaanites, Philistines, etc.



Chapter 11 The Tower of Babel and the Introduction of Abraham

V. 1-4 The whole world has one language and under the power of Nimrod was united behind a common purpose. In the plains of Shinar they found an excellent place to build this great tower. They had developed the technology to bake mud and make very durable brick, and use bitumen as a mortar, for a major construction project.

And why did they want to build this tower? “Let us build a city; and a tower that reaches into heaven, let us make a name for ourselves, and keep ourselves unified for power”. This was an anti-God effort. They had the technology, resources, man power, skill, and motive to stand against God and defy Him.

V. 5-7 God descended to look at the city and the tower which has been built.

- Behold, they are one people
- One language for all
- They will be able to accomplish what they have set out to do.
- We shall stop them by confusing their language.
 - This one act will disrupt the unity required to accomplish what they had determined to do.
 - Due to the confused language, barriers were established between the people and they began to scatter throughout the world.
 - What a beautiful picture of non-violent disruption of the plans of man.

V. 8-26 The lineage of Shem (Generations Chart)

Note: How close in proximity the sons of Shem lived.

- When Shem was born, Methuselah, Lamech and Noah were all alive
- Methuselah and Lamech both died before the rain began to fall.
- Shem buried his son and grandson, Arpachshad and Shelah.
- He lived through most of the life of Eber, his great grandson
- He outlived the following generations of his descendents: Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terah, and Abraham.
- Shem lived through much of the life of Isaac and Jacob.
- Abraham was 48 years old at the time of the Tower of Babel and lived in the area of its construction till he was perhaps close to 75 years of age.

Traditions regarding Shem the Righteous One

- Abraham lived with Shem for many years to avoid being killed by Nimrod
- Abraham destroys his father's idols
- Shem is a spiritual influence on the lives of all the generations who followed him.
- Shem outlived Abraham by 35 years

Terah took his sons and daughters-in-law and moved from Ur of the Chaldeas to Haran, located in southern Turkey or Northern Syria. Terah died there at the age of 205 years.

Terah's Genealogy:

- Terah begat three sons: Nahor, Abram and Haran
- Haran died after the births of Lot, Sarai, and Milcah
- Nahor married Milcah and had 8 sons. One was Bethuel who was the father of Rebecca and Laban.
- Abraham married Sarai, daughter of Haran.