

98-08-23c

We're back now from our break and we're looking at the concepts that are introduced in Psalm 1 which have to do with the blessing that comes on someone who disassociates himself from certain things. He does not walk in the advice or counsel of those who are loose or uncontrolled in their morals and ethics. He does not remain, take a stand, or persist in the way of those who are obvious offenders.

And he does not sit in the seat or assemble with those who are scorers, who are disregards of the divine truth. And we're looking at this idea of being a scorer in Proverbs. We've seen in Proverbs chapter 3 that those who lightly esteem or who disregard the things of God, God is going to disregard them.

And this is a scary thought. There are people who think, well, let me just go my own way and if God will just leave me alone, that will be fine. You do not want to be disregarded or left alone by God because apart from God and the life of God and the power of God, we are hopeless, helpless, useless, we will degenerate, we will tend toward destruction.

It is a bad thing to be disregarded by God. Proverbs 3.34 says that the scorer will be scorned by God, disregarded. And this is a death sentence.

To be disregarded by God is death. The scorer is proud and haughty. Look at Proverbs chapter 21, verse 24.

As I mentioned in the first hour, Proverbs has a lot to say about the scorer. Contrasting the way of wisdom and the way of righteousness with the way that disregards God. Proverbs 21, once again you have this contrast going back and forth.

If you begin in verse 20, There is a desirable treasure and oil in the dwelling of the wise, but a foolish man squanders it. He who follows righteousness and mercy finds life, righteousness and honor. A wise man scales the city of the mighty and brings down the trusted stronghold.

Whoever guards his mouth and tongue keeps his soul from troubles. A proud and haughty man, scoffer is his name. And this is our leitz word in Hebrew.

He acts with arrogant pride. We've already seen in Proverbs 1.22 that the scorer or the scoffer delights in what he does. He takes pleasure in it.

He enjoys it. That's Proverbs 1.22. He cannot take discipline in Proverbs 9.7. He refuses instruction. He doesn't want to respond to correction.

He doesn't want to respond to the truth. By definition, he disregards and makes light of truth. He will not accept reproof or rebuke in the very next verse there in Proverbs 9.8, which we've already seen.

If you look in Proverbs 15.12, the same idea is expressed. A scoffer does not love one who corrects him, nor will he go to the wise. This is one of the ways you can tell whether or not it's an occasion to speak, or to correct, or to try to infiltrate someone's thinking with the truth.

Did they come to you? Are they approaching with a receptive attitude? Are they asking any questions? Why do you think this way? Why do you think that this situation should be handled in a certain way? Why do you take the stand that you take? Are they interested in what you're thinking? Or are they mocking and scoffing and belittling and seem to be set in their ways? A scoffer does not love one who corrects him, nor will he go to the wise. If they don't come to you, don't go to them and try to straighten them out. You're wasting your time.

They're not going to accept it. Christians often forget this principle. You can look in Proverbs 13.1 and see the same idea.

A wise son heeds his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke. Once we've identified someone as a scoffer, what do we do? We don't assemble with them. We don't spend time with them.

We don't sit in the seat of the scornful. We don't associate. The scoffer, it is impossible for him to find wisdom.

Look at Proverbs 14.6. A scoffer seeks wisdom and does not find it. But knowledge is easy to him who understands. If you're asking and seeking and knocking, when that knowledge comes, it's going to make sense.

It's going to fall into place. Someone who disregards the truth, it isn't going to make sense even when he hears it. It's not going to impress itself.

We tend to think something is so convincing and so conclusive, and it's the nail in the coffin of this bogus position or this false perspective. We hear something and we think, that's a clincher. That nails that down.

We want to go tell the clincher to this scoffer. We say, look, don't you see? Look at this right here. It's not going to have the impression and make the sense to them that it makes to you because they're not seeking and they're not asking and they're not knocking.

Don't waste your time. Do not cast your pearls before swine. If you remember when we went through that little illustration in the New Testament that Jesus gave, the swine are running in the other direction.

The swine are moving away from you. They're going their own way. A lot of times we have these pearls of truth and pearls of wisdom and you want to throw them in front of

them and say, look, turn around.

Look at this truth. This idea of casting pearls in front of swine, you're seeing their backsides. They're heading away.

You're saying, wait a minute. You're throwing these pearls out there. Turn, turn.

Well, what does Jesus say? If you cast your pearls before swine, they're going to turn around. They're going to come back and face you. They're going to turn and they're not going to say, oh, give me some more of those pearls.

They're going to turn and tear you to pieces. They're going to slash you to ribbons. There's nothing more dangerous and hunters out in the big game area will tell you there's nothing more dangerous than an enraged wild boar.

They will slash you to pieces with their razor sharp tusks and teeth and their bite is highly infectious. If they do slash you, you have a very high likelihood that you won't survive it because it is such a nasty, infected wound. Jesus says don't cast your pearls before swine.

Well, you've got to know what a swine is. You've got to know what a scoffer and a mocker is. You've got to identify them as such and do not associate.

Do not stand in their way. Don't sit in their seat. It is only going to bring a curse.

It is not going to benefit anybody. They do not respond to discipline. They do not respond to reproof.

They do not respond to rebuke. They cannot find wisdom even when it's right in front of them. If you look at Proverbs chapter 24 and verse 9, we find that God says the devising of foolishness is sin and the scoffer is an abomination to men.

To tolerate and to put this kind of person on television in our society, it is an abomination. It is a curse to us as a nation and as a society to tolerate and to lift up in some way the scoffers. But that's exactly what we do.

We give them their own TV shows now. We elect them to office. Now, what does all this have to do with our study of Genesis? Turn with me now back to Genesis chapter 10 where we have seen that Scripture gives to us the genealogy of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons that were born to them after the flood.

You have this listing of the peoples and nations that are descended from the sons of Noah. You have the sons of Japheth given first, the Gomer, Magog, Madi, Javan, and so forth. We traced last week who some of these peoples are.

They became the Greeks. They became the different inhabitants of Asia Minor and so

forth. The forerunners of the Greeks and Romans and the inhabitants of Rhodes and Cyprus and so forth.

What does this table do? As an Israelite, as someone marching out of the land of Egypt and heading for the land of promise, they were the first recipients of this book, weren't they? When Moses recorded these things in the five books of the law, who did he give them to? Who were the first people to hear these words? It was liberated Israel. Israel formed by God as a nation. What kind of information do they need as a fledgling nation? They need to know who are my friends, who are my enemies, who can I safely engage in alliance with, and who should I be wary of? The very same kind of information that we are given as individuals.

Who can I spend time with profitably? With whom can I engage in discourse and in exchange of ideas and it will be profitable to them and or to me? With whom should I not spend time, not form an alliance, not assemble with? The Bible gives us that kind of guidance. This is the kind of guidance Genesis chapter 10 gives to the nation of Israel. And it does it by associating them with their forebears.

The blessings and cursings that Noah pronounces on his sons are for more than the moment. They are for more than the life span of those individuals. In the Old Testament economy, God dealt with people on a national basis, on a group basis.

And he did this to simplify and to make it possible to make application. Generally speaking, you are not going to have any truck with the Canaanites. There are wonderful exceptions on an individual basis.

Rahab the harlot comes immediately to mind. She is a Canaanite. She is a Canaanite prostitute.

However, because of her attitude toward God, her acknowledgement that God is the God of Israel and that she recognizes that he is who he says he is and that he is going to give victory to the Israelites, she jumps ship. She says, I don't want to be a Canaanite anymore. I want to join Israel.

I want to serve the living God. And so there is nothing confining. There is nothing inevitable about being born a Canaanite or being born a Syrian or being born a Moabite.

But as a people and as a group, these nations are going to represent certain things in the plan of God. And so God spells this out for the nation. And in the table of nations he says, Here are your Japhethites.

What did Noah say about them? He says in verse 27 of chapter 9 of Genesis, May God enlarge Japheth and may he dwell in the tents of Shem. Japhethites are okay. You can make alliances with them.

You can dwell with them. You can bring them into the fold. They can dwell in the tents of Shem.

This is going to be alright. But what about the Hamites? Verse 25, Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants he shall be to his brethren. They are under a curse.

The Canaanites are going to be servants to the Shemites. The Canaanites are going to be servants to the Japhethites. They are going to be the most distant from blessing.

The least likely to be blessed. Well, this is useful information because when you have the table of nations in verse 10, you find out which peoples in the land come from what source. When you get to the sons of Ham in verse 6, you've got the Cushites, Mitsrayim, which is Egypt.

Egypt has held Israel in bondage for 400 years. Well, that makes sense. This is out of the divine order.

These are the people who are under a curse. You have Put and Canaan. And Canaan above all is the cursed section of the Hamites.

You have Nimrod who is the son of Cush, who is the son of Ham. He is the one that is going to give birth to Babylon as a nation. And this in the future history of Israel is going to be a reversal of fortune.

The Israelites who are supposed to be the people of blessing in the land of promise wind up subservient and in captivity in Babylon. This is supposed to tell them something. Wake up, Israel.

Why are you captive to the Canaanites? Why are you captive in Babylon? It's because you have rejected the things that make for blessing. You have served their gods. You have intermingled and intermarried with the Canaanites instead of purging them out of the land.

You have your Ninevites, your Assyrians and so forth springing from this. So as you go through the Table of Nations, it's more than just a convenient source book of where these peoples came from. It tells you what category they fall into.

Do you associate with these people when you get to the land? Or do you exterminate them and drive them out? If they're Canaanites, they're under a curse. God's curse. And as a group and as a people, you exterminate them and wipe them out.

If they express individually a desire for relationship with God and the people of God like Rahab does, great. Assimilate them, bring them on in. But that's the exception rather than the rule.

So what's the principle here? God gives us the information we need to navigate this life.

He tells us what associations to maintain, where to get our counsel, where to make our alliances and where to step back and refrain and separate. And this is not the place, and we don't have the time in our study of Genesis to go through the doctrine of separation that applies to the church in the New Testament.

But there is abundant guidance. Who do you break bread with and who do you not sit down to table with in the church? There are believers from whom we separate. Who are they? The principles are the same.

Those who lightly esteem the Word of God, those who disregard divine counsel, those who are loosely woven in their spirituality, in their morality, in their ethics, we pull back and separate. Is someone interested in the truth? Do they ask? Do they seek? Do they knock? Are they receptive when the truth is spoken or do they disregard it? If they disregard it, put some distance between. If you maintain an association, it will only lead to problems.

There will no good thing come of association with those who don't care anything about God or the things of God. And it doesn't really matter if they're a believer or an unbeliever. So this table of nations gives the nation of Israel that information.

And it is going to foreshadow their national relationships. Why can they go into the land of Canaan and with a clear conscience execute men, women, children, and even animals in the land? Because the curse of God rests upon them. And it goes all the way back to these chapters.

It goes all the way back to what Noah predicts in his dying words when he says, Cursed be Canaan. Because Canaan is the father of these people in the moral and ethical and spiritual sense. It's not just that they're physically descended.

Well, I'm real sorry, but even though you might want to love God and worship Him, you're descended from Canaan, so all bets are off. The Bible never presents it that way, does it? But if you are a son indeed of Canaan, this curse applies. God can reverse the curse in a single generation for those who love Him.

But that curse extends to a thousand generations of those who hate Him. And if you persist, and if you are a true son of your father Canaan in that sense, God will ever be against you. And you can go to Isaiah and read the woe songs against some of these very same nations.

Remember Isaiah 14, where we often go, Oh, how art fallen, Lucifer, son of the morning. You said, I will, I will, I will. You have the five I wills there.

What is that chapter about? Turn just quickly over to Isaiah chapter 14. Does God know what He's talking about when He records and perpetuates this curse that Noah pronounces back in Genesis? Isaiah 14 begins with two verses that talk about mercy on

Jacob. The Lord will have mercy on Jacob and will still choose Israel and settle them in their own land.

The strangers will be joined with them. There are strangers who can join Israel. It's not just a matter of physical heritage.

And they will cling to the house of Jacob. If you cling to the house of Jacob because you recognize what it represents, you're going to be delivered. You're going to be blessed by God.

Then people will take them and bring them to their place. And the house of Israel will possess them for servants and maids in the land of the Lord. This goes all the way back to the words of Noah.

Canaan will be his servant. They will take them captive, whose captives they were, and rule over their oppressors. Who are their oppressors? Historically, Assyria, Babylon, Egypt.

All of them descended from Ham. But then you go on starting in verse 3 and you have this woe song against the king of what? The king of Babylon. Verse 4, you will take up this proverb, this woe song against the king of Babylon and say how the oppressor has ceased, the golden city has ceased, the Lord has broken the staff of the wicked, the scepter of the rulers, and so forth.

You go all the way down through this. Hell is going to be excited to receive you when you get cut down. Verse 11 there, the maggot will be spread under you and the worms are going to cover you.

You don't want to be in the cursing category from God. Then in verse 12, how you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning. Babylon is associated with the principle that is ultimately expressed in Lucifer.

Rebellion against God. Disregard of the things of God. The desire to go one's own way.

What does he say in verse 13? You have said in your heart the same things that Lucifer said in his heart. I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.

I will sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north. By the way, sitting in the mount of the congregation on the sides of the north, this is the same idea expressed in Psalm 1.1. Sitting in the seat of the scornful. I will sit in the assembly.

I will render judgment like Job. But I want to do it instead of God. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds.

I will be like the most high. These five I wills are the expression of attitude that constitute the fall of Satan. And this also constitutes the fall of the scoffer.

The fall of the sinful. The fall of the ungodly. When you detect this attitude in someone, start backpedaling.

Start putting some distance. Get out of their way. Get out of their counsel.

Get out of their seat. Get some distance. You're not going to do any good maintaining contact, maintaining association, or having anything to do with someone who has this kind of attitude.

It will only lead to you sharing their curse. There is blessing by association that we've seen with Noah. There's cursing by association with the wicked and the scoffer.

Israel finds this out nationally. And the guidance is given to them clear back in Genesis chapter 10. That's what the table of nations does for Israel.

Who are your friends? Who are your foes? So back now in Genesis, these are the families of the sons of Noah in 10.32 of Genesis. These are the families of the sons of Noah according to their generations in their nations. And from these, the nations were divided on the earth after the flood.

So you already have a connection here of the table of nations and the Tower of Babel. These peoples are going to be divided. Why are they divided? Because this scoffing, mocking, disregarding attitude manifests itself in their unity in chapter 11.

We saw last time that they travel together to the plain of Shinar. They are led over there by Nimrod. Come let us bake bricks.

Let's make the tower whose top is in the heavens. It's very interesting because the ancient Mesopotamian traditions, the temple of Marduk, the great Mesopotamian god there, their tradition said that that temple had been built by the gods. That the gods had come down with special bricks and made the temple of Marduk.

And this temple was said to raise its head to the heavens. And this is the ancient tradition of Babylon, of ancient Mesopotamia that said the gods built this temple and it raises its head to the heavens. Genesis says, Oh no, men built Babylon out of bricks they baked for themselves in violation of the divine mandate against the will of God and God scattered them as a result.

So it completely pokes a hole in this whole grand mythology that surrounds Israel as they come out of Egypt and travel to this land that has been dominated by the Mesopotamian and Babylonian tradition for centuries. And gives the lie to this grand man-made tradition. They had brick for stone.

They had asphalt for mortar. So they want to build themselves a city and a tower whose top is in the heavens. But in verse 5, we saw last time that this mighty achievement of

man, this great result of their unity and their one goal and one grand design, the Lord has to come down.

They're building it and its top is in the heavens, but God can't even see it from where He is. He says, Let us go down and find out what this is all about. So that's how far short they've come with their goal.

But the Lord says in verse 6, Indeed, the people are one and they all have one language. This is what they begin to do. Now, nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.

As they continue to propose evil schemes, evil plans, evil goals that disregard God, they're going to be able to unite in doing these things. There's nothing to stand in their way. So God says in verse 7, Come, let us go down and confuse their language that they may not understand one another's speech.

In a lot of commentaries and a lot of people's thinking, this is another great curse that God brings down. You have Adam and Eve in the garden. They sin, and there's judgment.

There's the curse that comes afterward. Then you have Cain and Abel. You have the murder.

God comes down and you have the curse on Cain. Then you have the episode after the evil designs of the hearts are only wicked continually and so God brings the flood and wipes everybody out. Then you have the episode with Ham and the tent and the nakedness and so forth.

Then you have the curse that Noah pronounced. Now you have the wicked building of the temple and here God is going to put on a curse. The difference here, do you notice a difference? In each of the preceding situations, there is an obvious offense and there is a judgment by God that makes an issue out of that fence and says because you have done this thing, God speaks.

God talks to Adam and Eve and the serpent. God talks to Cain. God speaks out against the evil imaginations that characterize the entire human race and wipes them out.

Then after the flood, God makes a covenant and He says I'm not going to do this worldwide judgment anymore. So when Ham sins against Noah, it is Noah who speaks out and says cursed be Cain and servant of servants he will be to his brethren. Here, God does not speak and say behold the wickedness of this tower is very great in my sight.

He doesn't come down to Nimrod or somebody down on the earth and say if you do well will you not be accepted and so forth. This is not so much in the nature of a judgment or a reaction and says as a consequence of this bad action you are penalized. What is this? If you look at it, and this is a crude illustration and I apologize for it in advance, but you

think about science and you think about a laboratory experiment where you've got the maze and you've got the rats in the maze and they come to a point of decision.

There are two little buttons that they can push with their nose. One button will dispense food and the other one will dispense cocaine. This is a very famous experiment where the little rat kept pushing the cocaine button until he died, would never eat the food, would never push the button to let him in with the lady rat to have a good time.

All he wanted was the drug. There's a choice there and then there's a consequence of the choice. This consequence where the nations are scattered, the languages are confused is not necessarily a burden.

It's not like you're going to have to go till the soil by the sweat of your brow. You're going to be a fugitive and a wanderer. You're going to be wiped out by a worldwide flood.

Instead of being a consequence of pushing the button here, this is more in the way that the maze itself is constructed. When you put the rats in a maze, you can give them certain choices, but you also box them in. There are certain things that they have no choice about at all.

The walls of the maze mean you can only go in some ways and not in others. The freedom of the rat is restricted to the paths that are set by the scientist when he builds the maze. Then he decides, well, you're going to get consequences of choosing to push button A or button B. The confusing of the languages, at least in my mind, is more of a wall in the maze.

You're not going to have the option of uniting. You're not going to have the option of gathering together in one place. There's no choice involved here.

When God confuses the languages, they have no choice but to separate. They can't understand each other. They don't have a bunch of linguists.

They don't have the DLI, the Defense Language Institute, where they can go and study and learn all of these tongues. They are immediately separated and can no longer communicate. So God does something overruling in human history.

There is no choice. There is no response. If you do well, you can't now understand all languages and unite.

God says, because of the nature of your thinking here, you no longer have the option of uniting. You can't even choose it. It's gone as an option.

You have to scatter. You have to separate. You have to cease building this tower.

He doesn't present them, yet 40 days and Babylon will be destroyed if you don't repent. He doesn't come down and destroy the tower and the city. He doesn't come down and

say, cursed be the land, it's sowed with salt, fire and brimstone, Sodom and Gomorrah.

What does he do? He seals off the option. And this is a different kind of a thing. And it tells us something about the way God works in history after the flood.

There are certain things that are no longer an option. God will intervene and prevent certain choices even from being made. You have no choice but to.

There are walls in the maze now that limit options. And there's no appeal. There's no tool that will dig through the wall.

There's no going back on these things. I do not see this so much as another judgment or another curse as a factor that God puts into existence to force man into a different path. God prohibits man from uniting.

God prohibits man from one world, one society, one city dwelling. He just flat cuts it off as an option. So it's not so much in the nature of a judgment or a curse as this is one of the immovable objects in human history now.

You are not going to be able to unite. And it never will be united until Jesus Christ comes back and unites the world under his rule in the millennial kingdom. So God says in verse 7, Let us go down and confuse their language that they may not understand one another's speech.

He doesn't destroy the tower. He doesn't slay the people. He just says, I'm going to put a factor in place that's going to make it impossible for them to continue down this path.

This is a wonderful comforting thing because God is going to do this now down through history. We'll see this later on in the history of Israel. You can have confidence that if people are going to go pursue a certain evil path, God has the power to make it impossible for them to continue.

He can cut that off as an option. You'll see this in the Exodus story. We have the idea of God hardening Pharaoh's heart so that he will not let the people go and much has been made of this in Reformed theology and so forth that, well, God chooses who's going to be saved and who's not.

There is no issue of salvation with Pharaoh. The issue with Pharaoh and God hardening his heart, God didn't harden Pharaoh's heart and prevent him from believing in God and coming to salvation. God prevented Pharaoh from making the decision to let the people go early.

God had ten plagues as discipline on Egypt for 400 years of abusive bondage inflicted on Israel. There is a price to be paid on this Canaanite civilization, this Hamite civilization of Mitsrayim that has enslaved Israel for 400 years. God is going to penalize them for doing

what they did to Israel.

God will not give Pharaoh the option of getting out from under the judgment after one plague or two plagues or seven plagues. The full measure of God's wrath is going to be inflicted on the nation of Egypt. Ten full plagues.

And God will prevent Pharaoh from making the decision to let the people go. That's what it means when he hardened his heart. It is no different than what he does here when he prevents these people from uniting and speaking to one another so that they can continue to build the city and the tower.

He prevents it. He prohibits it. It is not an option.

Pharaoh had no option to let the people go. Even though Moses comes and says, let my people go, he can't do it. And it is so that God can demonstrate that this is the attitude that Mitsrayim, that Egypt has had for 400 years.

They've had the people of God in their midst. They've had the words of Joseph in their midst for 400 years. They have the testimony of God.

They have the people of God in their midst. And they have disregarded it for 400 years. So in the picture, the leader of Israel, Moses, is going to come to the leader of Egypt, present him with God's will, and he's going to reject it.

And that picture is going to be presented on a national level. And then the judgment of God is going to come on the people. And so God is going to put on this play, if you will, to demonstrate the nature of blessing and cursing, of deliverance and judgment.

Same thing happens here. So the Lord, in verse 8, scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city. Therefore its name is called Babel, which in Hebrew means confusion, because there the Lord confused the languages of all the earth.

The Mesopotamians named Babylon, and they said, Oh, the name means the gate of the gods. This is the place of entrance to the gods. This is where we built our ziggurat, and we're looking up to the heavens and gaining the vast wisdom that's available from the stars.

Well, the Bible says, No, it's not gateway of the gods. It's the land of confusion. It's the place where God confused the languages.

So once again, you have this head-to-head divine viewpoint versus human viewpoint. Then in verses 10 through 26 of chapter 11, you have the genealogy of Shem. Shem was 100 years old and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood.

This tells us that our earlier note of the chronology, it says that Noah was 500 years old

when he begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Well, he was actually 502, because we know that Shem was 100 years old and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood. So the flood came in Noah's 600th year.

So if you work out the math, this is what tells us that Shem was not the oldest brother because Noah was 500 when the first of his sons was born. Shem was born in 502 of Noah's life. So he's not the firstborn.

The firstborn was born in 500. Shem was born in 502. So Japheth was probably the elder brother, then Shem, and then Ham.

Then you have, after he begot Arphaxad, Shem lived 500 years and begot sons and daughters. You have Arphaxad and Salah and Eber and Peleg, who we were told back in chapter 10, in verse 25, to Eber were born two sons. The name of one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided and his brother's name was Jachdan.

If you work out the math here, you find out that about 100 or 101 years after the flood, Peleg is born. And apparently his name is given because the earth is divided. So Peleg is born right around the time that the earth is divided.

What does it mean that the earth is divided? I used to think, well, this is when the continental plates started drifting and shifting and you had the division of the one continent. But I no longer think so after studying this more carefully because look at verse 32 of chapter 10. Families of Noah, according to their generations and their nations, from these the nations were divided on the earth after the flood.

The whole idea of division here is the division of mankind on the earth. So this idea of the earth being divided, and look at verse 1 of chapter 11. The whole earth had one language and one speech.

Very same term is used here. The earth has one language and one speech. But in Peleg's day, the earth is divided.

So we get the idea that around the time of the birth of Peleg is the time of the Tower of Babel and the confusing of the languages. So this took place about 100-101 years after the flood. Tower of Babel story.

But this line of Shem is given in great detail. By the way, if you trace this all out, the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the number of descendants of Noah, if you total them up, is 70. Later on in Genesis, we're going to find out that there are 70 descendants of Jacob that come down to Egypt in Joseph's day.

So you get the idea that this is a complete picture. Seventy is an enhanced version of seven, which is the number of completion. So you can go on down through Reu and Surug and Nahor and so forth.

Why do we have this extended list? Because this gives the direct connection of Abraham to Shem. It tells us that Shem who is blessed, Shem to whom God belongs, is in the words of Noah, blessed be the God of Shem. He apparently is the one who is pursuing God along the lines of Enoch, along the lines of Noah.

When Noah says, blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem, everybody else is related to Shem. Canaan is going to be the servants of servants. Japheth is going to dwell in the tents of Shem.

Shem pursues God. Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem, back in 926. So the line of Shem is now going to be most significant for Israel because you've got Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and Israel is descended from Jacob.

So this gives them their link. And these links are important. We see genealogies throughout the scripture that link Jesus back through David to Abraham and back to Adam.

So this information is significant. And once we get to Nahor and Terah, these by the way also tell the Israelites who their closest neighbors are, who their cousins are in the national realm. And we're going to find that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are going to get their spouses from these peoples, from the people of Nahor and from the people of Terah.

Sarah is the half-sister of Abraham. Rebecca is descended from Nahor. She's from his household.

And Jacob, when he goes back to Laban, Laban is a cousin of his people. And so these were staying within the blessed line here, the line of Shem in intermarriage, which is something that Ham apparently did not do. And you have all the problems associated with Ham as we have seen.

So we pick up now in verse 27 of chapter 11. This is the genealogy of Terah. Terah begot Abram, Nahor and Haran.

Haran begat Lot. We're going to have a lot to see about Lot in the upcoming verses. Haran died before his father Terah in his native land in Ur of the Chaldeans.

Abram and Nahor took wives. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai. The name of Nahor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah.

Sarah was barren. She had no child. Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife.

They went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan. And they came to Haran and dwelt there. The days of Terah were 205 years and Terah died in

Haran.

We will refer back to this when we get into the details of Abram's calling and Abram's early life because we find that this dwelling in the land of Haran here is not in accordance with God's will. It is not in accordance with the instructions that God gives Abraham, but that's why we have this information. It's background in the setting for what we're going to find in Genesis chapter 12.

But as we conclude this morning and as we leave behind Genesis chapter 10 and 11, what do we conclude? God has given us information to guide us in our horizontal relationships. In Israel's day, it was on the national level. Who do you ally yourself with? Who do you exterminate? Who do you refrain from having anything to do with? We have that same information in the Scriptures.

There are many, many parallels to Psalm 1 and 2 in the New Testament. We have to pay attention to that. We can't be casual and say, well, there's no real harm here.

Maybe it's an opportunity. The Bible says no. You have to distinguish with whom you spend your time, with whom you pursue relationship and conversation.

Who do you sit in the seat with? Whose way do you stand in? If you maintain relationships with people that fall in these categories, you will depart from blessing. You will erode away your relationship with God and your spiritual life and your spiritual growth. It will diminish and decrease if we don't purge the land in our souls of evil.

We cannot enjoy the indwelling presence of Jesus Christ and the indwelling presence of the Father. It is our responsibility to pay attention to those with whom we associate. It makes a difference.

It is a principle throughout human history, in the Old Testament and in the New. And we need to analyze it. And there are some things that we need to withdraw ourselves from.

Unhealthy associations, associations with the scoffers, the ungodly, those who are obvious offenders, touch not the unclean thing, this is where that applies. We withdraw ourselves or we're going to be counted among them. And it's an important concept and it is necessary to.

It's the foundation for all of the positive things that follow. If you want to be a tree planted by the rivers of water, you've got to get out of the road of the sinners. Let's close in prayer.

We thank you, Father, for the privilege of studying these things. We thank you for the clear guidance and direction you provide for us in your Word. We pray that God, the Holy Spirit, will give us insight into the application of these things in our own lives.

We pray that we will, as a result, walk in a manner that is pleasing and worthy in your sight. And we will be in a position to bear the fruit that reflects life everlasting. We pray these things in Jesus' name.

Amen.