

Discussion Guide

Week of April 6, 2014

Genesis 9:18–11:26

Passage Overview: Genesis 6:9–9:19 recounts how Noah and his immediate family are rescued from the flood. By echoing Gen 1, the whole process is presented as the undoing of creation and then the “re-creation” of the earth as it emerges from the flood. But after the flood not everything returns to a pristine condition. Human nature is not renewed. After the flood and the “new creation” comes another fall, by Noah—a sort of second Adam, in that he (like Adam) is father of the whole human race. This is made clear in Gen 10, the “table of nations,” which shows via lists how the descendants of Noah’s three sons populate different regions of the earth. All of this culminates in the construction of the Tower of Babel, which presents a unified humanity using all its resources to establish a city that is the antithesis of what God intended when he created the world.

Understanding the Text—Read Genesis 9:18–29 and 11:1–9.

- We get the impression from reading the post-flood account of Noah that he is just like his ancestor (Adam). In what ways is this account of Noah similar to the account of Adam found in Genesis? (What’s his occupation? How is he shamed? What follows?)
- How does Ham’s indiscretion anticipate one of the Ten Commandments?
- Read 11:5 again. How is this an ironic statement given man’s vision for this tower?

Living and Applying God’s Word

- Noah’s curse of Canaan (Ham’s son) was once used to justify the African slave trade. (His ancestors are believed to have settled in Africa.) How would you explain to someone why that interpretation is false?
- Why is God opposed to the building of the tower? How does the Tower of Babel show human disregard for God’s previous command that mankind “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it” (Gen 1:28, 9:7)?
- The Tower of Babel is a symbol of human autonomy, and the city builders see themselves as determining and establishing their own destiny without any reference to the Lord. Where can we find vestiges of this attitude today? In American culture? In your own heart? What is the remedy?

Turning to God in Faith and Repentance

- Ham sinned by scornfully looking upon his father’s shame, unlike his brothers, who were careful to protect and care for Noah in his weakness. How do you respond to others’ sin? What sins do you tend to laugh at or mock (literally or subconsciously)? How can you better serve those snared by sin?
- Sinful disobedience made it necessary for God to scatter mankind, but he could have used any number of means to accomplish that end. Instead, he chose language and culture as his means of enforcing Gen 1:28 & 9:7.
 - What does this say about the worth of various cultures and languages found throughout the world today?
 - In what ways is it difficult for you to embrace other cultures or people who don’t speak, dress or act like you? How can Christ transform you in this area?
 - Read Acts 2:1–13. How is Pentecost like the Tower? How is it different?
 - Read Revelation 7:9–10. What do you notice about human languages here? Once again, we find humanity united in one common purpose, but what is their goal this time?

Prayer: Remember missionaries the world over who desire to see the nations delight in the one true God. Pray for them, but also pray for the members of your group, that God would give you an urgency to see the unreached hear the Gospel. Ask for guidance about how you as a group, individuals and families can bless the nations that God has made.

Announcements

- 40 Days for Life (April 9)
- Ladies’ Lunch (April 15 @ noon; Rachel@insidecrosspointe.com)
- Good Friday (April 18 @ 7 p.m.)
- Easter (April 20 @ 10:30 a.m.)
- Children’s Min. Volunteer Orientation (April 27 @ 9 a.m.; Christy@insidecrosspointe.com)
- Starting Pointe (May 2–4; Robert@insidecrosspointe.com)