

“THROUGH THE BIBLE”
Union Chapel M. B. Church
Dr. O. Wendell Davis, Pastor/Teacher/Servant Leader

GENESIS, Part II

“Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph,” Genesis 12-50

Introduction to Part II

Genesis chapters 12 through 50 teaches about the life and work of Abraham, and his descendants. God called Abraham, to leave his homeland for the new country that God would show him. Along the way, God promised to make his descendants into a great nation: “In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” (Genesis 12:3).

Through Abraham’s spiritual descendants, God kept His Covenant, and blessed this great family. Many have been brought to faith through the blood of Abraham’s descendant Jesus Christ. Now we are called to follow in the footsteps of faithful Abraham, the father of all who truly believe in Jesus Christ. (Romans 4:11; Galatians 3:7, 29).

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GENESIS
OUTLINE 9

“The Call of Abraham,” Genesis 12

The first part of Genesis closes out with the whole world gathered in unity to construct a tower and city to make a name for themselves. But instead they experience defeat, confusion, and scattering. The result of this judgment was what God wanted in the first place (Genesis 9:1). In other words, it was God’s will.

The second part of Genesis (Genesis 12-50) opens with the Lord’s call to a man named Abraham. God called him to leave his homeland and family, to set out for a new life and land, which he did. He did it by faith, trusting God to show him the way. It takes great faith to leave your homeland and travel to a land that you have no knowledge of, or even where it’s located.

The rest of Genesis follows the life of Abraham and the next three generations who started to experience the fulfillment of the divine promises God made to him. God called Abraham into covenant of faithful service (Genesis 11:27-32; 12:1, 4). By leaving the territory (land of pagans and idols) of his faithless extended family and following God’s call. Abraham separated himself sharply from his distant relatives who stayed in Mesopotamia and attempted to build the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11).

Tonight we’ll highlight five contrasts of Abraham’s immediate family in Genesis chapter 12 verse 5, and Noah’s other descendents in chapter 11, those who attempted to build the Tower of Babel.

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I. First, Abraham puts his trust in God, they did not.

A. Abraham puts his trust in God’s guidance, rather than on human device. In contrast, the tower builders believed that by their own skill and ingenuity, they could devise a tower “with its top in the heavens” (Genesis 11:4). In an attempt to achieve significance and security in a way that usurped God’s authority.

B. Abraham trusted God and they did not. That’s a question that begs an answer from all of us today; are we going to trust God, someone else, some human device, or ourselves? Big question!

II. Abraham wasn’t seeking notoriety, but the builders wanted to be famous and known of forever.

A. The builders of the tower sought to make a name for themselves (Genesis 11:4), but Abraham trusted God’s promise that He would make Abraham’s name great (Genesis 12:2). The difference was not the desire to achieve greatness, but the desire to pursue fame on your own terms.

B. God did indeed make Abraham famous, not for his own sake but in order that “all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Genesis 12:3). The builders sought fame for their own sake, yet they remain anonymous to this day. We only speak of them when we’re trying to teach a person “what not to do.”

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III. Abraham was obedient, they were disobedient.

A. Abraham was willing to go wherever God led him, while the builders attempted to huddle together in their comfort zone.

B. They took on their project out of fear that they would be scattered across the earth (Genesis 11:4). In doing so, they rejected God’s purpose for humanity to “fill the earth” (Genesis 1:28).

IV. Abraham was willing to follow God into new relationships, but the builders wanted to live in a gated society and avoid new relationships.

A. How can we share God with others if we avoid contact with them? Sometimes following God means relocating. Mother Davis and I know this from personal experience. It’s hard to do when your roots are deep in family, friends, and your general relationships are strong, it’s hard to do.

B. Abraham was willing to let God lead him into new relationships. While the tower builders sought to close themselves off in a guarded fortress, Abraham trusted God’s promise that his family would grow into a great nation (Genesis 12:2, 15:5).

C. Though they lived among strangers in the land of Canaan (Genesis 17:18), they had good relationships with those they came in contact with (Genesis 21:22-34; 23:1-12).

Note: This is the gift of community...

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V. Abraham was patient and waited on God, while the builders were impatient and not willing to wait on God.

A. Abraham was blessed with the patience to take a long-term view. God’s promises were to be realized in the time of Abraham’s offspring, not in the time of Abraham himself. The Bible says the “offspring” is Jesus (Galatians 3:9), meaning that the fulfillment date was more than a thousand years in the future. In fact, the promise to Abraham will not be fulfilled completely until the return of Christ (Matthew 24:30-31). Its progress cannot be adequately measured by quarterly reports!

B. The tower builders, in comparison, took no thought for how their project would affect future generations, and God criticized them explicitly for this bad call (Genesis 11:6).

Conclusion and Q&A

RESEARCH QUESTION: What was the name of the person that accused Joseph of trying to take advantage of her, and why?

**Next week: We’ll examine God’s promises to Abraham.

***Notes on Back**

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