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Genesis 11



Genesis - Steve Gregg

Steve Gregg's discussion of Genesis 11 explores the story of the Tower of Babel, where people attempted to build a tower reaching the heavens to maintain control rather than being dispersed across the earth. God dispersed them and confused their language, creating different languages and nations. Gregg also delves into the genealogy of Terah's family and Abram's journey to Canaan after God's command. Ultimately, Genesis 11 emphasizes God's plan for people to seek Him independently rather than being ruled by one leader or government.

Transcript

Genesis 11 Now we come to Genesis 11 and a rather well-known story, the Tower of Babel. It says, Now the whole earth had one language and one speech. And it came to pass as they journeyed from the east that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there.

Then they said to one another, Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly. They had brick for stone and they had asphalt for mortar. And they said, Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower whose top is in the heavens.

Let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth. But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. And the Lord said, Indeed, the people are one and they all have one language.

And this is what they begin to do. Now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them. Come, let us go down, and there confuse their language that they may not understand one another's speech.

So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city. Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth. And from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.

Now we read in chapter 10 about how the nations who were descended from Noah were scattered throughout the earth, and where they spread out to the various regions. This tells us the time of their scattering. In chapter 10, there were a number of references to these nations scattering according to their nations and according to their languages.

But they didn't initially have languages, they initially had all one language. It's at the Tower of Babel that this dispersion and this confusion of the languages came about. Which tells us, of course, that separate languages did not come about the way that secular evolutionists would think, because they would assume that languages evolved gradually, probably in different places, and then other languages evolved from there.

But we do certainly see evolution of language. We do see even that the English language that is spoken by young people today has vocabulary and idioms that we didn't speak when I was young. And my generation spoke idioms that my parents didn't speak.

And now there are terms that have just come into the language that all generations that are now living know, which were new a generation or two ago. And if you go back and read English that was written 300 years ago or 400 years ago, you can hardly recognize the words because it changes. Language changes over time.

So it is very probable that some languages have come into existence since the Tower of Babel simply by the process of evolution. But they did not all evolve from a single language over a slow process. But they all, at least the original languages, perhaps the 70 languages that are alluded to in Chapter 10, because there are 70 heads of nations mentioned there in Chapter 10, were all begun at one time, at this tower.

And this tower was the occasion of God being offended by man, or at least concerned about what man was up to, and therefore interfering. Now we read that one of the problems was that everyone spoke one language. And yet God had told them to disperse.

He hadn't used the word disperse, but he did tell after the flood. He told Noah in Chapter 9, verse 1, Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. Well, filling the earth requires dispersing.

And that's what they did when God scattered them. So that's what God had in mind. They didn't want to disperse.

We see that in verse 4. They say, let's build this tower, let's build this city. And at the end of that verse it says, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth. So that's exactly what they were trying to avoid.

Now, apparently Nimrod, because we are told that Babel was the beginning of his kingdom, over in Chapter 10, of course, in verse 10, the beginning of Nimrod's kingdom was Babel. So this was his project. He apparently was maybe the first king, certainly the

first king after the flood.

We don't know if there were any kings before the flood. But he might have been the first man who ever made himself a king. And he apparently liked the idea of being a king over everybody.

And that would be why he doesn't want people scattered. If people scattered all over the earth, it would be impossible in an age without quick transportation or communication for one man who had to be located in one place. He couldn't rule over everybody if they're scattered too far away for him to get to.

So the idea is to keep them all in one place. And I think that that's actually a strategy that power-hungry rulers always observe. Keep people compressed where you can see them.

Don't let them be scattered out all over the hills and the mountains and the forests, all over the land. That's too hard to keep track of them. And it's interesting how that in our modern times, people are, populations are being concentrated in cities.

You know, so much so that it's possible to tell a city dweller that the earth is overpopulated, and they'll believe you. Because they can tell at rush hour, the traffic, the freeways themselves are overpopulated. And if you tell the average city dweller that the world is overpopulated, it rings true because their world is.

Because they're all crowded together in a small space. That's not the way that God necessarily intended people to be. He wanted to be scattered.

It was for political expediency that the leaders liked to keep people in concentrated groups. I didn't say a concentration camp, but sometimes they even liked that as a solution. But to concentrate people in one area where they can keep their eye on them.

Where they can keep them under surveillance. Where they can control them. There's actually, and I don't mean to get off on this, but in our own time, there are governmental policies in America that are being employed that seem to have only that as their objective.

Because in places like northern Idaho where I used to live, where there's people living here and there on homesteads out in the mountains and the woods and everywhere, there's laws being instituted where they're reinstituting grizzly bears and wolves. And making it illegal to kill them. So that farmers and ranchers are having their livestock eaten by bears that are reintroduced artificially into the region.

And by wolves that are reintroduced into the region. But the farmers are not allowed to kill the predators. So of course, eventually when their flocks and their herds are gone, they just have to move to the city where they can make a living.

More and more of the lands that have been privately owned forests and so forth are now being brought into the jurisdiction of federal jurisdictions. National forests and so forth. Which means that obviously people can't live there.

And various policies are being done to kind of herd the people out of the little nooks and crannies where they've gone for their privacy and kind of force them to have no other options but to go into the cities. Where they can be watched more carefully. And that's what Nimrod apparently had up his sleeve too.

When the crowds start to get big, people start to want some space. He could see it coming. These people are going to want to move out to remote areas so they can have some space to farm and to ranch.

But then if I want to control them, how can I control them? I can only go as fast as a horse can ride, or a camel. And so he said, let's do something to keep people from getting spread out. Let's keep everyone together in one space.

I know, we'll build a city. That was the first reason to build a city, I guess, after Cain built the city for his son. We don't read of any other cities necessarily being built till this one, as I recall.

But anyway, he said the way to do this is to build a city and a tower. Now the tower they built, of course archaeologists have not found the Tower of Babel. Or maybe they have.

They have found several towers in the region where this took place. Which was on the plains of Shinar, where ancient Babylon was. Towers actually have been found, a great number of them.

The kind that archaeologists refer to as ziggurats. Ziggurats. Z-I-G-G-U-R-A-T.

Ziggurat. These towers are, well they look like the pictures of the Tower of Babel that you see in children's Bible storybooks. You know, they look like they're made of a series of disks sitting on top of each other of descending diameters as you go toward the top.

You've seen those pictures I'm sure in children's books of the Tower of Babel. Well, the reason it's depicted that way in the children's books is because archaeologists believe these ziggurats are what the Tower of Babel was. It was a large ziggurat.

These were towers that had religious significance. They were actually astrological observatories. And it is thought that the Tower of Babel was constructed to be the largest of these.

That was the intention. And that it was perhaps going to be like a temple to the stars. I mean, astrology is a satanic deception, of course, and it's a religious notion.

And if Nimrod was the first to invent what we call astrology, pagan astrology, he may

have done so in order to create the first world religion, because through world religion you can keep people in one place. And that's why if you have a shrine that everyone has to worship at, they can't get very far away from it. You know, the Jews had to go to Jerusalem three times a year.

Some of them lived pretty far from it, but they would make their journeys three times a year to Jerusalem. They couldn't easily live very far away. Now, some of them eventually did because they were carried away by the Babylonians or by the Assyrians, and they couldn't help it.

But the way God had situated the Jews, they were all to be in the land of Canaan, which was only, you know, smaller than Rhode Island. And, you know, going to Jerusalem was something everyone could do and was supposed to do. Having a central shrine keeps people kind of geographically close.

And the Tower of Babel was probably supposed to be some kind of a religious shrine, not to Yahweh. But if the ziggurats that the archaeologists have found are samples of what the tower was, it was probably a shrine to the stars, which may have been worshipped as gods and may have given rise to the whole idea that the stars, you know, control your destiny and so forth. That is now informing the modern horoscopes and so forth.

Now, the story is told with a fair bit of disdain. This is a proud attempt of man to defy God. God wants people to spread out.

Why? Apparently, he doesn't want there to be one world government. He doesn't want everybody to be under the eye of one leader. And why not? Well, actually, it's probably with reference to the Tower of Babel that Paul is speaking.

In Acts chapter 17, speaking on Mars Hill, he's speaking to the Athenians, the Greek philosophers, and he's giving a sermon, and he's trying to bring them up to speed on the things of God. And they believe in idols, and he wants them to know about the real God. And it says in verse 24, Acts 17, 24, Paul said to the Athenian philosophers, God who made the world and everything in it, since he is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands.

Nor is he worshipped with men's hands as though he needed anything, since he gives to all, life, breath, and all things. He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and boundaries of their habitation, so that they should seek the Lord in the hope that they might grope for him and find him, though he is not far from each of us, for in him we live and move and have our being. Now notice Paul, talking to these pagans who don't know anything about Genesis, says there's a real God, the Lord of heaven and earth, he made the earth, he made the people in it, and he even made the nations, and pre-appointed where they would be, what their boundaries would be, at what times in history.

He certainly is referring to the results of what happened at the Tower of Babel. God dispersed the people into what became eventually nations all over the world. But why did he do that? Why did he disperse them like this? Why didn't he just let them all be in one place? He says, because God wanted that men should be able to seek God.

That's what it says. It says, so that they should seek the Lord in the hope that they might grope for him and find him. Now, the idea here is if all people were not scattered abroad, and all could be brought under the control of one leader, that leader could control everybody and limit the ability of people to seek the Lord, if that leader wished to prevent them from doing so.

But if people are scattered all over in various jurisdictions that are not under one leader, then even if a leader somewhere tries to restrict the worship of God, there's still the ability to worship God in other places that he has no control over. It is that people might have independence of thought and of religious pursuit that God did not want people all in one place. It is no doubt in order that they could not have this independence of thought and religious pursuit, that Nimrod wanted to keep them all in one spot, and built them a central shrine to be probably the shrine of a one world religion, which would, of course, underscore or undergird, I should say, the legitimacy of his one world government.

Of course, one world government didn't mean global in those days. All the world was capable of living in one plane. I mean, it was just probably not very many generations.

Two generations after the flood, three generations after the flood that Nimrod lived. And so, you know, starting with three guys, and each of them had maybe five to six or seven children, and then some grandchildren. By this time, there were probably, you know, maybe only a hundred people.

Maybe that was how many people were on the earth. But that's enough for them to say, well, you know, I think I'm going to start my farm over there a few miles over from you guys, because, you know, I'm feeling crowded here. And Nimrod says, no, I think I don't want you guys as a person, let's build a tower, and that'll be the thing that keeps us together.

Now, as the narration of it goes, the tower is described in very, I guess we say demeaning or disrespectful terms. The narrator, Moses, has no respect for it. For example, in verse three, it says, they said to one another, come and let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly.

And then Moses says, they had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar. Now, what's that saying? Brick made out of mud? They didn't even have stone to build this tower. When Solomon built the temple, he made it from huge stones.

It would have stood probably forever if it hadn't been burned down by the Romans. It was a solid, strong building. They didn't have stone there, so they had to make mud bricks.

They didn't even have mortar. They had to take slime, you know, asphalt, tar, for mortar. The point here is, a respectable building would be made out of stone and mortar.

But they didn't have that. They had bricks that they had to bake from the mud, and they had asphalt, which is not really suited for mortar, but the point is, it's the best they had. This was not going to be the highest quality building.

It was the best they could do with what they had on hand. And also, it says in verse 4, they said, let's build a city for ourselves with a tower whose top is in the heavens and make a name for ourselves. Now, the top in the heavens, some scholars have said it could be translated with the heavens in its top, which could mean a depiction of the heavens, like the zodiac or something depicted on the top of the building.

Some of the ziggurats do have images of the zodiac at the top of them, so it might be a reference to that. Or it might just say, let's build a tower that goes all the way up into heaven, as if to knock God off of his throne, perhaps. They don't say as much here, but Isaiah does.

In chapter 14 of Isaiah, where the king of Babylon is addressed, in Isaiah 14, in the passage which is so often, I think, mistakenly applied to Satan, in verse 12, it says, how are you fallen from heaven, O Lucifer? Actually, it should be translated, O morning star. Lucifer is not a name. How are you fallen from heaven, O morning star? Son of the morning.

How you are cut down to the ground. You who weaken the nations. Now, by the way, this is addressed to the king of Babylon, we know that.

Because it says so in verse 4 of this chapter, that you will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon. So this is uttered to the king of Babylon, who is referred symbolically to as the morning star and so forth. Unfortunately, the translation Lucifer was given in the King James, I think following the Vulgate, and it was treated as a proper name and some have applied it to Satan, but this doesn't.

It says, for you have said in your heart, I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I also will sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest side of the north.

I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the most high. Yet you should be brought down to shale to the lowest steps of the pit.

Those who see you will gaze at you and consider you saying, is this the man? It is a man,

not an angel we're talking to here. Is this the man who made the earth to tremble, who shook kingdom? Now, this man, the king of Babylon, is brought down because of his pride and his ambitions. And speaking to the king of Babylon, he says, you thought you'd ascend into the heaven.

You thought you'd ascend above the clouds. You thought you'd set your throne among the stars of God. Could this be a reference to the Tower of Babel? It certainly could be, because Babel was the beginning of Babylon.

And this is addressed to the king of Babylon as representative of his nation. Speaking to Babylon, God could even say, you thought you were going to push God out of his throne. You're going to be like the most high.

You're going to put your throne above the stars of God. If the king of Babylon, or if Babylon itself, could be said to have ever had any real such ambitions, it was here in Genesis 11 that we read of them. They wanted to build a city and a tower whose top is in the heavens, it says in verse 4. Genesis 11, 4. But, in keeping with the disdain the narration uses, it says in verse 5, Yahweh came down to see the city and the tower.

Now consider that. They thought they were building a high tower with its top in the heavens. God says, I'd like to see what you're doing.

And he had to go down to see it. They weren't as high as they thought they were. God was so high that he couldn't even see it from where he was.

Let's go down there and see this tower they're building. And the Lord, when he came down to see it, he said, Indeed, the people are one, and they have one language. And this is what they begin to do.

Now nothing that they have proposed to do, or purpose to do, no, proposed to him, will be withheld from them. Now what does that last line mean? Some people think that God is essentially saying, Whatever man can propose, he can pull it off. And in light of modern technology, it almost seems like that would be, I mean, almost like there don't seem to be really limits to what man can do.

The things that were science fiction in H.G. Wells and some of the other old science fiction writers in the 1800s, now is just real. Atomic submarines, space travel, telephones. When I was a kid, Dick Tracy, which was kind of science fiction in a way, had a wrist communicator, like a walkie-talkie.

He'd put it on his wrist and go, Oh, wouldn't that be something? And now you can get on the internet from your wrist if you want to. It's amazing all the things. Now they have virtual reality, where you can actually be in a virtual world with 3D and it interacts with your emotions and stuff.

I mean, it's like you create your own world, almost. It does seem like there's almost no limit to what man can do. I think there are limits.

For example, I seriously doubt that time travel is even philosophically possible, much less scientifically, but who knows? But the point is, some say, Well, that's what God's saying. Now whatever man purposes to do, he'll be able to do. But I don't think that's what God's saying.

Because he did say, Now. And back then, it certainly was not true that man had the ability to make all these things. Man did not have the technology back then, for many thousands of years after that either.

He's saying, At this point, something exists, which if I do not interrupt it, men will be able to do whatever they want to do. And I think what he means by that is not that they will have the innate genius or ability or technology to do it, but rather, it will be as if he's given them permission to. Shortly after the flood, we already had this revolt.

And I think what he's saying is, If I let this go by, I've set a precedent that I can't, you know, where do you draw the line then? Whatever they want to do, I have to let them get away with it, as it were. If I don't step in to interfere, then essentially I'm going to have to, you know, allow them to do anything. Why would I allow them to do this, if there's something else I won't allow them to do? And I think what he's saying here is, I've got to set a precedent here of telling men he can't just do whatever he wants to, or else he will do whatever he wants to.

It is possible, though, of course, that I'm wrong, and that he is suggesting that if people don't scatter, that the combined intelligence of all people working together will really put severe limits on what they could be prevented from doing. But I think, when he says nothing will be withheld from them, I think it means that if I don't withhold this ambitious project from them, then what can I withhold from them? This is their first rebellion against me. If I let them just get away with that, and I do nothing, say nothing, then I've set a precedent that kind of gives them permission to do anything.

So he says, let's go down there and confuse their language that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad, by apparently confusing their language, over all the face of the earth, and they ceased building the city. Therefore the name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language.

Now some people say the word Babel means confusion. It actually doesn't. The word Baal, or Balal, in the Hebrew, does mean confusion.

But Babel doesn't mean confusion in the Hebrew. It's more an ancient form of the word Babylon. But it sounds similar to the word for confusion, and therefore I think that's the

play on words that it's referring to here.

Now the rest of chapter 11 is the genealogy of Abraham, and just as in Genesis 5, we had a detailed genealogy from Adam to Noah, giving the ages of people at the time they had their sons, and the number of years they lived afterwards. And in that case also giving the combined age after that. This does something similar.

It tells how old a guy was when he had his son, and how many years afterwards he lived. It doesn't do the math for you, though, and doesn't add them up for you. But it's pretty simple, because the numbers are smaller here than they were in Genesis 5. After the flood, people apparently didn't live as long as before.

Why? Well, we're not exactly told. And there could have been a combination of things. It could have been God's judgment, just shortening a man's life.

It could have been conditions in the world that were different after the flood. The environment, things like that, shortened man's life. I mentioned the possibility that the soil was depleted, and the food supply was not as nutritious, and couldn't sustain life for as long, or whatever.

I don't know. I mean, there are herbs and nutrients that you can supplement with, that definitely are, at least many scientists believe, will someday give us a bill, maybe not 900 years. But here we had people living more up between like 200 and 500 years each.

Oh, I did say I would mention something about the races of the earth, and I shouldn't pass that up in case people are interested in that. I wanted to talk about it in connection with Babel, because it was at Babel that people were scattered. And people wondered, well, how could all the races of man come from one family, Noah's family? And some people imagined that maybe Ham was black, and Japheth was white, and that Shem was maybe brown or yellow-colored or whatever, and that the races came from these three men that way.

But it's not quite that simple. But what is simple is that the gene pool of a single family can easily be sufficiently rich as to eventually, from their offspring, give many different colors of skin, many different racial, what we call racial characteristics, versus only one race, the human race. But what we refer to as racial characteristics can easily come from one family.

And I may have mentioned this previously to you, but if a person has a black parent and a white parent, that person is called a mulatto. And if two mulattos marry and have children, they can have any color child in the whole world. Mulattos have such a combination of the genes from their black parent and their white parent that they can be combined in various ways, and nine children of one mulatto couple can be nine different colors, from white to black and everything in between.

So there's not a problem with all the racial groups, as we call them, the colors and the characteristics coming from a single family originally. We don't know how long it would take for them all to differentiate, and particularly to consolidate into groups where those traits were universal in their group. But the reason I mention this with Babel is that some people feel that when God divided up the languages of people, of course there would be a few people in every language group, it may be that he also chose languages that corresponded with genetic characteristics these people had, that they would be isolated from others by language.

The particular genetic traits of their group would also be inbred over the generations and consolidate so that some groups would have all white people eventually, even if they were kind of mixed beforehand, eventually the dominant traits would last, some of the all black and some of the all with other characteristics. As far as their geographical dispersion, it's interesting that the darker skin people live more in the equatorial zones where there's more severe exposure to sunlight, but really white people with not much pigment tend to live in the northern regions where there's not as much sunshine. And it is the case that the amount of pigment in your skin does determine your tolerance to ultraviolet and infrared radiation and stuff like that from the sun.

People with really light skin, take an albino for example, who doesn't have any pigment, they can't go out in the sun, it's going to kill them. Whereas if you have very dark skin, lots of pigment makes you very tolerant of the sun's rays and of course there's the gradation in between. It's very probable that the people who tended to have dark skin migrated toward the equatorial zones because they're good places to grow crops and these people were more tolerant of the sunlight and so forth and the people who couldn't stand that moved more toward the northern areas where the sunlight was less direct.

So that as these people moved to regions that were suited to their own genetic makeup and strengths and weaknesses, these colors and characteristics came to be solidified in those regions. Eventually the whole region was characterized by people of those traits. And over thousands of years, over hundreds of generations, you've got the establishment of these different characteristics in different locations.

But it's not impossible for them all to have come from a single family. And you don't even have to have one of Noah's sons is black and one's white and one's Asian looking, but rather they just had to have all that potential within their gene pool. And they obviously did, Adam and Eve had all that in them too.

But now, of course, since people have scattered more and have intermarried within their own geography more, the gene pool in each group would be narrowed over time so that you don't have that variety. Until modern times, of course, when people have been married interracially a lot more, and then of course their kids are going to have that richer gene pool as well. Anyway, we come to the descendants of Shem leading down to

Abraham.

And it says, this is the genealogy of Shem, verse 10, or the Toledoth of Shem. He was a hundred years old and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood. After he begot Arphaxad, Shem lived 500 years and begot sons and daughters.

So his total length of life was 600 years, though the total is not given to us here. Arphaxad lived 35 years and begot Selah. And after he begot Selah, Arphaxad lived 403 years.

So he lived to be 438 years old and begot sons and daughters, a bit younger than his father. Then Selah lived 30 years and begot Eber. After he begot Eber, Selah lived 403 years and begot sons and daughters.

So he lived almost as long as his father, a little shorter, just 433 years. Eber lived 34 years and begot Peleg. Now we followed the genealogy of his brother Joktan at the end of chapter 10.

Now we want to talk about Peleg, that brother. At 34 years, Eber begot Peleg. After he begot Peleg, Eber lived 430 years and begot sons and daughters.

So that total was 464 years. Peleg lived 30 years and begot Reu. After he begot Reu, Peleg lived 209 years and begot sons and daughters.

So his lifespan was radically shorter, only 239 years. Actually about half as long, or less than half as long as his dad lived. And Reu lived 32 years and begot Serug.

And after he begot Serug, Reu lived 207 years and begot sons and daughters. He too didn't live very long, a little longer than his dad, but only 239 years. Serug lived 30 years and begot Nahor.

After he begot Nahor, Serug lived 200 years and begot sons and daughters. So the total length was 230 years. Nahor lived 29 years and begot Terah.

And after he begot Terah, Nahor lived 119 years. So he lived 148 years only. And he got sons and daughters.

Now Terah lived 70 years and begot Abram, Nahor and Haran. I'm not sure whether it's Haran or Haran. But as you can see, it does not tell us immediately how long Terah lived after that.

But it does further down. He lived another 135 years after apparently one of those sons was born. And in the end, in verse 32, it says the days of Terah were 205 years and Terah died in Haran.

Now Haran was the name of a place. Also a name of one of his sons. And we have a little

bit of a story of the family here.

And Frank, I might need you to remind me, Abram was not the oldest son. Is that correct? He's mentioned first because he's the most important. Similar to the Shem, Ham and Japheth thing.

Nahor died first, right? And so he, or Haran did. But yeah, Nahor lived longer and he was the father of some of the other characters that we deal with. So Nahor apparently, Frank has done the work, probably the oldest.

Abram was the youngest? Okay, so as we see, these names are not at all in their birth order either. Abram was the youngest. Now apparently Terah was 70 when the oldest was born.

Is that right? When Nahor was born. Alright, now this is the genealogy of Terah. Terah begot Abram, Nahor and Haran.

Not in that order though. And Haran begot Lot. Now Haran, I'd better be consistent, I'll call him Haran.

And Haran died before his father Terah in his native land in Ur of the Chaldeans. So here we read that their hometown was Ur of the Chaldeans, a Babylonian city apparently. Chaldeans were the Babylonians.

And that's where Terah and his family lived. And one of his sons died even before his father did. And that was Haran.

But he left two, or actually three, orphaned children. He had begotten Lot, who became an orphan when his father died. He also had a daughter named Milcah.

And apparently another daughter, this is not entirely clear, but at the end of verse 29, it says that, well it says 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.

Now Iscah is only mentioned here. It's a feminine name, and so it's another daughter apparently. I don't know what became of Iscah after her father died.

But the other two children found help with their uncles. Milcah married her uncle, Nahor, and Lot, the other orphan, was kind of adopted into Abram's family. Because Abram had a wife but no children, so he adopted his nephew, Lot.

It says in verse 30, Sarai, at this point she's called, was barren. She had no child. So here's the family sticking together.

They're still at that point in Ur of the Chaldees. And there's been no migration yet toward

Canaan. And one of the three brothers dies, apparently the middle brother.

He leaves three orphans. One of the surviving brothers marries one of those orphans, and the other surviving brother takes the other orphan under his wing. And what became of Iscah, we don't know.

Maybe Iscah was taken care of by Terah. But we are informed early on that Sarai was not having any children. She was barren.

And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot and his son Haran, I'm sorry, the son of Haran, excuse me, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, who was also, by the way, she's called his daughter-in-law, but she's also his daughter. We're told later on that Sarai had the same father Abram had, but a different mother. So Terah had at least two wives, and Sarai was his daughter, but here she's referred to as his daughter-in-law, because after she was married, her relationship with her husband is more defining than her, as is always the case.

And his son Abram's wife, it says, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan, but they didn't go there. They came to Haran and dwelt there. So the days of Terah were 205 years, and Terah died in Haran.

Now, it's interesting here. It says that Terah took Abram and the rest of the family and started to go to Canaan. We are not told why, but they didn't go to Canaan.

They got to Haran, which was not there, and they stayed there until Terah died. Later, we see that Abram will go to Canaan, but we'll find out more when we get to chapter 12, which we won't do now because we're out of time. When we come to chapter 12 and we see in the story of Abram, it'll turn out that it was God who spoke to Abram back in Ur of the Chaldeans and told him to leave his father's house and go to Canaan.

But what actually happened is his father decided to bring the household with him, and it was Terah who took them all from Ur toward Canaan. This was not as it should be, I believe. I believe it was a mistake, and that's why they didn't get all the way to Canaan.

They got to Haran, but they didn't get any further until Terah was dead. I believe Terah was probably an obstruction to Abram going to Canaan. If Abram had just left his father's house as God told him to do, he would have made the trip alone and made it directly to Canaan.

Instead, he apparently allowed his father to go along. It's easier if your whole family wants to go with you. It's easier than leaving them behind.

He only half obeyed God and only got really part of the way to Canaan until his father died. We'll talk about that and how we know that when we get to chapter 12, but at this point we will take no more.

