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# What You Need to Know About The First Eleven Chapters of the Bible

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## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE FIRST ELEVEN CHAPTERS IN THE BIBLE

There are exactly 1189 chapters in the English Bible. I believe it can be rightly concluded that the first eleven of these chapters are some of the most important ones. Certainly they comprise the foundation upon which the remaining 1178 securely rest. The following attempts to offer a unique and (hopefully) useful overview of these Bible verses.

### He stood up, spoke out, and sat down (1:1-2:3)

- The One who stood up was God. The words He spoke out brought all things into existence. Following this He sat down, for the work of creation was complete.
- All it required was six sovereign "Let there be" commands, and there was!  
First Command: Let there be light  
Second Command: Let there be space and water  
Third Command: Let there be plant life  
Fourth Command: Let there be sun, moon, and stars  
Fifth Command: Let there be fish and fowl  
Sixth Command: Let there be land animals
- But the divine language regarding the second part of the sixth command suddenly changes from "Let there be," to *"And God said, let us make man in our own image ... and let them have dominion over all the earth."* Thus, God's final act was to create a TAKE CHARGE CREATURE MADE IN HIS OWN IMAGE!

### A Somber Warning followed by a Sensational Wedding (2:4-25)

- The somber warning: Here was God's tale of two trees which He invited Adam to partake of the tree of life, (and all other trees) but forbade eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, *"for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."*
- The sensational wedding. Following Adam's naming of the animals the wedding took place. It was not only history's first, but the most unusual of all in that the groom gave birth to the bride he married!

### "TRUST ME," he said, "go ahead, you won't die!" So they did and they did! (3:1-24)

What a tragic and shameful story we have here of deceit, disobedience, despair, and spiritual death. But the account concludes with God cleansing and clothing His erring children, along with the promise of a future Savior who would do the same for all who would accept it. Just think of it—long before the star of Bethlehem, Christmas is anticipated in the Garden of Eden! Marvelous and mysterious are the ways of God.

### A farmer and a shepherd: Why the first murdered the second (4:1-26)

The reason was tragically simple: the farmer (Cain) had offered God a bloodless sacrifice and his brother, the shepherd (Abel) had presented a blood offering. The first was

rejected by God, the second accepted by Him. For this, the unrepentant Cain is driven from God and becomes the founder of a godless Cainite civilization.

### **History's First Obituary Column, listing those who died and the one who did not (5:1-32)**

- Those who died: Eight names of the deceased ones (not counting Noah and his three sons) are listed, along with their age at death. Among these eight was history's oldest human being (before or after) Methuselah, whose final birthday celebration required 969 candles on his gigantic cake!
- The one who did not die: speaking of Methuselah, the one who did an end run on death, the first to get out of this life alive, was his father, Enoch!
- *"And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years: And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him"*(5:23, 24).

### **Why and How the Creator Destroyed His Creation: A tale of madness and mercy, of punishment and protection (6-8)**

- The madness: In the days of Noah, gross sin and universal iniquity had reached the level that could not be tolerated a moment longer by a holy and righteous God. It was even possible that both humans and angels had banded together in blasphemous transgressions against their sovereign creator.
- The mercy: *And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD"* (6:7, 8).
- The punishment: The divine method of destruction would entail no less than a global flood, meant to destroy all humans and animals with the exception of those gathered in a huge floating barge which Noah was commanded to build.
- The protection: Exactly one week after Noah and his family, along with a male and female of all animals (7 pairs of the clean ones) were safely aboard the Ark, the rains began to fall in Niagara-like torrents. At the same time great subterranean lakes ruptured, spewing forth their contents. All this was accompanied by the lowering of the land continents and the raising of the sea floor. And the results? *"And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered"*(7:19). But what of Noah? Did he, indeed, could he have survived this fearful onslaught of divine punishment? *"And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters asswaged"*(8:1). In fact, all living creatures, human and animal, would exit the Ark a year later with none being the worst for wear!

## **A Sign in the Sky and a Sot in a Tent (9)**

- The sign: A rainbow now appears as a reminder of God's promise never to destroy the earth again by a global flood. Question: Is there really a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow? Spiritually speaking, in God's case, the answer is YES, and that rainbow is the Redeemer who assures His own that they need never fear divine judgment of any kind!  
*"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved"*(Jn. 3:17).
- The sot: *"And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent"* (9:20, 21).  
*"How are the mighty fallen!"*(2 Sam. 1:19). These sad words, later spoken by David in regards to King Saul could also tragically describe Noah's life. Think of it—the former fearless sailor who braved the elements of a global flood now lies in a drunken stupor! Will God, indeed, can God use him again? We are not told, but it is significant to note that he was approximately 600 when he entered the Ark and 950 when he died. Apart from uttering a single prophecy, nothing more is recorded during the final three and a half centuries of his life. The apostle Paul may well have had Noah in mind when he wrote the following:  
*"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway"*(1 Cor. 9:27).

## **Descendants by the dozens! What a family tree it was! (10:1-31; 11:10-30)**

- There were three main branches extending from this tree, namely, the descendants of Noah's three sons, Japheth, Ham, and Shem.
- If you read the record closely it will reveal your lineage! Several names stand out in this listing. These are:  
Mizraim, son of Ham and father of the Egyptians.  
Nimrod, grandson of Ham and builder of Babylon.  
Abram and Sarai, distant descendants of Shem.
- Soon the descendants from these three key branches would obey God's original command to *"be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the earth"*(1:28).
- Paul would later remind the crowd on Mars Hill of this common human heritage:  
*"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;... And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation"*(Acts 17:24, 26).  
So, dear reader, the truth is, I AM YOUR DISTANT COUSIN!

## **How, when, where, and why the Gate of God would become the City of Confusion (11:1-9)**

- Following the flood some descendants of Noah's three sons began construction of a tower and city on the fertile plains near the Euphrates River. The city would be known as Babel ...

The Gate of God! But the God of Heaven viewed this as a wicked attempt by rebellious people to unify against Him. Acting swiftly He stopped the project in its tracks by confounding and confusing their common language, breaking it into many dialects. Thus was the meaning of Babel changed from Gate of God to City of Confusion.

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