

The Essentials: The Church

Session 2: NATION

Genesis 11:27 – 12:9

Opening Collect

Together: Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Read: Genesis 11:27 – 12:9

Opening Thought

Last week we saw how God created all things, placed human beings in a garden, and commissioned them to exercise dominion and creativity as a reflection of God's goodness. In Adam and Eve's perfect fellowship with God, one another, and creation, we see an essential call of the church—to reveal to the world what human beings are meant to be and do. Now we see how the church is also called to reveal what God is like. God begins to restore his original design through the creation of a particular people. This week we'll discover more about how God calls and orders his people to be a people of distinction and particularity—set apart and visible.

Discussion:

1. This passage is typically interpreted as the initial promise—or covenant—given to Abraham that his family would eventually become a people or nation. What does it mean to be part of a nation? What does the word nation mean to you?
2. In Scripture, a lineage names where someone comes from in order to describe who they are. The lineage given in the beginning of our passage goes all the way back to Noah and even to Adam. What might that say about Abram and his calling?
3. How is the creation of a nation an answer to The Fall?
4. In our passage we see at least four different things: a genealogy, a location, a promise, and a response. What might those things tell us about what the church is meant to be?

Check in and Closing Prayer

Genesis 11:27 – 12:9

²⁷ Now these are the generations of Terah. Terah fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot. ²⁸ Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his kindred, in Ur of the Chaldeans. ²⁹ And Abram and Nahor took wives. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and Iscah. ³⁰ Now Sarai was barren; she had no child.

³¹ Terah took Abram his son and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and they went forth together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan, but when they came to Haran, they settled there. ³² The days of Terah were 205 years, and Terah died in Haran.

12 Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ² And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

⁴ So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. ⁵ And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, ⁶ Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. ⁷ Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him. ⁸ From there he moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there he built an altar to the Lord and called upon the name of the Lord. ⁹ And Abram journeyed on, still going toward the Negeb.