

- I. Excursus: A Tale of Two Cities Part 1
- a. Purpose: In this lesson we shall see the theme of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation about a tale of two cities so that we can learn more about God's glory in building a city for Himself and destroying His enemies which will move us to be more at awe with His glory.
 - b. The City of Man: Babylon
 - i. City as an act of rebellion in Genesis
 1. In the beginning of Genesis God wanted humanity to fill the whole earth
 - a. This was God created order in the Dominion mandate: *"God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.""* (Genesis 1:28).
 - b. This command is reinforced even after the fall in Genesis 8:17, 9:1, 9:7.
 2. So the building of cities brings people in proximity to one another rather than spreading out to fill the earth, thus going against God's command.
 3. This truth is reinforced by the fact that the first city mentioned is described in negative light: *"Cain had relations with his wife and she conceived, and gave birth to Enoch; and he built a city, and called the name of the city Enoch, after the name of his son"* (Genesis 4:17)
 - a. Here this first city mentioned is built by Cain.
 - b. The rest of Genesis 4 already paint Cain in a negative light so the connotation here is not positive.
 - c. Note that Cain name the city after Enoch in which Cain glorified a man instead of God.
 - ii. Tower of Babel (Genesis 11)
 1. "Babel" is Babylon
 - a. "Babel, which occurs over two hundred times in the Hebrew Bible, is almost always translated into English as 'Babylon.' Remarkably, in the whole of the Old Testament there are generally only two exceptions to this rule. These are Genesis 10:10 and 11:9, and even here a few English translations replace Babel in Genesis 10:10 with Babylon (e.g., NIV; JPS). Babel should be called Babylon."¹
 - b. In Genesis 11:2 the location of the Babel story was at *"a plain in the land of Shinar"* and elsewhere such as Daniel 1:2 we see that the *"land of Shinar"* is the location of Babylon.
 2. Characteristic of the city of Man #1: Disobedience to God

¹ T. Desmond Alexander, *The City of God and the Goal of Creation*: (Wheaton, Crossway), Kindle Location 204-209 out of 1936.

- a. Note: *“They said, “Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven... otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.””* (Genesis 11:4)
 - b. This is contrary to God’s plan of filling the whole earth.
- 3. Characteristic of the city of Man #2: Thinking they can reach God themselves
 - a. Note: *“They said, “Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven... ””* (Genesis 11:4a)
 - b. Of course God cannot by their own effort reach God whether physically or spiritually.
- 4. Characteristic of the city of Man #3: Self-Glorifying
 - a. Note: *“... and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.””* (Genesis 11:4b)
 - b. Note they believed that they will make a name for themselves will result in them not be scattered.
 - c. This belief is irrational but such is the nature of sin.
- 5. Characteristic of the city of Man #3: Imperialistic
 - a. Note: *“Now Cush became the father of Nimrod; he became a mighty one on the earth. 9 He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, “Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the Lord.” 10 The beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.”* (Genesis 10:8-10)
 - b. Note might mentioned three times in this passage.
 - c. As T. Desmond Alexander comment on this passage here Nimrod ruled by power a kingdom of collection of cities by might is contrary to God’s intended rule by peace.²
- c. The City of God: Jerusalem
 - i. God is not against city in of itself as our study of Jerusalem will show.
 - ii. The City of God doesn’t appear right away but the hope for the city of God began with Abraham
 - 1. Abraham is a contrast with Babylon. Whereas the people of Babel want to make a name for themselves here we see God wants to make Abraham’s name great in Genesis 12:2.
 - 2. Unlike Babylon, Abraham went to the Promise to look forward to a city not built by man but by God: *“By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. 9 By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; 10 for he was looking for the city which has*

² T. Desmond Alexander, *The City of God and the Goal of Creation*: (Wheaton, Crossway), Kindle Location 204-209 out of 1936.

foundations, whose architect and builder is God.” (Hebrews 11:8-10)

3. Of course that city will be later Jerusalem.
4. It is also a city we look forward to as well as Christians, see **Hebrews 12:22**.

iii. The Temple of God

1. Jerusalem is the city of God because of the temple in which God resides at.
2. God’s entrance into the Temple described: *“Now when Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the Lord filled the house. 2 The priests could not enter into the house of the Lord because the glory of the Lord filled the Lord’s house.” (2 Chronicles 7:1-2)*→The manner in which God entered the Temple echoes how God entered the Tabernacle in **Exodus 40:34-35**.

iv. The Messianic King

1. Jerusalem is the city of God because it will be where the Messiah will reign at.
2. *“But as for Me, I have installed My King Upon Zion, My holy mountain.” (Psalm 2:6)*
 - a. Mt. Zion is where Jerusalem is at.
 - b. Psalm 2 is a Messianic Psalm and here we see God declaring He will install the Messianic Davidic King in Zion.

v. The Blessings to the Nations

1. Jerusalem is the city of God because it will be a source of blessing to the nations
2. *“So many peoples and mighty nations will come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem and to entreat the favor of the Lord.’ 23 Thus says the Lord of hosts, ‘In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.”” (Zechariah 8:22-23)*
 - a. Note here this will occur when God has returned back to Jerusalem according to **Zechariah 8:3**.
 - b. This is still yet future both in terms of biblical prophecy and current event.

vi. The Sacrifice

1. Recall **Genesis 22:2**, *“He said, “Take now your son, your only son, whom you love, Isaac, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I will tell you.””* And **Genesis 22:14**= *“Abraham called the name of that place [c]The Lord Will Provide, as it is said to this day, “In the mount of the Lord it will [d]be provided.””*
2. Where is Mount Moriah where God will provide a sacrifice? *“Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the Lord had appeared to his father David,*

at the place that David had prepared on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.” (2 Chronicles 3:1)

3. It is where the Lamb of God is provided through Jesus at Calvary.