

# FAMILY PRACTICE

## Home Lessons From Scripture

### Genesis 10:8-12 & 11:1-9, Part Two

#### Lesson One: What is human government?

Human government is an idea invented by God to help keep people from doing really bad things on Earth, which means that government is designed to "limit" what people can do. Since government limits what people can do, it takes away our freedoms, and so we should want government to be as small as possible, because then we will be able to do more things for ourselves.

Before the great Flood of Noah in the book of Genesis, humanity was doing lots of very wicked things, including lots of murdering of each other. When God was done cleaning the world from all of this wickedness through the Flood, He told Noah and his sons that they and all of their many descendants (their kids and grandkids) would have to "limit" their conduct from now on. This limiting was the very beginning of the idea of human government, and began with taking away humanity's freedom to murder one another. I'd say that's a good freedom to lose!

But God doesn't want us to lose too much freedom, since He wants us to be free like Him, for being free is one of the many wonderful ways that we reflect His image (or are like Him). He therefore made government as small as possible, so that it would only take away our "bad" freedoms.

❖ Here are some hints and questions that might help your study:

- What are some "good" freedoms?
- Do you want to lose your "good" freedoms?
- What are some "bad" freedoms?
- Do you want someone else to use their "bad" freedoms on you?
- Should government be really big, or as small as possible?
- How does being free make us like God?

❖ Here are some Scriptures that might help your study:

- Genesis 1:26,28 (humanity created in the image of God)
- Genesis 6:5 (how bad humanity was before the Flood)
- Romans 1:13-32 (how bad humanity still is)
- Genesis 9:6 (the beginning of human government - the advent of capital punishment)

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#### Lesson Two: Who gets which land?

One of the most difficult issues on planet Earth is how we decide who gets to call what land their own. There have been many, many wars (big fights between nations) fought over this issue, because it's hard to agree on who gets to live where. Fortunately, the Bible tells us how this is supposed to work.

By dividing everyone into the many different languages, God separated everyone into what would eventually become many, many nations. He also made them spread out all over the planet when He did so, because God wants the whole Earth to have lots of people on it. This meant that the different nations would one day have to decide who gets to live where once there were lots of people, just like Abram and Lot had to do later in the book of Genesis.

Except for the nation of Israel (much later in history), God didn't give any particular part of Earth to any particular people, which meant that everything was up for grabs. So originally, it was finders-keepers, and whoever was the first to a nice place got to keep it. Later, however, other people would try to take it from them, and so it became necessary to be stronger than the other nations around you. Basically, this meant that you could call a land your own only if you lived there and could keep other people from taking it away from you, which meant that you had to be a really strong nation.

The only people that were ever given a portion of the earth was Israel, and even they had to remain strong in order keep it. When they became weak, they lost control of their land and could no longer call it their home. This may not seem like much fun, but it's just the way things are. But God has an answer for how to be a strong nation - we just have to love Him and obey His Word (the Bible). If we do, He will make us strong and we can keep our nation and our land.

❖ Here are some hints and questions that might help your study:

- Get a good world map and try to count how many nations there are
- Point out somewhere in the world where a war is taking place
- Just because a people were the first to live in a particular place, does that mean they get to live there forever?
- Point to Israel on a map
- Was Israel the first people to inhabit the Promised Land?
- What did they need to do to remain in possession of the Promised Land?

❖ Here are some Scriptures that might help your study:

- Genesis 13:14-17 (Abram is promised the land – the Promised Land)
- Genesis 13:5-12 (Abram and Lot separate)
- Numbers 34:1-12 (God's boundaries for Israel)
- Deuteronomy 28:1-12 (the blessings of God – how a nation can remain strong)