

GENESIS

Genesis 11-12 | "The Tower of Babel & The Call of Abraham"

I. THE TOWER OF BABEL (11)

A. (v. 1)

1. "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech."

- a. "language" - Heb. "lip"
 - 1) There was ONE PHONOLOGY, or the sounds people would make.
- b. "speech" - Heb. "words; sentences; sayings"
 - 1) There was only ONE VOCABULARY!
- c. **NOTE:** The *one language* was probably Hebrew since the proper names of men and places in the Pre-Babel period were Hebrew names. (cf. Genesis 2-5)

B. (v. 2)

1. "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."

- a. "journeyed from the east"
 - 1) The land of Shinar is S.E. of the mountains of Ararat ([Gen. 8:4](#)), thus it seems that after they left the Ark, they first traveled to the *far southeast*, maybe even to modern Iran or Afghanistan, and then came West (i.e. "from the east") to *the land of Shinar* in modern Iraq
- b. "the land of Shinar"
 - 1) Another name for BABYLONIA.
 - a) Cf. [Genesis 10:10; 11:2; 14:1, 9; Joshua 7:21; Isaiah 11:11; Daniel 1:2; Zechariah 5:11](#)
 - 2) Founded by NIMROD ([Gen. 10:8-12](#)).

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a) After the Flood, Noah's great-grandson Nimrod became the first World Dictator and established Babylon, and they built the Tower of Babel during the time of his reign.

i. **NOTE:** It was around 2396 B.C., the time that Peleg was born (101 years after the Flood), that their languages were changed and people spread out over the earth. (cf. Genesis 10:25, 32)

3) Named after Nimrod's wife, SEMIRAMIS.

a) "*Shinar*" = The Hebrew word translated from the Sumerian word "*sammur*", which is the root for *Semiramis*, Nimrod's wife.

i. **NOTE:** The historian Eusebius records that Nimrod's wife was *Semiramis*.

ii. Since King Nimrod was Deified as a *god* (6:4; 10:8-9), his wife Semiramis became Deified as his queen, thus she became "**THE QUEEN OF HEAVEN**".¹

C. (v. 4)

1. **"And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."**

a. They REBELLED Against God's Word (Gen. 9:1, 7).

1) God told them to go out into the earth and multiply (Gen. 9:1, 7), but they decided to stay in one place and build a City!

a) They wanted a Civilization that would organize life apart from God!

¹ Jeremiah 7:18; 44:17-19, 25
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- b) They wanted to live a self-sufficient life and shut God out of it!

- b. They were Living for the PRESENT World.
 - 1) They were building bricks to built a permanent home.
 - 2) They had no thought of Eternity.

- c. They wanted a Name FOR THEMSELVES.
 - 1) *"let us make us a name"*
 - a) The SELF-CENTEREDNESS and PRIDE of man!
Instead of lifting up the Name of the LORD, they want to make a name for themselves.

- d. Yet, there was a LURKING FEAR.
 - 1) *"lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth"*
 - a) In their hearts and minds, they knew what they were doing, and they knew that there might be a day when they would have to give an account.

D. (v. 8)

1. **"So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city."**

- a. The reason God brought *Confusion* was to RESTRAIN mankind from a Final Assertion of themselves, which would lead again to a worldwide judgment by God!
 - 1) We live in a world that has the idea that we will continue to evolve and eventually have a GLOBAL UTOPIA - APART FROM GOD. BUT, WE'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO GET

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THERE! All we’ve had is war, misery, terror, bloodshed, and disappointment.

- 2) I look at the chaos and confusion of our world, and I see man’s rebellion against God. Yet, on the other side of the coin, I believe that God is allowing the confusion in our world to *restrain* men from *finally* asserting themselves, resulting in worldwide judgment.
 - a) **NOTE:** However, there will come a time where God will allow, once again very soon, a One-World Government — centered in the city of *Babylon* — led by the AntiChrist, where God will then bring the Great Tribulation and the Final judgments that will result in the 2nd Coming of Jesus Christ!
 - b) **Q** = Do you know why the AntiChrist hasn’t come on the scene to establish this One-World Government in Babylon yet?... The Restrainer, God the Holy Spirit!
 - i. Cf. **2 Thessalonians 2:3-8** - “*Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? And now you know what is **restraining**, that he may be revealed in his own time. For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now **restrains** will do so **until** He is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.*” (NKJV)
 - b. Like the days of the Tower of Babel, the only reason God has not brought the Final Judgment on the world is because He is still

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RESTRAINING men from themselves! But, I believe those days are numbered and He will soon get out of the way!

- 1) **KEY:** The big lesson from The Tower of Babel is this — people in sin are fools because they think they can defy Almighty God and get away with it!
- 2) **Q** = Do you make plans without God? When you plan out your future, is God part of the equation? Do you want what He wants, or do you just make plans apart from Him?...
 - a) **KEY:** If you make plans for your future without God, it will come to *nothing*. Nothing at all. God will come down and destroy it. That’s the history of the Bible. That’s the history of the 21st century. You cannot build your life without God.
- c. There is only one way of Unity, and it happened on Pentecost when the Church was birthed.
 - 1) Cf. **Acts 2:4-8** - “*And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?*”
 - 2) **KEY:** There is only one legitimate way to bring Unity between various people groups again — in Christ, in God, by the power of the Holy Spirit!
 - a) Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones: “We are all one in sin. We are all lost. We need the same salvation, and we are confronted by the same Savior. The whole world becomes one in its need. It all looks up to God, and God gives his salvation and his Holy Spirit. When humanity realizes its sin, when we realize individually that we are sinners and under

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the wrath of God and are hopeless and helpless, we cease to be jealous and envious and enemies. We all drop down on our knees, and we find our enemy on his knees by our side. The middle wall of partition is broken down in Christ. The differences are abolished, and a new unity comes into being. People begin to love one another. Why? Because now they have the Spirit of the living God within them."²

E. (v. 32)

1. "And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran."

- a. Q = Terah was 70 years old when he started having sons ([Gen. 11:26](#)), and died at 205 years old ([Gen. 11:32](#)), thus *if* Abram was his firstborn, that would make Abram 135 years old when Terah died ($205-70=135$). BUT, in the very next chapter ([Gen. 12:4](#)), it says that Abram was 75 years old when he left Haran! So, was Abram 75 or 135 years old when his father Terah died?...
 - 1) Stephen tells us that Abram left Haran after his father Terah died ([Acts 7:4](#)), and Moses tells us that Abram was 75 years old when he left Haran ([Gen. 12:4](#)), so Terah must have been 130 years old when Abram was born, which means that Abram could not have been the firstborn son, though he is the first son mentioned! ([Gen. 11:26](#))
 - a) **KEY:** It is quite common in the Scriptures to not list from oldest to youngest, but to start with the younger!
 - i. Shem & Japheth ([Gen. 5:32; 9:24; 10:21](#)) - Shem younger
 - ii. Ephraim & Manasseh ([Gen. 48:1, 5, 20](#)) - Ephraim younger

² Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones. Sermon on Genesis 11:1-2 "The Tragedy of Man"

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- iii. Moses & Aaron (Ex. 40:31; Num 16:43; Josh 24:5; 1 Sam 12:6; 1 Chron 6:3) - Moses younger
- b) **NOTE:** Abram was probably mentioned first by Moses because of his prominence as *the father of the Nation of Israel*.
- b. **Q** = How long did Abraham dwell in Haran before his father died?...
 - 1) Abraham was born when his father Terah was 130 years old, and Abraham was 75 when he left Haran (Gen. 11:32; 12:4; Acts 7:4).
 - 2) In this 75-year gap:
 - a) Abraham married Sarah (Gen. 11:29), his half sister (Gen. 20:21), which girls were typically married after puberty (12-13 years old), thus Abraham would have been ~23 when married.
 - b) Abraham was already married to Sarah when they moved from Ur of the Chaldeans to Haran (Gen. 11:29-31), so there could be as much as a 50 YEAR GAP between the *call* to Abraham and his *obedience!*

II. THE CALL OF ABRAM (12)

A. (v. 1)

1. **"Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:"**

a. *"the LORD had said unto Abram"*

- 1) Abram was brought up as a pagan, where the people worshiped many gods (Joshua 24:2-3, 14). As he was just living life with the pagans, God spoke to him. God disturbed him. God called him out.

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- 2) **NOTE:** Any Christian that has ever lived have this same story. "I was just living my life, doing the same things as everybody else, when suddenly (or in my case gradually), I became conscious of something disturbing me. Something was stirring me and calling me."
 - a) God brought a *disturbance* to my life.
 - i. For me, it was the feeling, "We're partying every weekend and having fun, but is this all? There's got to be more than this! This is getting boring." I didn't know why those thoughts came in, but they did. I was starting to look at things differently. What was that? The call of God!
 - a. During that time (I was about 18 years old), my grandma became really sick with cancer, and it made me really think about eternity and what I believe. Then, both of my grandmas died within 2 months of each other. God disturbed me. He was calling me.
 - ii. For some, the disturbance comes through circumstances.
 - a. Someone dies; you lose your job; a relationship ends; you get sick; etc.
 - iii. Some hear the call when someone is preaching.
 - b) No matter how it happens, there comes the moment you hear the call of God to you personally.
- b. "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house"
 - 1) Abram was told to SEPARATE HIMSELF from *everything* that he had ever known.
 - a) He was told to leave the pagan atmosphere.

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- b) He was to leave his country.
 - c) He was to leave his family.
 - i. **NOTE:** He wasn't *completely* obedient (he took Lot with him), and it caused him all kinds of trouble later!
 - d) He was to leave everything and go into something else!
- 2) Abram was told by God to look at the kind of life that he was living and see that it was wrong and that he must come out of it! This is what the Bible calls REPENTANCE!
- a) There comes a point where we THINK AGAIN about the type of life we are living, and CONFESS that it is wrong and COME OUT OF IT and TURN THE OTHER DIRECTION!
- c. "unto a land that I will shew thee"
- 1) God calls Abram *out of* the old life *into* a new life that is even better!
 - a) **NOTE:** Abram had never been to that land! All he had was the Word of God.
 - i. **Illust.** - When I sensed the Lord calling Liesl and I to Wales, UK, we had never been there. I figured that if Abraham could go to a land he'd never been, trusting God, then I could do it too! One of my close friends said, "Where are you gonna live? You've never been there! Your crazy!" I said, "Well, I guess I'm as crazy as Abraham, just trusting the Lord!"

B. (v. 2)

1. "And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:"

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- a. *"and make their name great"*
 - 1) God is offering to Abram the very thing that the people had been trying to get for themselves ([Gen. 11:4](#)) — to make his name great!
 - 2) **NOTE:** Abraham's name has been made great! The 3 major religions of the world (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam) honor Abraham.

C. (v. 3)

1. **"And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."**

- a. *"in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed"*
 - 1) **KEY:** Even though the whole world *rebelled* against God, He *restrained* them in His mercy ([Gen. 11:6-8](#)) by scattering them throughout the earth, and then chose a man that He might *bless* those rebels! That is GRACE!!!
 - a) Cf. [John 3:16-17](#) - *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."*