Genesis 10:1-11:9 - ***The Tower of Arrogance***

This morning we highlight humanity's transition from post-flood renewal to collective rebellion and God's sovereign dispersion of the nations.

A. Genesis 10:1–5: The Descendants of Japheth - When God Turns pride for Purpose

"These are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Sons were born to them after the flood. The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. The sons of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. From these the coastland peoples spread in their lands, each with his own language, by their clans, in their nations."

The Table of Nations (10:1): Introduces the "generations of the sons of Noah," showing God's post-flood blessing and the literal fulfillment of multiplying and populating the earth. This is a theological description, not simply a listing of events.

-Shem - Inland from Egypt to the Mesopotamian Valley
-Ham - North Africa and some of the Middle East
-Japheth - Northern Mediterranean Coast, European coast

Japheth's Lineage (10:2–5): Descendants (including Gomer, Magog, and Javan) spread out into the "coastlands of the nations," establishing early European and northern territories.

God orchestrates history across geography. Diversity among ethnic groups, languages and customs - so nations originate in His providential design, not random chance or human rebellious pride.

B. Genesis 10:6–20: The Descendants of Ham - When Pride rejects Provision

"The sons of Ham: Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan. Cush fathered Nimrod; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man.1 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD. Therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the LORD." The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. From that land he went into Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir, Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; that is the great city. Egypt fathered Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, Pathrusim, Casluhim (from whom2 the Philistines came), and Caphtorim. Canaan fathered Sidon his firstborn and Heth, and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, the Hivites,

the Arkites, the Sinites, the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Afterward the clans of the Canaanites dispersed. And the territory of the Canaanites extended from Sidon in the direction of Gerar as far as Gaza, and in the direction of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, as far as Lasha. These are the sons of Ham, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations."

Ham's Lineage (10:6–7): Traces lines that settled Africa and parts of the Middle East (Cush, Egypt/Mizraim, Put, Canaan). Mercy is within the judgment of God here in their scattering - the scatter the seed of organized evil within humanity. Canaan, because of what his father Ham did,

The Rise of Nimrod (10:8–12): Nimrod is introduced as a "mighty one on the earth" and a "mighty hunter before the Lord," founding kingdoms in Babel, Erech, Akkad, and Nineveh. His "hunting" implies a tyrannical grip and empire-building centered on human power rather than God. The departure in verse 11 concentrates on the line of Shem, ending the line of Abraham technically.

Nimrod represents the prototype of human autonomy and aggressive self-glorification.

C. Genesis 10:21–32: The Descendants of Shem - When Provision is Pursued

"To Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the elder brother of Japheth, 3 children were born. The sons of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram. The sons of Aram: Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. Arpachshad fathered Shelah; and Shelah fathered Eber. To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg, 4 for in his days the earth was divided, and his brother's name was Joktan. Joktan fathered Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, Obal, Abimael, Sheba, Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab; all these were the sons of Joktan. The territory in which they lived extended from Mesha in the direction of Sephar to the hill country of the east. These are the sons of Shem, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations. These are the clans of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, in their nations, and from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood."

Shem's Lineage (10:21–31): Focuses on the ancestral line leading toward Eber and the Semitic peoples.

Division of the Earth (10:25): Mentions Peleg ("division"), signaling the geographical and linguistic separation that occurred during his lifetime.

God preserves a specific lineage through Shem to carry the covenant promise that ultimately leads to Abraham proceeding through the line of David and finally to the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

D. Genesis 11:1–4: Human Ambition at Babel - The Illusion of Self Determination

"Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth."

One Language and Speech (11:1–2): Humanity shares a unified language and migrates to settle in the plain of Shinar.

Human Technology and Plan (11:3–4): People collaborate using baked bricks and bitumen to construct a city and a tower reaching into the heavens. Their explicit motive is to "make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed."

This project is a direct defiance of God's explicit command to scatter and fill the earth (Genesis 9:1). Sin loves centralization, safety in human achievement, and autonomous glory.

E. Genesis 11:5–9: Divine Judgment and Dispersion - When Sovereign Control is Asserted

"And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. And the LORD said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech." So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. And from there the LORD dispersed them over the face of all the earth.

The Lord Comes Down (11:5–6): God sarcastically "comes down" to inspect the microscopic tower of human pride, noting that united rebellion unchecked will lead to greater corruption.

Confusing the Languages (11:7–8): God disrupts their scheme by confusing their speech, rendering cooperation impossible and forcing the global dispersion humanity tried to avoid.

The Meaning of Babel (11:9): The site is named Babel (sounding like the Hebrew word for "confused") because God scattered them over the face of the earth.

Reminder of NSC mission statement - all for the glory of God.

Application:

Human attempts to “reach” God or secure ultimate safety apart from Him always fail under divine judgment. Yet, God's scattering is also an act of mercy, preventing self-destructive totalitarian unity and setting the stage for Pentecost, where God gathers diverse tongues back to Himself (Acts 2).

The So-what…

1. Pride Looks for its own Value - rather than as Image Bearers: Genesis 10 traces how all post-flood nations, clans, and languages descend from Noah’s three sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth. This genealogy shows that human diversity is real, but every person belongs to one shared, image-bearing reality rejecting ideas of racial superiority or isolated human origins and plans.

2. Human Self-Reliance and Self-Aggrandizement Lead to Rebellion: In Genesis 11:1–9, the people gather in Shinar to build a city and a tower "to make a name for themselves" rather than obeying God's command to scatter and fill the earth. This project represents human autonomy, security-seeking through collective ego, and direct defiance against God's plan. Don’t be a Nimrod!

3. God Exercises Sovereign Control Over Nations and Language: When humanity attempts to unify in rebellion at Babel, God intervenes by confusing their languages and scattering them across the earth. What looks like judgment also fulfills His design for populating the globe and establishes historical and geographical boundaries for nations under His rule. In the midst of God’s judgment, God ensures the redemption of the nation through His sovereignty.