

Genesis 046

A Stairway to Heaven

Genesis 11:1-5

August 8, 2021

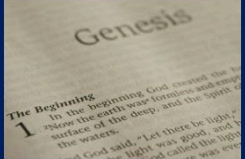
Dr. Andy Woods

Good morning, everybody. Take your Bibles and open them up to Genesis 11:1. Look at this: we are not in Genesis 10 anymore. We are continuing to make progress in our verse-by-verse teaching on the Book of Genesis. The title of our message this morning is "A Stairway to Heaven." (I normally do not quote Led Zeppelin from the pulpit, but I could not resist this time.)

GENESIS STRUCTURE



- I. Beginning of the Human race (Gen. 1–11)**
- II. Beginning of the Hebrew race (Gen. 12–50)**



We are actually making progress in our study on the Book of Genesis. Genesis 1-11 is the beginning of the human race, which features four things: number one, creation—what was God's design for our world before sin entered the picture? That is Genesis 1-2.

GENESIS STRUCTURE



- I. Genesis 1-11 (four events)**
 - A. Creation (1-2)**
 - B. Fall (3-5)**
 - C. Flood (6-9)**
 - D. National dispersion (10-11)**



Then, what went wrong? In Genesis 3-5 is the Fall of man. Yet we have hope that a Messiah is coming to correct the ship one day. Of course, that Messiah is Jesus, but His advent into our world is predicted as early as Genesis 3:15. The rest of the Bible is just tracing that lineage right up to Jesus Christ.

Then we moved into our third major event in Genesis 1-11, which was the Flood, an event that cataclysmically changed our world, in Genesis 6-9.



Outline

- Table of nations (Gen 10)
- Tower of Babel (Gen 11:1-9)
- Genealogy from Shem to Terah (Gen 11:10-32)

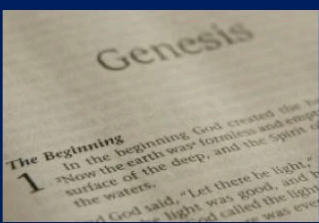


There is a fourth and final event in Genesis 1-11, which is national dispersion, in Genesis 10-11. We have finished (and some of you are probably very grateful that we have) Genesis 10. I think we spent five Sundays in Genesis 10 trying to read over all those names that I mispronounced. Fortunately, that is behind us, but it leaves several questions.



GENESIS 10 Outline

- I. Introduction (1)
- II. Japheth's line (2-5)
- III. Ham's Line (6-20)
- IV. Shem's line (21-31)
- V. Conclusion (32)



Genesis 10, as you will recall, is a record of where Noah's three sons settled and the nations that came forth from those three sons and repopulated the earth—the line of Japheth, the line of Ham, and the line of Shem; seventy nations total.

Genesis 10–11 Questions & Answers



- Origin of the nations?
- Dispersal of the nations?
- Corruption of the nations?
- What happened in the days of Peleg? (Gen. 10:25)
- Nimrod's empire in Shinar? (Gen. 10:10)
- How did Nimrod get to Assyria? (Gen. 10:11-12)

But you read through Genesis 10, and it leaves a bunch of questions. Number one, where did these nations come from? What was their origin? Number two, why are they dispersed all over the world? Number three, why are they corrupt? Why can God not use any of the existing nations to mediate His blessings to the earth? Why does He have to raise up Israel to mediate the promise of Genesis 3:15 into the world?

The fourth question is "What happened in the days of Peleg?" Genesis 10 says that the earth was divided in his days. The fifth question is, "Well, what was Nimrod (who was a prefigurement of the Antichrist) doing in Shinar?" Genesis 10 talks about an empire he was building in Shinar. "I sure would like to know a little bit more about that." The last question is "How did Nimrod get up into the north, into Assyria?"

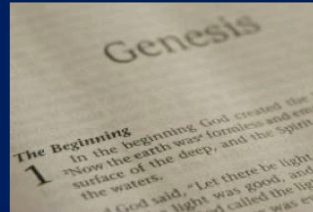
Genesis 10 tells us about all of these things. We are given the answer to the "What?" question in Genesis 10, but we are left with the "Why?" question. And fortunately, the Bible provides an answer, because all of these questions in Genesis 10 are answered in Genesis 11. Genesis 11 is the cause; Genesis 10 is the results. Genesis 10 and 11 are not necessarily in chronological order. We believe that Genesis 11 actually took place before the events of Genesis 10. You cannot understand Genesis 10 until you read the full account of God.

That is where we pick it up today: in Genesis 11:1-9, a story that many, many people are exposed to very early on in their Christian life, either through Bible reading or in Sunday school as kids—the infamous story of the Tower of Babel.

GENESIS 11:1-9 Outline



- I. The Former World (1-2)
- II. The Rebellion (3-4)
- III. God's Condescension (5)
- IV. God's Observations (6)
- V. God's Intervention (7-8a)
- VI. The Results (8b-9)



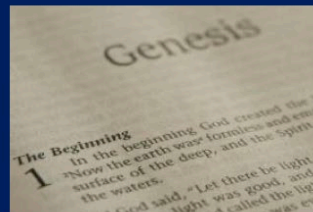
As we look at Genesis 11:1-9 (and we are not going to get close to finishing this today, I don't think), here is the outline we are going to be using: Genesis 11:1-2 describes the world that was. The world that we are living in is very different from the pre-Tower-of-Babel world. In Genesis 11:3-4 there is a rebellion. Then God condescends to come down to see what humanity was doing in Genesis 11:5.

As God comes down He makes three observations in Genesis 11:6. Then, number five on our outline, in Genesis 11:7-8, He intervenes. What was the lasting result? The residuals that we are still facing today are described from the middle of Genesis 11:8 to Genesis 11:9. That is the lay of the land, or the big picture, as we look at Genesis 11:1-9, "A Stairway to Heaven."

I. The Former World vv.1-2



- A. The Philology (1)
 1. One language (1a)
 2. One speech (1b)
- B. The Location (2)
 1. In the East (2a)
 2. At Shinar (2b)



Let's start here with number one, Genesis 11:1-2. What was the pre-Tower of Babel world like exactly? Well, we have the philology. Do not let that title there scare you; it just means the study of language. That is a cool thing because people will ask you,

"What did you learn in church today?" And you can say, "Well, at our church we learned about philology."

So, Genesis 11:1 is the philology of the world. Genesis 11:1-2 is about the location that the world gravitated toward after the Flood. Let's work our way through this a little bit. Notice the philology in Genesis 11:1. It says,

*"Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words"
(Genesis 11:1).*

There was a time in human history when there was only one language over the face of the earth. Everybody says, "Well, what was that language?" I used to be non-committal about that. I said, "Well, I do not really know what language it was." But I have been persuaded by Arnold Fruchtenbaum, who believes that the first language was Hebrew. When we were back in Genesis 5, looking at the genealogy there, I read to you this quote. It says,

"A second observation is that all these ten names are Hebrew names and only make sense in Hebrew,..."¹

Those are the names mentioned in Genesis 5. They are all Hebrew names.

"...although Jewish history has not yet begun. Moreover, all these people and their names existed prior to the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11, again indicating that the first language was the Hebrew language."²

I do not know if this is something worth starting a new church over, necessarily, but I think it is very interesting that all of those names, pre-Israel, only make sense in the Hebrew language. It is very likely that Hebrew was the first language. It is also very likely that when God brings to this world a universal language one day, as He will do in the Millennial Kingdom (you will see that prediction in Zechariah 3:9), it is likely that the language that will again cover the whole earth will be Hebrew.

That is difficult for me because learning Hebrew was hard for me. In fact, I think I have forgotten more than I have learned because it leaves faster than it comes in. In Hebrew, first of all, you are reading in the opposite direction. It is not something we are starting a new church over, but it could be that the very first language was Hebrew.

Not only did they have one language, but they had one speech. Everybody, according to Genesis 11:1, had the exact same vocabulary. Now many of you are very sophisticated people and you are saying, "What kind of ignoramus are you? Don't you know that there are 6,000 to 7,000 languages in the world? Are you really expecting me as an educated person to believe that at one time in history, there was only one language over the face of the earth?"

¹ Dr. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Book of Genesis*, 141.

² Ibid.

These are questions that I wrestled with as a new Christian. One of the books that I will recommend to you that really came to my rescue in so many areas was the book by Josh McDowell entitled "Evidence that Demands a Verdict." I do not know if you have that in your library, but it is worth your time. It is actually written in an outline form.

It is not the most exciting book to read through, though I think they have jazzed it up since I read it. As I was reading through that book as a young Christian in an environment where everybody was questioning Christianity, and I needed to really understand that my Christianity was built on solid evidence, I ran into this quote in the Josh McDowell book. He says,

"According to Scripture, 'The whole earth was of one language and one speech' (Genesis 11:1) before the Tower of Babel. After the building of the tower and its destruction, God confounded the language of all the earth (Genesis 11:9). Many modern-day philologists attest to the likelihood of such an origin for the world's languages. Alfredo Trombetti says he can trace and prove the common origin of all languages. Max Mueller also attests to the common origin. And Otto Jespersen goes so far as to say that language was directly given to the first men by God."³

It is interesting that as people scoff at this biblical account they say, "Well, there are 6,000 to 7,000 languages in the world. Are you telling me that at one time in human history there was only one language?" Josh McDowell, quoting several scholars, says, "Yes, that is true, and many scholars feel it to be so," because it is like a jigsaw puzzle. You can connect all of the languages of the earth back to some sort of proto-language, some kind of proto-tongue.

The world system will just make you feel ridiculous for believing what the Bible says. That is where the study of apologetics or defense of the faith is so helpful, because it shows that the Bible is more reasonable than most people are willing to give it credit for. W. C. Fields, at the end of his life—he knew he was dying—shocked everyone because he was not known for his godliness, yet he was reading his Bible. People said, "Why are you reading your Bible?" He said, "I am looking for loopholes."

That is how a lot of people are with the Bible. They are just looking for any little mistake, because the Bible will make a moral claim on your life. That is why the Bible is always treated with a different standard from any other moral work of antiquity. Nobody, at the end of their life, looks for loopholes in Shakespeare or Herodotus. But, boy, they cannot wait to find something wrong with the Bible.

They will capitalize on this ancient story and make you feel as though it could not be true. Yet, the more you look into it, there is a credible scenario in place whereby the events of the Bible happened exactly like God said.

We move away from the philology to the location. You see that there in Genesis 11:2. It says,

³ Josh McDowell, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, Vol. 1, p. 69.

"It came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there" (Genesis 11:2).

Notice the location. The location here is in the east. This eastern part of the world is going to be later called "Shinar." The Greeks called it "Mesopotamia," meaning "between the rivers" (the Euphrates and the Tigris). Today that region is modern-day Iraq.

East = Babylon

- Genesis 2:8
- Genesis 11:2
- Matthew 2:2



These are the references where the Bible mentions the "east." Typically, when the Bible mentions the "east," it is talking about that territory between the rivers. We are not really sure how much the Flood altered the topography of our world. I am assuming it did quite a bit of alteration because it was a global deluge. But there is actually a description of the Euphrates and the Tigris in the Garden of Eden, and Genesis 2:8 locates that part of the world in the East.

This was where the Tower of Babel arose, Genesis 11:2—in the East. It is also where the magi came from. I realize that it is a very hot day in August, and you are not thinking about Christmas carols and Christmas cards quite yet, but it is going to be December before we know it. You are going to have, on all of your Christmas cards, these wise men coming from the East to worship the Christ child. Where exactly did these magi come from? Well, they came from what we call modern-day Babylon—the East (Matthew 2:2).

Well, why are they coming to worship the Christ child? Because they had a couple of prophecies. One of those prophecies was given by Daniel, when he was a captive in Babylon six centuries earlier, in what is called the Seventy Weeks Prophecy, which pinpoints the exact day that Jesus would ride into Jerusalem and present His Messianic credentials to the nations.

They also had Numbers 24:17, because one of their own, a man named Balaam, from that part of the world, analogized the coming of Christ to a star. That is why they were following a star at a particular time in history, because we believe they had at least two Messianic prophecies.

It is a rebuke to God's nation—His own nation, the nation of Israel—who had a completed Old Testament canon and rejected Christ. Yet the pagans, with just two scraps, could understand who Jesus was. Sometimes we think that if someone has not received Christ, they just need more information. The reality of the situation is that information is wonderful and God will provide information. But sometimes giving someone more information and more information and more information is not going to help, because it is a condition of the heart.

God is looking at the heart. Either a person has a heart to receive the Savior for salvation from their sins, or they do not. But I bring all of that up to show you that in the Bible, the East is typically that part of the world where the Tower of Babel was constructed. It is also called "Shinar" in Genesis 11:2.

"Shinar" is the Hebrew word for that area between the Euphrates and the Tigris rivers, modern-day Iraq. The Greeks called it "Mesopotamia." "Meso-" means "middle." You recognize the term "-potamia." We have a Potomac River in the United States. "-Potamia" means "rivers." "Mesopotamia" means "between the rivers." It was located between the Euphrates and the Tigris rivers, encompassing modern-day Iraq.

The Bible is telling us that the Tower of Babel was constructed in the East. Shinar is an interesting part of the world. It is where the nation of Israel was taken into the Babylonian captivity for seventy years, much later on in biblical history. Interestingly, Zechariah 5:11 tells us that it will be a part of the world where a woman is going to be released from a basket. In that part of the world, she is going to build a temple, not for God, but for the devil.

It is interesting to me how the Bible is cyclical. The things of the past are recycled in the future. The things of the future already took place in the past. It reminds me of Ecclesiastes 1:9, where Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived other than Christ, says,

*"That which has been is that which will be,
And that which has been done is that which will be done.
So there is nothing new under the sun" (Ecclesiastes 1:9).*

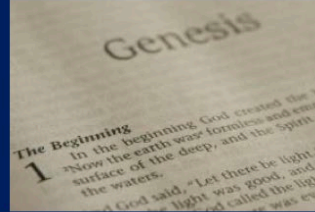
I have a little book that just came out. (We will make it available here once we get copies of it.) It is called "Babylon: The Bookends of Prophetic History." I worked hard at getting it under one hundred pages, because people do not read a book that is bigger than that, I have discovered. I do not. We like short books. Not including the bibliography, "Babylon: The Bookends of Prophetic History" is less than one hundred pages long. It is a biblical explanation as to why God is not finished with Babylon.

Babylon, in modern-day Iraq, is destined to play a monumental role in the future. It is interesting that humanity gravitated back towards that place, because that is where everything originated from. If the Garden of Eden, the source of life itself, was found somewhere in that area, it stands to reason that after the Flood, the world would recycle back to that part of the world.

GENESIS 11:1-9 Outline



- I. The Former World (1-2)
- II. **The Rebellion (3-4)**
- III. God's Condescension (5)
- IV. God's Observations (6)
- V. God's Intervention (7-8a)
- VI. The Results (8b-9)

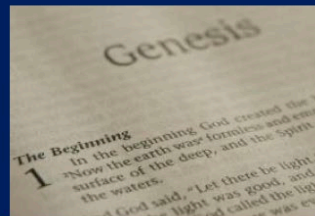


That is a little bit of a description of the world that was. But then you go down to Genesis 11:3-4, and there is a rebellion that takes place. There is a building, Genesis 11:3-4; there is a reputation they are trying to protect, Genesis 11:4c; and then there is a deliberate rejection of God's command, Genesis 11:4d.

II. The Rebellion vv. 3-4



- A. Their building (3-4b)
- B. Their reputation (4c)
- C. Their rejection of the divine command (4d)



Take a look at this building that they were trying to build. It involves bricks, Genesis 11:3; a city, Genesis 11:4; and a tower that would reach unto heaven, Genesis 11:4. Notice the bricks. It is very interesting. Genesis 11:3 says,

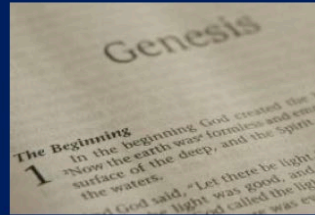
"They said to one another, 'Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly.' And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar" (Genesis 11:3).

A. Their Building

vv. 3-4b



1. The bricks (3)
2. The city (4a)
3. The tower (4b)



Arnold Fruchtenbaum, in his commentary on Genesis, says,

"This is to make the bricks hard and to make them last a very long time. The result was that they had brick for stone; the hardened brick was used for building in the place of stone. Indeed, South Mesopotamia is rich in alluvial deposits, but is extremely short in stone."⁴

That explains why they were using bricks for stone. You will also notice the city that they were building, if you look very carefully at Genesis 11:4.

"They said, 'Come, let us build for ourselves a city,...'" (Genesis 11:4).

This is not the first time in the Book of Genesis that lost man has tried and actually been successful at creating a city. You remember that is that after Cain becomes the first murderer in human history, when that scene ends, it says in Genesis 4:17,

"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).

It is interesting in the Bible that there are two cities. There is the city built by man, and then there is the city (Hebrews 11:16) that Abraham was looking for, whose builder and foundation was God (Hebrews 11:10). I just wonder, as you are listening to this sermon this morning, what allegiance are you of? Is your hope in man's city—man's ability to rescue the economy—man's ability to keep inflation under control—man's ability to keep the economy humming? Or is your hope in the Lord—in the city whose builder and maker is God—a city whose foundations cannot be moved?

There has to be a city in the plan of the devil, because the New World Order—and that is what this is here in Genesis 11: it is the beginning of what many call the New World Order, Satan's system—has three legs to it. Number one, there is a political angle to it.

⁴ Dr. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Book of Genesis*, 222.

Number two, there is an economic angle to it. Number three, there is a religious angle to it. You are going to see all three of these in Genesis 11:1-9.

As you see that word "city," you see very quickly the political angle. As we continue on, Genesis 11:4 does not just talk about a city made with bricks, but it also talks about a tower. You see that there also in Genesis 11:4:

"...let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven,..." (Genesis 11:4).

There are a lot of people out there telling me that the tower was not very tall. Well, I do not know how they get that from this passage. It was so tall that it was reaching into heaven. This was a monstrosity. This was the height of the accomplishments of man. It was the beginning, not just of a political system, but of a religious system as well. This was the beginning of the zodiac—stargazing: plotting one's future according to the reading of the stars.

There are so many people out there in the world who do not know Christ personally. What are they left with? They are left with trusting the stars to guide them through life. Countless people check their astrological/astronomical projections daily. I guess I would be doing that as well if I did not know Jesus Christ. Why should I consult the stars for my future when I know the One who hung the stars and made the stars? Why worship the created thing when I have access to the Creator itself?

Arnold Fruchtenbaum writes,

"They wanted to build a tower, with the goal being: whose top may reach unto heaven, or literally, 'with its peak in the heavens.' The very name 'Babylon' in Hebrew, Babel, means 'the gate of God.'"⁵

"Bab-" means "gate." You will recognize "-el," as in "elohim"—"God." Literally what they were building was a stairway to heaven, or a gateway unto God Himself.

"The point is that they want to reach out to the heavens. The purpose of this tower was for the purpose of astrology, or the signs of the zodiac. This act marks the beginnings of false religion and idolatry."⁶

It is interesting, as you get later on in biblical history, that man would have a tendency to worship the sun—not the Son, but the sun. They would have a tendency to worship the stars. And God here at the beginning of human history is showing where the sun and the stars came from. They came from the creative handiwork of God. He is showing where all of this star worship and sun worship came from.

So this is the beginning of not just the political leg of the New World Order, but also of the religious arm or leg of this three-legged stool of the New World Order. It has to have a political angle. We have that with the city. It has to have an economic angle, and it has

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

to have a religious angle as well. Clearly it had all of the above because they were building a gate unto God Himself.

This also is an expression of works righteousness, where they were climbing and trying to claw their way up to God. People frequently will say, "Well, how can you believe Christianity is true? Don't you understand that there are all these religions all over the world? How can you believe that your religion is accurate?" The truth of the matter is that there are only two religions.

Most of the religions of the world have a common theme, and they have a common denominator. That common theme, or common denominator, is works righteousness. Man has to do something to gain God's approval. He has to climb a ladder. He has to walk through a maze. He has to climb over broken glass. He has to do something to earn God's favor. That is the world of religion. The truth of the matter is that if you are here today and you are trying to get right with God through religiosity, He will not accept your efforts.

In fact, Isaiah 64:6 says,

"...all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment;..." (Isaiah 64:6).

Notice that it does not say that "all of our deeds are like a filthy garment."

"...all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment;..." (Isaiah 64:6).

All the things we do which we think are good, of which we think "If we do these, God is obligated to accept us"—God looks at those as if they are a filthy garment. But the religions of the world all teach this. They go by different names, but they are all operating according to works righteousness.

In distinction to all of that is the second belief system—not second in the way of importance, but second just as a way of chronologically discussing it. This is the idea of not self-righteousness, but transferred righteousness. We are not right with God because of what we do. We are right with God because of what He did. He transferred that work to us as a free gift at the point of faith alone in Christ alone.

Either you are in Group A or you are in Group B. If you are not in Group B and you have not received the transferred righteousness of Christ, you are left with the sinking sands of works-oriented religion, trying to earn God's approval. By the way, good luck with that. How do you know if you have done enough? "Maybe I should have done a little bit more. Maybe I should have worked a little bit harder." You are left your entire life wondering, "Am I really going to make it into heaven or not?"

Most people, even churchgoing people, if you ask them, "Are you sure you are going to heaven?" will say—like the weather report: seventy-percent chance of rain—"I think I am going to make it." When someone answers the question that way, that is a dead ringer for the fact that they are operating according to works righteousness. How do you really know if you have done enough? If your good works save you, there is that nagging doubt in your mind: "Maybe I have not done quite enough."

If they answer the question that way, that is your opportunity to share the gospel. The gospel is not man climbing up to God. The story of the Bible is not what man does for God. It is what God has done for man. We are not climbing up to God. God is reaching down to us through the finished work of Jesus Christ, and He is saying, "Trust in that."

This is how you can always recognize a false gospel. It is a matter of the spotlight: where is the focus of attention when the so-called gospel is presented? Is the focus of attention on Jesus, or is the focus of attention on what you need to do for Jesus? If your focus in life is on what you need to do for Jesus, then the focus of your life is on yourself and on works righteousness. It could very well be that you are not even saved.

But when the gospel is presented and the whole focus is on Jesus and how man cannot do anything to earn God's favor, and Christ is exalted and man and his works-oriented system is demoted, and the only thing you can do is to receive a free gift from Jesus Christ by way of faith—then the spotlight is where it needs to be, and that tells you that you are hearing the correct gospel, the biblical gospel.

These people building this tower were very sincere people, and they were very religious people. They put a lot of energy and effort into it. But it was a false religious system: the beginning of the New World Order, a political angle and a religious angle as well. Now, there was something else happening here called the beginning of the mother-child cult, or religion. We can piece this together, not so much from the Bible, but from extra-biblical tradition and Babylonian tradition.

Spread of the Mother-Child Cult		
Nation/People/ Denomination	Mother	Child
Assyria	Ishtar	Tammuz
Phoenicia	Astarte	Baal
Egypt	Isis	Osirus/Horus
Greece	Aphrodite	Eros
Rome	Venus	Cupid
Asia	Cybele	Desius
India	Isi	Aswara
Roman Catholicism	Mary	Jesus
Israel	Queen of Heaven (Jer. 7:18; 44:17)	Tammuz (Ezek. 8:14-15)
Alexander Hislop, <i>Two Babylons</i>		

Alexander Hislop, in his book "The Two Babylons," covers this. He says that what was happening at the Tower of Babel with Nimrod was that Nimrod, who is mentioned in the

Bible, was married to a woman named Semiramis. The two of them had a child. His name was Tammuz. Tammuz was killed by a wild animal and miraculously brought back to life through satanic powers, very similarly to how the Antichrist in Revelation 13 is going to die and rise again under satanic power.

Because this happened, what started to take place at the Tower of Babel was the beginning of the worship of the mother and the worship of the child. The two of them started to be worshiped at the Tower of Babel. According to Alexander Hislop, they worshiped Semiramis, Nimrod's wife, and they worshiped Tammuz, this son who was brought back from the dead.

So when, as we will be studying, God confounded the only existing language that was present, and the builders could not cooperate with each other any longer, what everybody did was they took that system and they brought it into their own respective people group, or nation. Alexander Hislop says that you can find remnants of this mother-child system of religion all over the world. It is just that the names are changed from place to place.

In Assyria, the mother was called "Ishtar" (by the way, that is where we get the word "Easter") and the child was named "Tammuz." In Phoenicia the mother was named "Astarte," and the child was "Baal." In Egypt, the mother was named "Isis" and the child was named "Osiris" or "Horus." In Greece, the mother was named "Aphrodite" and the child was named "Eros."

I hate to ruin Valentine's Day for you—I already ruined Easter—but in Rome the mother was named "Venus" and the child was named "Cupid." In Asia, the mother was named "Cybele" and the child was "Desius." In India the mother was "Isi" and the child was "Aswara."

And oh my goodness, you mention this to Roman Catholics, and they will not like this teaching at all, because Alexander Hislop's point is that this teaching went right into the Roman Catholic Church. Hislop says that the Jesus and Mary of Roman Catholicism are not the Jesus and Mary of the Bible. It is just that the mother was called "Mary," and the child was called "Jesus."

It is interesting that in Roman Catholicism, Mary is someone you pray to: a co-redemptress, if you will. She is someone who actually allegedly stayed a virgin her entire life—the perpetual virginity of Mary. Roman Catholicism makes it tough to believe what Mary said of Jesus, "He is our Savior." She was no goddess. She certainly deserves respect as the mother of Christ, but let's not elevate her beyond what the Bible says.

In Roman Catholicism, essentially, salvation through Jesus involves God's part and your part. Jesus bought lunch, but goodness gracious, you had better leave the tip. How much of a tip do you have to leave? "Well, you need to pay, pray, and obey." So in the Roman Catholic system, what you will discover is that justification is not by faith alone, but by a combination of faith plus works, which is a false gospel.

This, of course, is why we had the Protestant Reformation in the days of Martin Luther, John Calvin, and others: to break away from a lot of these false ideas that were in Roman Catholicism. Alexander Hislop's point is that the origin of those ideas was this mother-child cult.

This is why God, when He decides to bring His own Son into the world (and we know that that Son is coming from Genesis 3:15), is not going to use the Assyrians. They are already contaminated by the mother-child religious system. For the same reason, he is not going to use the Phoenicians or the Egyptians or Greece or Rome or Asia or India. He is going to have to start a new nation, a nation that was born after these events that I am speaking of here in Genesis 11—a brand-new nation, the nation of Israel, begun in Genesis 12, the only nation in the history of mankind that was started independent of this mother-child system.

That is what makes Israel such a big deal: her birthday is in Genesis 12, after this mother-child system went into the whole world. Every other nation has been contaminated by it, and thereby becomes unusable as far as God is concerned. This is why God becomes incensed with the nation of Israel when they want to be just like everybody else. They want to keep up with the Joneses.

By the way, that is why they asked for a king in 1 Samuel 8. "Why do you want a king? Isn't God enough?" "Well, everybody else has a king. We want a king." "All right, I will give you Saul. See how well that works out for you." The truth of the matter is that Israel's downfall can be marked to the point where she wanted to be just like everybody else. Essentially what happened was that the mother-child system, eventually, much later on in biblical history, came into the borders of Israel.

You will see references to it in Jeremiah 7:18 and Jeremiah 44:17. The mother is called "the queen of heaven." When I was explaining this to one of my classes at the Bible College, I had an ex-Roman-Catholic student in one of those classes. She said, "Do you know what they call the Virgin Mary in Roman Catholicism? They call her the 'Queen of Heaven.'" That is the idol that was let into the borders of Israel. You will find Tammuz's name mentioned in Ezekiel 8:14.

When that happens to Israel, God is incensed to the point where he has to send Israel into a seventy-year captivity to rid them of this system. Why? Because she was living outside of her purpose. She was living outside of her design. Her purpose was to reach the nations, not to become just like them.

It is interesting that this entire mother-child system, the religious angle of the New World Order, in addition to the worship of the stars, gets its start here in Genesis 11:1-9. What is the New World Order? It is a one-world system of economics, politics, and religion that excludes a true knowledge of God.

Josephus, a famous historian (now, again, this does not rise to the level of canonical Scripture), living just a little after the time of Christ, in his "Antiquities," comments on what was happening here at the Tower of Babel. When you read this quote, it is eerily similar to what is happening in our own day.

Notice what Josephus says:

"He [Nimrod, the prefigurement of the Antichrist] persuaded them to attribute their prosperity not to God but to their own valour,..."⁷

It is very interesting: when the Covid numbers in New York initially started to come down, I remember very specifically the governor of New York saying—and this is almost a direct quote—"God did not do this. We did this." And I thought to myself, "Well, there is a gentleman who is cruisin' for a bruisin'." When you look at some of the things that have happened to him of late, you start to see an outworking of my initial thoughts.

"He [Nimrod] persuaded them to attribute their prosperity not to God but to their own valor, and little by little transformed the state of affairs into tyranny,..."⁸

How did Nimrod bring tyranny over the face of the known earth? He did it little by little. Maybe there were mask mandates. Maybe there were vaccine passports. Maybe they will start coming to your house and knocking on the door. Little of this, little of that, just inch by inch by inch. Then suddenly you wake up one day and you are in full-blown tyranny, and you wonder how it happened. It did not happen overnight. (By the way, the views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of this station or its sponsors.)

"...transformed the state of affairs into tyranny, holding that the only way to detach men from the fear of God was by making them continuously dependent upon his power."⁹

He created a safety net for everybody. The problem is that the safety net turned into a hammock, and the hammock was so comfortable that you did not want to give it up. Then someone told you, "You had better obey the way they want you to obey, or the hammock is going to disappear." That, by the way, is called, 'mincome': a level of income for every single human being. Once they have you there, they have you, because they can just cut off your income if you happen to be politically incorrect, and attend Sugar Land Bible Church, for example.

"...holding that the only way to detach men from the fear of God..."¹⁰

"Wean them away from God because I want to be God. Introduce in the schools that God does not exist and that we came to this place in life from the goo to the zoo to you over billions of years. Do not look at God for your future, for your sustenance. Look to the state. Look to me. Look to Nimrod."

⁷ Josephus, *Antiquities*, 1.4.2.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

"...holding that the only way to detach men from the fear of God was by making them continuously dependent upon his power. He threatened to have his revenge on God..."¹¹

First of all, how dumb is that? "Hey God, I am going to get even with You." It is like a child throwing a tantrum.

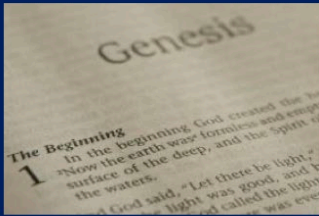
"He threatened to have his revenge upon God if He wished to inundate the earth again; for he would build a tower higher than the water could reach and avenge the destruction of their forefathers."¹²

"God, we are very upset at the fact that You judged this world through a flood. So we are going to create a tower that goes up into heaven. It is so high that if you ever decide to do that again, God, we will be insulated from it. We will be protected from it." It is a culture and a society that has deliberately pushed God and His future judgment out of their collective thinking. This is the Tower of Babel. This is what they were building.

II. The Rebellion

vv. 3-4

- A. Their building (3-4b)
- B. Their reputation (4c)
- C. Their rejection of the divine command (4d)



We move away from their building to the reputation that they were trying to protect. Whose name were they trying to protect, exactly? It is right there in Genesis 11:4:

"They said, 'Come, let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth'" (Genesis 11:4).

It is the spirit of Cain. A little earlier, I gave you the verse Genesis 4:17, where Cain, the first murderer in human history, was building a city. But did you catch whom Cain named the city after?

"...he...called the name of the city Enoch,..." (Genesis 4:17).

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

Now, that is a different Enoch from the one you know of who was taken to heaven. That was the good Enoch. This is a bad Enoch.

"...he built a city, and called the name of the city Enoch, after the name of his son" (Genesis 4:17).

"I am going to preserve," Cain said, "through the construction of this city, my lineage—my reputation upon the earth."

This city of Genesis 11 was built out of a prideful spirit of fallen man. They did not care about God and God's reputation and God's name. They cared about their own reputation. By the way, that is what got David really upset about Goliath. When you study that story in 1 Samuel 17, what really upset David was the fact that God's name was being dragged through the mud. Not this group—they could not care less about God's name and God's reputation. They wanted a name for themselves.

I will just ask you a simple question: as you are out there laboring in the workforce and climbing the corporate ladder, being educated, becoming proficient at a task, whose applause are you really seeking? The applause of man? Or are you doing it all for an audience of One? We get our motives very, very confused sometimes, when suddenly it becomes our reputation—our knowledge—our livelihood.

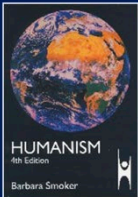
And we wonder, "Is this really something that God is bringing forth in me to glorify Himself?" Because if that is not the motive for everything we do, we have missed the point of our existence. The very purpose of our existence is to love God, glorify God, and enjoy Him forever. There is nothing wrong with education and career and becoming proficient at a skill, as long as the motive is right: to glorify the God that made us.

What was beginning here in Genesis 11 was the doctrine of humanism. Humanism, of course, is the belief that God does not exist. If He exists, He is irrelevant. They believe in a god, little "g," not a God who makes a moral claim on a person's life. They believe that man is the center of all things. They look at themselves in the mirror and they shave, and they have no need for the true God, because they are shaving their own god, as they look at themselves.

Humanist Beliefs

- The non-existence or irrelevancy of god
- Man as the center of all things
- The reality of evolution
- Man as an evolved animal rather than a special creature made in the image of his creator
- The absence of any absolute morals or values
- Confidence in the scientific method to solve the world's problems.

John Eldsmoe, *The Christian Legal Advisor*, 180-87.



Of course, if that is your belief, you have to have some way to explain how we got here. That is why humanists hold so strongly to the theory of evolution, because it dismisses the creative intervention of God. It destroys humanity, because man is nothing more than a naked ape. If we are our own gods and we get to make our own rules, so values become situational—situational morals, situational ethics. The only thing that we can trust in is science.

Now, science is masquerading as philosophy, but "We trust the scientific method." Boy, we are hearing a lot about that today, aren't we? "Trust the science." Well, what about scientists that have a different perspective? "Cancelled. Deleted. We cannot hear their perspectives. But trust our version of science."

I do not know if you read much out of the good old King James Version. The "good old King Jimmy," as I call it. In KJV, 1 Timothy 6:20 says,

"...oppositions of science falsely so called:" (1 Timothy 6:20 KJV).

I cannot think of a better description of the current age, when people are saying, "Trust the science," when the science that they are giving us is nothing more than man's philosophy. This is humanism. This, by the way, is what they teach round the clock in the public schools. "Gee, isn't it great how the Supreme Court got religion out of the public schools in 1963?"

Are you kidding me? The public schools are as religious today as they have ever been. The Supreme Court did not get rid of religion in the public schools. They exchanged religions. Christianity, upon which our country was based, was removed, and in its place came humanism, or the idea that man is the center of all things.

The people building a city in Genesis 11 wanted a name and a reputation for themselves (Genesis 11:4). Jesus said something very interesting in John 5:43 to the Jews, the unbelieving Jews of His day. He said,

"I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him" (John 5:43).

They would not receive Jesus coming in His Father's name, but boy, they are going to receive someone that comes in his own name. And oh my goodness, is the nation of Israel in its current state of unbelief being set up for that, having rejected the true Jesus Christ 2,000 years ago. Jesus said, "Well, if you do that, you are going to accept someone who comes in his own name, the Antichrist."

It is amazing to me the things that people believe and will give themselves to—like stargazing, for example—when they reject the truth. If a person rejects the truth, the heart and the mind is like a vacuum that Satan will fill with counter-God, anti-God philosophies. But these people of Genesis 11 wanted a reputation for themselves.

If anyone deserved to fight for his reputation, it would have been Jesus. But Jesus had no concern for His own reputation. Did you know that? In fact, I would say this: the more

concerned a person is for their own reputation, the less effective they can be for God. Of Jesus, Philippians 2:7, again quoting the good old King Jimmy, says,

"But [Jesus, God in human flesh] made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:" (Philippians 2:7 KJV).

In fact, when Jesus would do miracles, His own brothers were very frustrated with Him—"Promote Yourself. Show Yourself to the world. You gotta get on Facebook, Jesus, and you have to get twenty million followers and likes and 'friends.'" (People try to rack up their friends list on Facebook, when my Bible says that a man of many friends comes to ruin [Proverbs 18:24].) It says in John 7:3-4,

"Therefore His brothers said to Him, 'Leave here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may see Your works which You are doing. For no one does anything in secret when he himself seeks to be known publicly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world'" (John 7:3-4).

"Get your website, Jesus. Get your YouTube channel. Get your megachurch. The world needs to know who You are." And yet He made Himself of no reputation (Philippians 2:7). In fact, it says in John 7:6,

"So Jesus said to them, 'My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune'" (John 7:6).

"Your quest for fame is always there." Jesus says, "That is not My schedule. My schedule is to live according to the dictates and the decrees of God the Father."

These are very thought-provoking things (would you not agree?) concerning the motives of these builders in Genesis 11, as we compare them to our own motives. Moses goes on, and he not only talks here about the building and about the people's reputation, but he also talks here at the end of Genesis 11:4 about how the people rebelled against the direct command of God. These people could not be more rebellious than what they were, because God, back in Genesis 9:1, said,

"...'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth'" (Genesis 9:1).

Genesis 9:7 says,

*"As for you, be fruitful and multiply;
Populate the earth abundantly and multiply in it" (Genesis 9:7).*

"Multiply. Spread out." The people said, "No, we are all going to come together." They did exactly what the Lord told them they should not do. Genesis 11:4 says,

"...otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth" (Genesis 11:4).

God said to scatter, and they said, "No, we will not. We have to come together collectively, because, after all, (and how many times have we heard this over the course

of the last year?) we are all in this together. We are all one big, happy, human family. God is irrelevant. But we are in this together." Collective salvation—this idea that somehow we can come together and beat back the decrees that God Himself has given.

It is interesting that the sin nature has not been tethered or tamed at all in the post-Flood world. You would think that the Flood, which cleansed the world on the outside, would do something for the inside of man, but it has not. The human nature is exactly the same way it has always been: God-hating.

Genesis 8:21 says,

"The LORD smelled the soothing aroma; and the LORD said to Himself, 'I will never again curse the ground on account of man, for the intent of man's heart is evil from his youth;...' (Genesis 8:21).

"But I thought children were innocent." That is not what your Bible says. People who think that children are innocent—I wonder if they have ever had children. The truth of the matter is that the moment of conception is the moment that a nature which is at war with God is passed on to that person. That is why we so desperately need a revolution from within. What needs to be infused in us is a nature from above through the new birth.

You would think that the Flood would have fixed everything, but no. It fixed the outside, but it never fixed the inside of people. *"...for the intent of man's heart,"* Genesis 8:21 says, about as clearly as it could be said, *"is evil from his youth;..."*

"Well, can't we fix the problem by giving everybody an education?" Well, guess what happens when you educate a blue-collar criminal? You turn him into a white-collar criminal. All you have done is enhanced his ability to steal. That is what you have done if, simultaneously with that world education, his heart inside is not transformed through the person of Jesus Christ.

We will close here with Genesis 11:5, God's condescension. In fact, there is a great deal of humor in this as you look at Genesis 11:5. Notice what it says.

"The LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built" (Genesis 11:5).

Well, I thought, according to Genesis 11:4, that this tower was to reach into heaven. "I thought this was the greatest magnificent edifice the human race had ever seen. It would certainly impress God, wouldn't it?" No. God has to lower Himself just to see what they are doing. "Let's see what kind of sandcastle y'all came up with. I am going to leave heaven and get down there with My microscope just to see what it is you think is so great."

Arnold Fruchtenbaum says,

"Here the author uses anthropomorphic satire, to satirize what puny man is trying to do. No matter how high man towered, God still has to come down to see it and to get a better look. This shows that God is interested in the affairs of men [see, God is not a deist who wound up the clock and let it go; He is interested in the affairs of men], but God is so high and man is so puny that God had to come down to get a better look."¹³

Jonathan Sarfati, in his commentary on the Book of Genesis, says,

"In this case, the account emphasizes the greatness of God and the puniness of man by comparison. Although man vainly tried to build this immensely high tower, God was still described as 'coming down' to see this comparatively tiny venture."¹⁴

By the way, no extra charge for this, but it is interesting that not only does the Bible not support deism, but our Founding Fathers of the United States are accused of being deists. Benjamin Franklin is considered to be one of the most deistic of our founding fathers. And yet Benjamin Franklin himself quotes this story when he is encouraging the delegates at the Constitutional Convention to pray. Does this man sound like a deist to you?

"I firmly believe this; and I also believe that, without his [God's] concurring aid, we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel...."¹⁵

"If we do not get on our faces and seek the face of God and pray, then our country will never get off the ground." That is what the "deistic" Benjamin Franklin said. So what was the solution? "We have to raise money. We have to do marketing research. We have to consult the philosophers of the day." No, that is not what Benjamin Franklin said.

"I therefore beg leave to move that, henceforth, prayers imploring the assistance of heaven and its blessings on our deliberations be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that service."¹⁶

Oh my goodness, Franklin did not even believe in the strict wall of separation between church and state. He says, "We are not going to get anywhere in this country—we are going to be like a bunch of squabbling children—our efforts are going to be derailed, just like the efforts of the builders were derailed in Genesis 11—unless we start to cry out to

¹³ Dr. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Book of Genesis*, 223-224.

¹⁴ Dr. Jonathan D. Sarfati, *The Genesis Account: A Theological, Historical, and Scientific Commentary on Genesis 1–11* (Powder Springs, GA: Creation Book Publishers, 2015), 660.

¹⁵ Benjamin Franklin, June 28, 1787; quoted by Albert Henry Smyth, ed., *The Writings of Benjamin Franklin* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1905-7), IX:600-1.

¹⁶ Ibid.

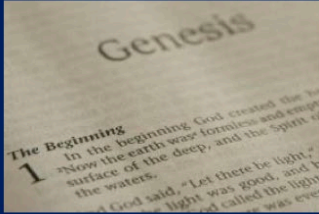
God in prayer." No, the Bible does not support deism, and this is the most deist, allegedly, of America's Founding Fathers.

There are things in your life that you are struggling with. There are things in your life that are not working the way you want them to work. And sometimes prayer is the last option. Benjamin Franklin says, "No, prayer is the first option, because the prayer of the righteous man or woman, James 5:16, is powerful and effective and availeth much."

GENESIS 11:1-9
Outline



- I. The Former World (1-2)
- II. The Rebellion (3-4)
- III. God's Condescension (5)
- IV. God's Observations (6)
- V. God's Intervention (7-8a)
- VI. The Results (8b-9)



The next time we are together, we will look at God's observations after He descended (He makes three), how God intervenes, and the results which we are still living with today. You cannot make any sense of our world today without understanding what happened in this historical account, which had a global impact. The neat thing about it is that God confounds the language.

Have you read the Book of Acts lately, where God, in redemption, in Acts 2, as the apostles were preaching to people in other languages, could be understood—these apostles, even though they were speaking a completely different language? It is almost as if God took what happened here at the Tower of Babel and reversed it. That reversal is coming even further in the Millennial Kingdom when Zephaniah 3:9 takes place, and there is only going to be one language again over the face of the earth.

What sin has marred God reverses. That is who God is. He is not just the Creator; He is not just the Judge; but He is the Restorer. God will take your life and, if you let Him, put the whole thing back together. God will take your marriage, which might be in disarray, and, if you let Him, He will put the whole thing back together. God will take things in your life that you have made a total shambles of and, if you let Him, He will put the whole thing back together. That is the nature of God.

The first step He took in this effort was to give us His Son, Jesus, who stepped out of eternity into time to fix what we messed up, to resolve tensions that we ourselves created through sin. The first step in Christianity is always restoration. That is the first thing God does as He holds out His hands to an obstinate and disobedient human race. He does that through the gospel.

The gospel, as we have said, is not what we do to please God. It is what God has done in our place. We receive what He has done as a gift by way of faith. Right now, as I am speaking, people within the building or people listening online can be restored to God. God really is the only entity I can think of who is really worth being restored to by way of priority. You can restore all kinds of things in your life, but if you are not restored to God, what good is it?

The gospel is restoration, and when a person receives by faith what Jesus has done, they are no longer in conflict with God, but they become God's child—not through their own righteousness, but through His righteousness transferred to them at the point of faith alone in Christ alone. God offers it to the whole human race as a free gift. He just says, "Receive it." And as you receive it, and as you begin to walk with God by way of faith, what you will start seeing Him do is put back together other areas of your life.

But He cannot put back together the other areas of your life until the primary area of your life gets fixed. That is what the gospel does. It is something that you receive from God, not by walking an aisle, joining a church, giving money, or trying harder. It is a matter of privacy between you and the Lord, where the Lord convicts you of your need to do this: trust in His Son.

You respond to that convicting ministry as a matter of privacy in your heart of hearts, by trusting what Jesus did for you. "I am not going to trust myself anymore to fix my situation. I am going to trust God." In a nanosecond, you receive the transferred righteousness of Jesus Christ. You can receive that right now, even as I am speaking.