

March 21, 2021

Genesis Behind The Curtain: Bonus Ep. 9 - The Tower of Babel

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Genesis 11:1-9

Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words. ² It came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. ³ 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. 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." ⁵ The LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. ⁶ The LORD said, "Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them. ⁷ Come, let Us go down there and confuse their language, so that they will not understand one another's speech." ⁸ So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city. ⁹

Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of the whole earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth.

Question 1? Why is it that so many cultures have a flood or tower to heaven narrative?¹

Question 2? Why is it that the oldest written languages and histories in the world (3000-3500 BC) align with the Babel narrative timeline?

Vs. 1 Now the whole earth used the same language and the same words.

- It is generally supposed, that after the confusion mentioned in this chapter, the Hebrew language remained in the family of Heber. The proper names, and their significations given in the Scripture, seem incontestable evidence that the Hebrew language was the original language of the earth - the language in which God spoke to man, and in which he gave the revelation of his will to Moses and the prophets. ²

Vs. 3 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.

- **Making War on God:** The people of Shinar (Babylon) decided to unify against God, believing that they could build a watertight fortress far above the threat of flood in an attempt to meet God where he dwelled.
 - The people were no longer living in covenant, believing that God would renege on his word and destroy again by flood.
 - **The chasm between God and man was growing. Vs. 5** The LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built.

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_flood_myths

² <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/clarke/genesis/11.htm>

Vs. 7 The LORD said, “Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them.

- **Question:** Was God fearful that man might overthrow the Empire of Deity?
 - The text more than likely means that no sin or debauched act might be impossible for them rather than fear of a god-like act.
 - The confusion of language and the separation of peoples was an act of grace to slow humankind's ability to conspire in sin, thus pausing the need for another catastrophic event of judgement.
 - **Isaiah 48:9** For the sake of My name I delay My wrath, And for My praise I restrain it for you, In order not to cut you off.

Small Group Questions:

1. What is the point of this story?
2. Are there practical lessons to take away from it for modern day living.
3. What do you think God meant when he said that “nothing will be impossible for them”? Was God afraid?
4. Pastor Adam said that separating the people and confusing their language was an act of grace that slowed their rush towards greater sin and destruction. Can you think of a time where God slowed you down for your benefit?
5. Rather than walking in the garden with mankind, he was now coming down from heaven. Sin had separated God from man. Do you ever feel far away from God? Is it possible to be far from God if he dwells within you?