

Genesis 11 - Lesson 21

The Tower of Babel and Tongues

1. Peleg and the Division

- a. The earth was divided in the days of Peleg - Gen 10:25
- b. The division is defined: families, tongues, land, nations - Gen 9:19, 10:5, 20, 31, 32
- c. The earth overspread, they were divided, and God did it - Gen 11:8-9
- d. God divided the nations and chose Jacob - Deu 32:6-12

2. Tower of Babel

- a. *"one language, one speech"* - as it was before the Gen 10 divisions
- b. *"plain in Shinar"* - a plain between two rivers, near where Baghdad is today
- c. *"let us build, ... unto heaven"* - to sit in high places as gods, as it is also today
 - i. Herodotus said it was at least a furlong tall (200m), others much taller.
- d. *"let us make us a name"* - not in honor to God - Psa 49:11-13, John 5:44, Gal 1:10
 - i. God blessed be the LORD God of Shem, but they wanted their own name
 - ii. A king of (Babel) Babylon making himself a name - Dan 4:29-30
 - iii. Bel (Baal) was the god in Babylon - Xerxes broke the tower - Jer 50:2, 51:44
- e. *"lest we be scattered abroad"* - why aren't they obeying God? - Gen 9:1, 9:7
- f. *"which they have imagined to do"* - Rom 1:21, Gen 6:5, 8:21, Psa 2:1
- g. *"scattered them abroad"* - God did the scattering Pro 19:21 (as with Israel Jer 9:14-16)
- h. *"upon the face of all the earth"* - It means the whole earth, they scattered everywhere.

3. Language in Prophecy

- a. God did not author confusion (1 Cor 14:33); men confused God's instructions
- b. God created the original languages, he was the first to speak - Gen 1:3
- c. Unknown tongues are a sign we still live in the time of man's rebellion to God.
- d. Unknown languages were from punishment in Israel - Jer 5:15, Neh 13:24
- e. God promised a pure language in the future - Zeph 3:1-9, Zech 8:23
- f. Egypt will speak the language of Israel - Isa 19:18

4. Restoring the Language

- a. It is not babble talk, but speech that can be understood - Isa 32:1-4, 35:5-6
- b. Jesus came to correct the speech - Luke 1:64, Mark 7:32-37, Mat 15:30-31
- c. Signs will follow them that believe (speak in new tongues) - Mk 16:17
- d. Israel would teach all nations in their kingdom - Matt 28:18-19
- e. The power to speak and understand was given in Acts 2:6,12; not Babel confusion
- f. We do not have power from God to remove the language barriers today;
 - i. What does this mean? Acts 2:12 - the kingdom has not yet come

5. Shem to Abram

- a. This chronology of Shem links the Messiah and Jacob to Adam and Noah
- b. This chronology also shows the diminishing of ages to the present span