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## **Babel-The Birthplace of Mass Confusion**

1. Babel comes from a Hebrew word, which means confusion. We read on the tower of Babel in Gen. 11:1-9. The building of the tower of Babel, and the confusion of tongues, occurred in about the fourth generation after the flood; app. one-hundred and one years later; and three-hundred twenty-six years before the call Of Abraham.

2. We read in Gen. 11:1-4: "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. 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. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. 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. Gen. 8:4 tells us, that after the flood, the ark came to rest upon Mt. Ararat, north of Babylonia. It is believed that the descendants of Noah, first traveled south, and then turned west; possibly traveling over the same spot, and building the tower of Babel, where the Garden of Eden had previously been located.

B. And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. How wonderful it must of been, for the entire world, to be able to communicate in the same language. How much confusion, turmoil, and trouble, the world has to go through today, because of there being so many different languages which they must learn.

C. They found a plain in Shinar, which was later called Babylonia; and they dwelt there. Hebrew-biqah (biq-aw): a wide, level valley, between mountains.

D. And they said one to another, go to , let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone and slime had they for mortar.

First of all, when we go to do a job or a project for God, we do the very best job that we can do. This does not mean using just whatever materials we can come up with; even if they just be scrapes and whatever kind of junk

material we can find. We use the very best material available. But these people did not care; as long as they got their job done. Their heart was not concerned with what God wanted, but with what they wanted. After all, they were not doing this for God's benefit, but for their own.

E. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower. The truth is, the people had rather build them a dwelling place, where they could all dwell together in one place; rather than go out and conquer the land, as God had previously instructed them to do. It sounds as though their reason for doing so, was for the sake of defense; so they would be close together, and be able to help protect one another. Evidently, their reason for deciding to built a tower, was not to protect themselves, in case God should send them another flood; which He had already promised them, would not happen again. For if this had been the reason for building the tower of Babel, they would of chosen a high mountain to build upon; rather than upon a low plain.

F. Whose top may reach unto heaven. Their reason for desiring to build a tower which may reach unto heaven, was not for any reverent reason; but so as to get as close to God as possible; not in holiness, but as a rival to God.

G. The tower of Babel is said to of represented the temple tower, or pyramid of Babylonian religion, which is called the Ziggurat. There was a pyramid of this type built in Ur; in southern Mesopotamia, in app, 2100 B.C. This pyramid consisted of three terraces of diminishing size as the building ascended; with a temple at the top. Converging stairways on one side, led up to the temple. The outside of the structure was built of fired bricks and bituminous mortar, just as the tower of Babel is described. Even though many beautiful structures have been constructed upon the earth, with the use of fired bricks, according to God's Word, they are an inferior substitute for natural stone. Isa. 9:10 tells us: "The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stone." Hebrew-gazyth (gaw-zeeth): something cut; dressed stone. Structures of this sort were signs of power to many of the people who came forth with Moses out of Egypt. Many times, when they faced the responsibility of seizing the land, which God gave them instructions to go and possess, they allowed these huge and earthly man-made sights, to put them in a state of fear; rather than keeping their eyes upon the Lord, and trusting Him to give them the power which was needed, to go and conquer these many sights, which they had been ordered to go and possess. Any time we attempt to do anything for the Lord, we must not be concerned about the circumstances which we must face; but just set our eyes upon Jesus, and trust in Him. We read in Num. 13:28: "Nevertheless the people be strong

that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great: and moreover we saw the children of Anak there.” And in Num. 13:33 we read: “And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.” The people allowed the size and the appearance of the people, to cause them to lose faith in themselves. They looked at the great cities which had been built, and allowed Satan to fill them with fear. And Deut. 1:28 tells us: “Whither shall we go up? Our brethren have discouraged our heart, saying, The people is greater and taller than we; the cities are great and walled up to Heaven; and moreover we have seen the sons of the Anakims there.” Let us never allow the appearance of people, or the appearance of the structures in which they live, to discourage us from doing the work which we know that God has called us to do. For no matter what the size of the people, or how strong they may appear to be, let us never forget, that God is much greater. And Romans 8:31 tells us: “If God be for us, who can be against us?”

H. The people wanted to make themselves a name. Hebrew-shem (shame): a mark of memorial significance or individuality, or power or of recognition.

I. It was the plan of God, that the people go and replenish the earth. Gen. 9:1 tells us: “And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” After the flood, this was to be carried out by Noah, his sons, and their descendants. They were to go and scatter, and allow their descendants to refill the different parts of the earth. But these people decided that they wanted to stay together. They thought of how they could be of help to one another; of how they loved one another; only of the safety and security of being close together; not at all of what God wanted. They only thought with the frame of mind “the more the merrier”. They weren’t at all concerned about what God’s will was. They only wanted to build them a city and a tower; not thinking at all about the increase in population in the future. They wanted their tower to reach unto Heaven. The imagination of their hearts was evil. They were thinking of opposition to God. Their desire and thoughts were as the devil himself had thought; how they could really make themselves a name; really be somebody; even somebody who could be equal to God; without a bit of help from Him. They wanted to have a reputation among mankind which would not be easily forgotten. They wanted a city and a tower, which would be a monument; bringing glory to their name throughout the earth; throughout future generations. It is said in ancient history books, that they even went to the point of engraving each of their individual names upon the bricks which were used in the building; in order to preserve their name; yet not one of their

names is remembered.

3. Babel was a kingdom established by Nimrod; a grandson of Ham; who was the son of Noah. We read of Nimrod in Gen. 10:8-10: “And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.”

A. Nimrod began to be a mighty one. Hebrew-gibbown (ghib-bone): powerful, strong, or excelling; a warrior, tyrant, champion, chief, or giant; one to be feared in battle; a victorious one (in battle or in war). Nimrod’s reputation as “the mighty hunter”, came about from his hard work to protect the people from the wild animals. He was also the founder of Nineveh and Babylonia. Babylonia was long known as “the land of Nimrod.”

4. We read further in Gen. 11:1-9: “And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men had built. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech.”

A. Notice that God allowed the people to proceed a ways in their building project, before He put a stop to it. Why? It certainly was not because He had failed to notice it sooner. Could it of been because He had hoped, that they might realize the sin in what they were doing; and possibly may of chosen to repent of their evil doings; and allow Him to be merciful unto them; and forgive them? As we might recall, God gave the people in Noah’s days, one-hundred and twenty years to repent of their sin; even though they did not do so; before He sent the flood to destroy them. Gen. 6:3 tells us: “And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.”

God is most certainly a God of love and mercy. He is always very patient and merciful unto us; in hope that we will come to repentance; before his judgment comes upon us for our sins. But the people had no thoughts of any wrong doing, and so the Lord God was forced to come down in judgment against them.

B. The people were one. Hebrew-echad (ekh-awd): united; in agreement; spiritually speaking, as to be in agreement concerning a particular task. They were one in agreement, that the building of the tower, was what they desired to do; whether it be right or wrong.

C. They have one language. The people had complete understanding of one

another's speech. They were proceeding fast with their sinful building project; simply because no time was being wasted due to misunderstanding of what was being said. Orders were being given and received without misunderstanding or confusion; which would ordinarily of caused great delays, and a lot of wasted time.

D. Nothing will be restrained from them. Hebrew-batsar (baw-tsar): as to be impossible to accomplish.

E. Which they have imagined to do. Hebrew-zaman (zaw-man): to plan or to plot; to have a desire to accomplish. God was simply saying, that if He allowed them to complete this evil task, that they would continue with their evil desires, for as long as He did not put a stop to them.

F. Go to, let us go down. Who is God talking to? To the angels? Not likely. Let us never forget the Holy Trinity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

G. And there confound their language. Hebrew-balal (baw-lal): to overflow or to add to (utterances or sounds which cannot be recognized); to fade (as to cause something (the speech) to be unclear); to cause to be hard to identify.

H. That they may not understand one another's speech. Hebrew-shama (shaw-mah): to be able to hear with intelligence; to comprehend, perceive, or to discern (what is heard). This apparently, was the beginning of the many different languages, which are spoken upon the earth today. Babel, at this time, was only a place of mass confusion.

5. We now read in verse Gen. 11:8: "So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of the earth: and they left off to build the city."

A. The Lord scattered them abroad. Hebrew-puwts (poots): to break up (their united arrangement); to disperse or to drive out; to spread out (as to put great fear upon, and cause to run away).

B. Upon the face of all the earth. To the same places which He had also previously instructed Adam and Eve and Noah and his sons to go. Gen. 1:28 tells us: "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

C. And they left off to build the city. Work upon the tower of Babel was temporarily suspended; due to the confusion among the people. The people who remained in Babylonia, resumed the work on the tower later; and the tower became the center around which Babylon was built; even though we know that the tower never reached unto the heavens, as it had been previously planned. It became a pattern for similar towers in other Babylonian cities, and may have suggested the form of pyramids in Egypt.

The tower was at Borsippa; ten miles southwest of Babylon. It appears to of been at the top of a large hill; which evidently must of had a large plain on top. However, some archeologists believe it to of been in the middle of Babylon; due to a few of their discoveries. But there is no positive proof of either one being the exact spot.

6. We conclude, by reading Gen. 11:9: “Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.”

**Conclusion:**

The hard work and time spent in the building of the tower of Babel, was in vain; for it was all a desire of man’s heart; and not at all the desire of God. Therefore, it turned out to be only a place of confusion. We should always make sure that whatever it is that we want to accomplish, is not just a desire of our own, but a desire which we have received from God. For if it is not God’s desire, it will all end in vain; just as the tower of Babel.

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