

LESSON SIX

**THE TOWER OF BABEL**

TEXT: Genesis Chapters 10 & 11.

**A. NOAH'S THREE SONS:**

In the latter part of Genesis chapter nine we read the story of Noah's sin and the part that his three sons had in the sad downfall of Noah. The Bible always faithfully records the bad along with the good. This is true in the account of Noah's life. Noah's sins were drunkenness and immodesty. These two sins are often associated. This is the first record of both.

Noah's sin gave occasion for his son, Ham, to sin. What was Ham's sin? Ham's sin was his utter failure to honor his father. He was lacking in filial love. For a child to expose and sneer at his parent's fall was wickedness of the worst kind. Had he really cared for his father he would have acted as his brothers did. Ham sinned as a son and was punished in his son, Canaan. A person reaps what he sows!

What was the result? A curse fell upon Ham and especially upon Ham's son Canaan. Shem was blessed and Japheth was to be enlarged. Japheth stands for the Gentile nations.

Genesis chapter ten states and names the descendants of Japheth, Ham and Shem, and the nations that developed from them.

Japheth, being the oldest, is named first (Genesis 10:21). Fourteen nations are associated with him. From him came the nations of Europe and the Anglo-Saxon race. *"By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands"* (verse 5). The prophecy that he should dwell in the tents of Shem apparently means that he should receive blessing from Shem.

Ham was the second son. Thirty nations are mentioned. Nimrod is especially mentioned because of his opposition to God as seen in Babel. Canaan is also mentioned because of his opposition to Israel in subsequent history.

Shem was the youngest son. Twenty-six nations are mentioned here. The emphasis is placed upon the direct line to Abraham.

This chapter would teach: (1) oneness of origin of all men; (b) oneness of man's need because of sin; and (c) oneness of redemption through Shem.

**B. NIMROD:**

The story of Nimrod is found in Genesis 10:8-10.

Nimrod was Ham's grandson; his father was Cush. Nimrod is a type of Antichrist. The word "Nimrod" means, "Rebel." This points forward to one of the titles of the Antichrist given in II Thessalonians 2:8, "The Lawless One." Nimrod's rebellion was to lead a movement in revolt against God.

Three times in this passage and also in I Chronicles 1:10 it states that Nimrod was mighty. In Genesis 10:9 he is described as being a "mighty hunter BEFORE THE LORD." This infers that he pushed his own designs in defiance of his Creator.

### **C. THE TOWER OF BABEL:**

*"And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel" (Genesis 10:10).* Here we have the first mention of Babel. In the language of that time Babel meant "the gate of God" but afterwards because of judgment it meant, "Confusion." Here we find that Nimrod had a kingdom and therefore was "king." Not only did he start a new kingdom but he also instituted a new and idolatrous worship.

"Let us build us a city" - This refers to a political system, a world empire.

"Let us build us a tower" - This refers to a religious system, a religion of good works, reaching heaven without any help from God. It was a system of deifying man. It was Cain's religion beginning again.

"Let us make us a name" - This refers to a desire for fame and power. Salvation was to come in their name. However, God had a name through which there would be salvation (Jesus) and it was not yet God's time to reveal that name.

Everything about Babel was in opposition to God. It was because of this that judgment fell and God scattered them because of confusion.

Let us ever remember that the root of all sin is rebellion and the result is always the same, confusion and a scattering.

### **D. THE BEGINNING OF THE BABYLONISH RELIGION:**

In the seventeenth chapter of Revelation we have pictured the false idolatrous religion of the last days, a harlot sitting upon a scarlet colored beast, a politico-religious system of great power. In Genesis chapter eleven we find the history recorded of the beginning of this false religion.

After the fall, God clothed our first parents and instituted the true plan of salvation and worship. We find this continued by Abel, Noah and other men of faith. Following the flood God instituted the principle of human government, a system by which God would maintain law and order, and preserve peace and harmony.

Both of these two institutions were of divine origin. However, God ordained that these two institutions, religion and government, would be kept separate until Jesus Christ would come who would unite the principle of priest and king in one person. Until that time came these two institutions were to be administered by different individuals. The King must come of the tribe of Judah and the priest must come of the tribe of Levi. In the New Testament Jesus confirmed this principle when He said, *"Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's."* This is the separation of church and state.

Nimrod married a girl by the name of Semiramis who bore a son called Tammuz. Going back to the promise of Genesis 3:15 Semiramis claimed that she was the woman of the promise and that her son was the seed of the woman. Although they had turned their backs upon God, they could not eliminate the knowledge that had come down to them. Semiramis set herself up as the high-priestess of the Babylonian religion. It was a religion that centered in the worship of the

mother and the child. The sign of this religion was a mother who held a baby in her arms and was known as the mother-child cult. Semiramis took for herself the name, "The Queen of Heaven" and taught that access into the presence of God was through her high-priestess ministry. She became a mediatrix between God and man.

When Tammuz came to young manhood, he was slain while hunting a wild boar. Semiramis gathered a number of virgins and after a forty-day period of prayed and fasting, Tammuz was supposed to be resurrected from the dead by the power of his mother, "The Queen of Heaven." That forty-day period became an annual time of mourning throughout Babylon. At the conclusion that had a feast in honor of Semiramis and Tammuz. They made the egg the sacred symbol, which was a symbol of life out of death. On the birthday of Tammuz they erected evergreen trees as the symbol of eternal life.

This religion spread to Phoenicia, Egypt and Greece but Babylon continued to be the center of this false religious system until her destruction and then the system moved to Pergamos, and from there to Rome. After the professed conversion of Constantine this pagan religion that started with Nimrod was superimposed upon the Christian church.

#### **E. GOD'S JUDGMENT UPON BABEL:**

The judgment that fell upon Babel was a confusion of tongues. This act of God should be compared carefully with the miracle that took place on the Day of Pentecost.

At Babel there was judgment, confusion and a scattering.

At Pentecost there was blessing, unity and harmony, and the Gospel message proclaimed.

*COURSE: GENESIS*

LESSON SIX

SELF HELP TEST

A. Name the three sons of Noah:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

B. Why did a curse fall on Ham?

C. Write a brief history of Nimrod.

D. Compare Babel with Pentecost.

If you wish to obtain your AIS Bible and Theology Certificate or work toward your B.A. Degree from Indiana Bible College, complete this Self-Help Test as completely as possible and return it to: AIS, P.O. Box 47917 Indianapolis, IN 46247 or email it to: [ais@apostolic.edu](mailto:ais@apostolic.edu) or fax it to: (317) 781-7700.