

The Table of Nations from the Flood to the Tower of Babel

Genesis 8:15 And God spake unto Noah, saying, 16 Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. 17 Bring forth with thee every living thing that [is] with thee, of all flesh, [both] of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth. 18 And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him: 19 Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, [and] whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark. 20 And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.

The Hebrew word for God here is not [*~'Elohiym*] YHWH [*~Yahweh*], as frequently used in connection with God's covenant actions and in exhibitions of His grace.

Genesis 8:21 And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart [is] evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done.

Here is another example of the impassable gulf that exists between mythical and Biblical accounts. God's smelling the "sweet savor" of Noah's magnificent sacrifice is merely a figure of speech to describe God's acceptance and approval of it.

On the other hand, the vulgar Babylonian myth represents "the gods" as being "gathered like flies above the offerer of sacrifice," as if they were hungry and even starving because they had not been fed by sacrifice in such a long time!

From the Epic of Gil-ga-mesh "Seven cult vessels I sat up ... the gods smelled the savor, the gods smelled the sweet savor, the gods crowded like flies about the sacrifice."

Even the most casual glance at the various mythical stories with accounts of a great flood reveals them as distorted and perverted accounts of the real, actual historical event accurately recorded in Genesis.

Genesis 8:21 And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart [is] evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done.

**For that the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth ..."
Man's heart was evil before the flood Genesis 6:5 and now man's heart is still evil after the flood ... Noah and his descendants will not be any better than were the posterity of Adam. The flood was not to take care of all evil but to preserve the righteous seed line through which the Messiah would be born. Despite such a fact, God would nevertheless go forward with his Operation Mankind.**

This prophecy of the continuing wickedness of humanity ... Noah's behavior soon provided "a striking example" of mankind's depravity.

Genesis 8:22 While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

"While the earth remaineth ..." This is not a promise that the earth and the established order will continue eternally, but that "as long as the earth itself exists," that order will continue. The Scriptures make it explicit that there is still another event that shall annihilate the whole world in the fires of the eternal judgment (II Peter 3).

"Seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night..." The Jewish historian Josephus described the necessity for the promises in these verses as follows:

"But as for Noah, he was afraid, since God had determined to destroy mankind, lest he should drown the earth every year. So he offered God burnt offerings and besought God that nature might hereafter go its further orderly course. He also prayed God to accept his sacrifice, and to grant that the earth might never again undergo the like effects of his wrath."

This stupendous event was pointed out by Christ himself as a "foreshadowing of the final judgment that shall at last summon all men before that solemn tribunal where every man shall receive the appointment of his eternal destiny (Matthew 24:37-39).

Matthew 24:34-39 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. 35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. 36 But of that day and hour knoweth no [man], no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. 37 But as the days of Noe [were], so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, 39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

I Peter 3:20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

II Peter 3:5-6 For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the

water and in the water: 6 Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:

Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

Covenant With Noah

Genesis 9:1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

From the Epic of Gil-ga-mesh “When at length as En-lil (god) arrived, and saw the ship, En-lil was wroth, he was filled with wrath ... ‘has some living soul escaped?’ No man was to survive the destruction.”

But the Babylonian Epic myth does have some parallels to the Bible

The flood was divinely planned

The hero is warned to build a ship, pitched within & without

The hero & his family are saved

Animals to be saved are placed on the ark

Everyone not on the ship is destroyed

The ship lands on a mountain

Birds are sent out to see if the water is receded

Sacrifice is offered

Genesis 9:1-6 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth. 2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth [upon] the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered. 3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things. 4 But flesh with the life thereof,

[which is] the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. 5 And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. 6 Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

This whole passage may be viewed as God's precautionary action taken against the possibility of the recurrence of the universal physical violence that preceded the Flood. It is significant to note that this represents a change in the action of God Himself when He spared Cain, following the murder of his brother Abel. Cain's fear that someone would kill him (Genesis 4:14) shows that even he realized that his crime deserved death, hence, the fear that gripped his evil heart. But with the establishment of this law, God had seen enough of such leniency. Henceforth, the murderer would receive the retribution that his crime deserved.

Roger Keith Coleman from Grundy, VA was convicted and executed for the rape and murder in March 1981 of his sister-in-law, his brother's wife Wanda McCoy. The day of the rape and murder he had been laid off from work. Coleman's case drew national and worldwide attention before and after his execution because of his repeated claims of innocence. Coleman's appeals were supported by the anti-death-penalty movement. His cries of "I'm innocent" was picked up by the press, even making the cover of Time Magazine, features by ABC, CBS & NBC ultimately he became the "darling" of world-wide death penalty protest. Coleman was executed May 20, 1992, in the electric chair. Coleman's final words were: "An innocent man is going to be murdered tonight. When my innocence is proven, I hope America will realize the injustice of the death penalty as all other civilized countries have. After DNA evidence was analyzed January 2006, Virginia Governor Mark Warner announced that testing of DNA

evidence had conclusively proven that Coleman was guilty of the crime. It determined that his DNA matched that of semen found at the crime scene, with no exclusions, and that there was only a 1-in-19-million chance of a random match.

Capital punishment for murderers is a law here instituted by God Himself. The just application of such a law would necessitate the creation of a judiciary with power to exonerate those who were inadvertently guilty in a technical sense, but whose lives should be spared, later in the law of Moses in the establishment of the cities of refuge. The germ of government is here also found.

"By man shall his blood be shed ..." "This is not merely a permission legalizing, but a command enjoining capital punishment." Only God has the right to take life, but in this commandment, it is clear that, when God commands man to execute murderers, He delegates this task to man, and it becomes man's God-given responsibility to do it.

Genesis 9:7-17 And you, be ye fruitful, and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth, and multiply therein. 8 And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, 9 And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; 10 And with every living creature that [is] with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. 11 And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. 12 And God said, This [is] the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that [is] with you, for perpetual generations: 13 I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. 14 And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: 15 And I will remember my covenant, which [is]

between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. 16 And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that [is] upon the earth. 17 And God said unto Noah, This [is] the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that [is] upon the earth.

"Covenant ..." This word "occurs some two hundred times in the O.T." There was a series of covenants with Abraham; two were revealed to Noah, and many were made with Israel.

"By the waters of a flood ..." This is the prime qualifier of this covenant. The promise was not that "never again would the earth be destroyed," but another total destruction of the earth will yet occur, by means of fire, at or near the time of the Coming again of Jesus.. (See 2 Peter 3; Zechariah 12:9).

"I do set my bow in the cloud ..." This would mean that rain had not fallen upon the earth until the times of the flood, which some see as a fact in the light of Genesis 2:6.

I Peter 3:19-21 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; **20** Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. **21** The like figure whereunto [even] baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

II Peter 2:4-5 For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast [them] down to hell, and delivered [them] into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; **5** And spared not the old world, but saved

Noah the eighth [person], a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly;

Genesis 9:18-25 And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham [is] the father of Canaan. 19 These [are] the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread. 20 And Noah began [to be] an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: 21 And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. 22 And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. 23 And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid [it] upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces [were] backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. 24 And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. 25 And he said, Cursed [be] Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. 26 And he said, Blessed [be] the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. 27 God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant 28 And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. 29 And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years: and he died.

"Cursed be Canaan ..." What Cain was to the antediluvian world, Canaan was to the world after the flood. He was the ancestor of the Canaanites who preceded Israel in the land of Palestine, and the preoccupation of that entire Canaanite culture with their vulgar sex gods, which they worshiped with the most abominable rites, indicates clearly that they partook of the nature of their infamous ancestor. This also lends strong presumptive proof that the nature of Canaan's sin was sexual by the phrase "had done unto him". Significantly, it was precisely that evil culture which later overwhelmed Ephraim and the whole northern kingdom of Israel, through which, in turn, the

southern kingdom also fell and was carried away by Babylon. This was the grandson of Noah whom that patriarch cursed for his despicable behavior during the event of Noah's drunkenness, and it should be noted that none of Canaan's descendants can be identified with the Black African race, who were actually descended from Ham, not from Canaan. Moreover, their homeland was not primarily Africa, but Palestine, from Sidon to Sodom and Gomorrah. They were the pre-Israelite Canaanites, notorious for their sexual debauchery, their vile sex gods, and the licentious worship services by which they served them. The Canaanites thus justified in their subsequent history all that Noah had prophesied of them. Also, in this connection, it should be noted that Noah's curse was a prediction of how they would behave. Also, that part about their being enslaved and subjugated by other peoples likewise came true. No great power ever rose out of Palestine until AFTER the Canaanites had been supplanted by Israel and the vast Hebrew monarchy under Saul, David and Solomon dominated the Mid-east. On the other hand, Canaan's brothers became world conquerors, The Assyrian Hammurabi probably being among the descendants of Ham.

"Blessed be the Lord, the God of Shem ..." This means, that in a particular sense, God would be identified as "the God of Shem," through whom the Messiah would come for human redemption. This is the prophetic designation of Shem as the patriarch through whom Jesus would be born.

"Enlarge Japheth ..." This prophesied the multiplication of his posterity, which was remarkably fulfilled in the proliferation of the populations of Europe and other places where so-called Western Civilization and Christianity prevailed.

"... he shall dwell in the tents of Shem" Japheth ... in the future European Gentiles shall worship the Lord the God Shem,' another

reference to the spiritual blessings upon the Church through the Messianic line.

Genesis 10:1 Now these [are] the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth: and unto them were sons born after the flood ... (we will skip the naming of all the descendants of Noah)

Generations, section, or book Hebrew Toledoth IV

Christians should not ignore this chapter, the fundamental teaching of which is that all the nations of earth are descended from a single ancestor and that, all the peoples of the earth are of "one blood"

Acts 17:26 And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;

Genesis 10:5 By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided (split) in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.

Genesis 25 And unto Eber were born two sons: the name of one [was] Peleg; for in his days was the earth divided; and his brother's name [was] Joktan.

Peleg - From פלג *palag*, in Hebrew means earthquake,

“... in his days was the earth divided; ...” the word “divided” in Hebrew means split. This is supposed to be about one hundred years after the flood. We are of the opinion that a physical division of dry land, or a separation of dry land into continents and islands; from the one previous land mass for what is said in Genesis 10:5, is spoken by way of anticipation, or prophecy of this event. Furthermore, Peleg or “earthquake’s” brother was named Jok-tan, which, in Hebrew means “to make little”. Looking at the verse, in the light of these facts, it appears in the days of Eber, the earth was divided and split, and he

was so impressed the cataclysmic earthquakes which accompanied the ripping or tearing apart of dry land which modern scientists call Pangaea ... that he named one of his sons “earthquake”, and the other, “to make little”. Only the finger of God in a supernatural event such as this, could explain the mastodons found so quickly frozen in the permafrost of Siberia, that many had green grass still in their mouths and they were frozen before it could be swallowed or spit out.

31 These [are] the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations.

32 These [are] the families of the sons of Noah, after their generations, in their nations: and by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood.

Genesis 11:1 And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.

It would be impossible to exaggerate the importance of this chapter, since it recounts the Second Hardening of mankind, in which, on the plains of Shinar there flowered the second general rebellion of humanity against the Creator. The same pattern is evident in both. In the first, it began with a single act of disobedience; but it eventually resulted in the total corruption of Adam's race, the First Judicial Hardening of humanity, followed by the judgment of God upon their gross wickedness and the destruction of the whole antediluvian world in the waters of the Deluge.

In this second instance, it also began with the shameful wickedness of Canaan: but the eventual exaltation of man against his God became general in the events associated with the Tower of Babel and once more became so serious that the situation demanded God's direct interference with it. This resulted immediately in the confusion of tongues and the introduction of the Chosen People, through whom

God would yet provide a Savior and Redeemer for men. This is the significance of the presentation of the family line of Shem, the Messianic line, here recorded in close connection with the events of Babel, which stand here as an introduction to the call of Abraham.

The story is basically the same in both the fall and the Tower of Babel: "man's defiance of God." The setting, however, is different. The first Fall occurred among the flowers and fruits of Eden; the second one came in the bricks and asphalt of the city. Therefore, we see nothing less in this event than the Second Judicial Hardening of Adam's race, the first resulting in the Flood, this one resulting in the call of Abraham and the commissioning of a "Chosen People," by means of whom God's purpose of Redemption would still be achieved.

2 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.

"Plain in the land of Shinar (SHI-nar) ..." This is the great plain upon which Nimrod built Babylon and other cities. The Septuagint reads "Babylonia" here for "Shinar." "It is the land wherein were situated the great cities of Babylon, Erech (ER-ehk), and Akkad (AHK-add)." In Zechariah 5:8, there is the vision of the ephah (EE-pah) basket with a woman in it (probably the image of a goddess) symbolizing Wickedness; and when Zechariah asked where she was being taken, an angel revealed to him, that, "They bear the ephah to build her a house in the land of Shinar: and when it is prepared, she shall be set there in her own place" (Zechariah 5:11). This prophetic revelation shows that it was the establishment and enthronement of wickedness in Shinar that constituted the great error visible in this event at Babel. In all ages to come, Babylon would be the symbol of civilization in its organization opposed to God in pride, arrogance, and defiance. It was literally true that the cancer that began here at the tower of Babel was to form in every great city of the earth for all ages to come,

making Babylon the "Mother of harlots and abominations" of the earth, not merely in the religious connotations of the current dispensation, but also in the political developments ever afterward from the foundation of Babylon.

3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.

"Brick ... slime had they for mortar ..." The absence of building stone on the plains of Shinar (SHI-nar) led to the perfection of the brick industry, thus providing materials for the ambitious project contemplated. "The word for slime here is [*~hemar*], that is bitumen or asphalt." This was a different substance from that used in preparing the ark for Moses, or that Noah used to caulk the ark.

How innocent all this seemed, how practical, and commendable! Despite the innocuous appearance, however, wicked forces of the greatest magnitude were behind these proceedings. Man wanted to be God. As Neff put it:

"A true son of Adam, man wants to be God Himself. He wants to run the world in his own way. He wants to put himself at the center of his civilization on a pedestal inscribed with his own name: `Glory to MAN in the highest.

4 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.

"Whose top may reach unto heaven; ..." The Babylonians called such a tower a ziggurat (ZIG-er-at). The most conspicuous feature was a huge pyramidal tower, in seven terraces from the temple area. The seven stories represented the seven planetary deities ... The ascent

of the tower was a meritorious approach to the gods; and the summit was regarded as the "entrance to heaven."

In the light of the nature and use of such towers as subsequently revealed, there can hardly be any doubt that paganism and idolatry were intimately associated with the tower mentioned in this passage, despite the fact of there not being a word in the text concerning it. Many have discerned this. The construction of the tower of Babel was actually the dethronement of God and establishment of paganism as their system of worship. There were extensive collateral developments in connection with the tower. There was the change of government into a military dictatorship with cruel and oppressive power, and also the creation and promulgation of a priesthood which constructed right there in Babylon a pantheon of pagan gods and elaborated paganism into a religious system that was to prevail throughout the world until the Edict of Theodosius (thee-o-DO-she-us) outlawed such things in 389 A.D.

The same writer also declared, "That the tower of Genesis 11 is Babylonian is obvious on every ground." We may inquire as to "Who did all this?" But the Scriptures record none of the names of the perpetrators. The traditional account handed down by Josephus carries the stamp of truth in the simplicity that says, "It was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God; he was the grandson of Ham, the son of Noah." Josephus also affirmed that Nimrod had taught that it was cowardice to submit to God, and wrong to praise God for benefits, because it was through the courage and daring of MEN themselves that all blessings and benefits came! Such a doctrine as this has been the bible of evil world rulers in all generations.

"Let us build a city ... let us ... make us a name ... lest we be scattered ..." The children of men who wrought this wickedness in God's sight

were clearly infected with the US virus - the pride, arrogance, and conceit of the people standing starkly obvious in this cryptic account of it. Their rebellion against God is inherent in their stated purpose of avoiding their being "scattered," a scattering that God had commanded in the original great commission to "multiply and replenish the earth." Their self-centeredness and anti-God determination reveal with surgical accuracy the fundamental aspects of paganism. That the Second Judicial Hardening of the human family had not merely begun in this episode but that it had reached a crisis stage is revealed emphatically in Paul's great essay on it in Romans. 1. Of those pre-Christian Gentiles, Paul declared three times that, "God gave them up" (Romans 1:24, 26, 28). The rapid increase and degeneration of paganism were also recounted by Paul. It began by man worshipping himself (or, an image of himself), but it swiftly moved downward in cycles until men were worshipping reptiles and creeping things!

Thus, we understand the events of Babel as man's SUBSTITUTION of himself for God as the object of worship and devotion. In all probability the ancient tradition that Nimrod (NIHM-rod) himself was deified and worshiped as Merodach (MARE-o-dock) or Marduk (MAR-dook) in Babylon, and that his wife Semaramis (SEE-mar-a-muhs) received divine honors would appear to be founded in fact. The deification of Roman emperors in the Christian era and their hatred of God were only the eventual developments of the tragedy at Babel.

5 And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.

The fact that no individuals being mentioned in this account and its action being mentioned as something that "the children of men" did, shows that God considered this event as a rebellion of all mankind against Himself. The willingness of mankind, generally, to receive the

arrogance, pride and conceit of those people as their chosen way of life, and the perception of God that the cancer that began there would spread continually throughout the whole world fully justified the heavenly interference with it. God would also call Abraham, who was commissioned to be the head of a "chosen race," who would preserve the knowledge of the true God until the revelation of the Messiah.

"Came down to see ..." This speaking of God in terms that are related to the conduct of men was most natural, there being, in fact, no other way that knowledge of the true God could be conveyed. This is called anthropomorphism; and this passage is loaded with it. Significantly, while man was boasting of his tower "to reach heaven," God could not even see it without making a trip down to earth! Despite the fact that God sees everything continually throughout the whole universe, this manner of speech is superlative as an exposure of the foolishness and wickedness of men.

6 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.

God foresaw if their wickedness had been left unhindered the true knowledge of God might easily have been totally removed from the earth. The establishment of the people of Israel as a witness of God also aided in frustrating the devices of Satan which were, at the moment, proving successful. In fact, at that future time when "Satan shall be loosed for a little while," there will then occur exactly what was in the process of occurring here.

The silly notion expressed by some to the effect that God feared mankind as a rival is absolutely unworthy of any believer. Whatever fears God had in this situation, they were those fears for the future of the race of men which God accurately foresaw.

7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

"Come, let us go down ..." The plural form here suggests the Trinitarian Godhead more fully apparent in the N.T., but certainly not any kind of a conference with angels, or some kind of a "community of gods," as imagined by some. Also, it is the height of superlative naiveté (ni-eve-TAY) that prompts men to bother with trying to reduce all these anthropomorphisms to descriptions of where God was when He said this or that, or to suppose that God had to return to heaven between similar expressions. The thought here is simply that God had a remedy for human arrogance and conceit. He would do two things:

(1) first, He would thwart the spread of the wicked virus by confounding the languages;

(2) and He would also call out and separate a people to Himself who would keep themselves from idolatry and who would live as a continuing witness of the true God and His holy Name throughout the long dark ages of pre-Christian Gentile darkness then beginning its awesome descent upon the family of Adam.

8 So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.

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.

This is the conclusion of this remarkably important episode. We shall notice, in passing, some of the insinuations against this account, not because of any value in them, but as a notation that evil men are STILL opposed to the will of God.

Here is the story of how Babylon got its name, a name which has been on the tongue of all generations, and a name that memorializes eternally the dramatic event that produced its name. We do not blame critics for trying to find another explanation for the name of this ancient and wicked city, because, just as long as this Genesis record stands, the proof of the event is in the name itself! Leupold's comment on it is perceptive:

"The word [*~bala*] means 'confuse'; and from it the form [*~balbel*] (contracted to Babel) is derived, and here we have the actual origin of the name of this famed city. Thus, we translate part of Genesis 11:9, "Called Babel because there *Yahweh* made a babble!"

Marks refer to this passage as one of the "most important in the O.T., because it is the point where primeval history and sacred history dovetail." Primeval history left open the question of human salvation, but sacred history provides the certain promise of it in the call of Abraham and the announcement that "all the families of the earth" would be blessed through his seed (singular). The actual announcement of this is in Genesis 11:12, and the transition from primeval history to sacred history occurs precisely in Genesis 11:1-3.

10 These [are] the generations of Shem: Shem [was] an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood:

"Generations of Shem ...", this is the 5th section, division or book Hebrew Toledoth (to-led-ah') of Shem Genesis 11:10-26

11 And Shem lived after he begat Arphaxad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

12 And Arphaxad (ar-FAX-ed) lived five and thirty years, and begat Salah:

13 And Arphaxad lived after he begat Salah four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

14 And Salah (sal-AH) lived thirty years, and begat Eber:

15 And Salah lived after he begat Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.

16 And Eber (EH-ber) lived four and thirty years, and begat Peleg:

17 And Eber lived after he begat Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters.

18 And Peleg (PELL-ehg) lived thirty years, and begat Reu:

19 And Peleg lived after he begat Reu two hundred and nine years, and begat sons and daughters.

20 And Reu (RUE) lived two and thirty years, and begat Serug:

21 And Reu lived after he begat Serug two hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters.

22 And Serug (SEAR-uhg) lived thirty years, and begat Nahor:

23 And Serug lived after he begat Nahor two hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.

24 And Nahor (NA-hor) lived nine and twenty years, and begat Terah:

25 And Nahor lived after he begat Terah an hundred and nineteen years, and begat sons and daughters.

26 And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

27 Now these [are] the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran (HER-an); and Haran begat Lot.

“Generations of Terah ...”, This is the 6th section, division or book Hebrew Toledoth (to-led-ah’) of Terah beginning in Genesis 11:27

Genesis 11:27 provides the additional information that Terah had two other sons besides Abraham, Nahor (named after his uncle) and Haran, the father of Lot. This was probably given to explain the association of Lot with Abraham in subsequent chapters of Genesis. He apparently became, in fact, a kind of adopted son of Abraham, following the death of Haran in Ur of the Chaldees.

28 And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.

29 And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abram's wife [was] Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah.

Genesis 11:28-29 relates the marriages of Nahor who married the daughter of Haran, and that of Abraham who married Sarah (Sarai), the daughter of Terah (evidently by a second marriage), making her thus his sister, or half-sister. This explains other subsequent events mentioned in Genesis.

30 But Sarai was barren; she [had] no child.

Genesis 11:30 makes mention of the barrenness of Sarah.

31 And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.

Genesis 11:31 says, "And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there."

There would appear to be frustration of some kind recorded here: "They went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there! What happened? Why did they not go where they started to go? We have no way of knowing. Some think that Terah, unwilling to leave the pagan culture of Ur completely out of his life, diverted the journey to Haran, where the culture of Ur was likewise entrenched. In any case, Abram was unable to leave Haran until Terah died. The call of God to Abram next to be related in Genesis 12, carried the specific that Abram should "leave his father's house, and his kindred"; and this seems to confirm the view that Terah had been the big hindrance at first. "Even, Terah, the father of Abraham and of Nahor ... they served other gods" (Joshua 24:2). Terah was an idolater, and his removal from Ur could very well have been for the purpose of frustrating any trip to Canaan whatever. Unger gives the following on the cultural and religious makeup of Ur and Haran:

"When Abraham migrated from Ur, the city was idolatrous, given over to the worship of the moon deity Nannar (NAN-er) and his consort Nin-Gal (NIN-gal); a sacred area and a ziggurat (ZIG-er-at) were devoted to this idolatry ... Nannar was also worshipped at Haran to which Terah migrated."

32 And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years: and Terah died in Haran

We are including a special comment on this verse because of the alleged contradiction regarding the age of Terah and Abram's leaving Haran when he was 75 years of age (Acts 7:4). Genesis 11:26 says that Terah lived seventy years and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Well, here is how you get the "contradiction." This means that Terah was 70 when Abram was born. Does it really say that? No! It merely affirms that all three of Terah's sons were born AFTER he was 70

years of age, and it gives no hint whatever that Abram was even born first, one of the pure assumptions due to the prominence given his name in Genesis, but that prominence might have been the sole reason for naming Abram first. Therefore, he might well have been the YOUNGEST son. Since Terah died at age 205, as this verse says, and, since Abraham was 75 when he left Haran (Acts 7:4), then Terah was 130 years old when Abraham was born. Anyone can add it up. Well, was not that after Terah was 70 years of age? Of course! And the fact of Haran's having died in Ur at an age not specified, the presumption must be that he was the one born some 55 years earlier when Terah was only 70, thus being the oldest son and the first to die. People who like to hunt for "contradictions" will have to find something better than this!

This brings a great division of Genesis to a close. Previous chapters have dealt with events concerned with the history of all the Adamic race, the following chapters will take up the narrative relative to the deeds and fortunes of the "Chosen Nation," the posterity of Abraham through whom a Messiah to redeem all men was promised.

The Sources that have been quoted freely and paraphrased: KJV Bible, Strong's, Burton Coffman & Clark's Commentary, Hailey's Bible Handbook, Wikipedia, Bible Chronology & The Seed Lesson