“Genesis 1 – 11 – Fact Not Fiction”

Chapters 10 & 11

The tenth chapter records the genealogies of Shem, Ham, & Japheth and the nations which emerged through their lineage

Blue Letter Bible has a great summary regarding this

Go to their website and type Genesis 10 in the search bar

Next, click on the tools icon and select David Guzik’s commentary

When we go to chapter 11 there is another significant genealogy beginning in verse 10

This one traces the descendants of Shem right up to Abram who became Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation

Because Abraham holds such great importance in God’s redemptive plan, Moses spends the rest of this book writing about him, his sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons

Please also go to Blue Letter Bible to read up on this genealogy from David Guzik’s commentary

We know the significance of Abraham’s story is the Messiah would come through his lineage

What we are celebrating of Christ’s birth this Christmas goes right back to Genesis

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Sandwiched between these genealogies is a historical event many of us know as “The Tower of Babel”

If this was a normal Sunday, I would seek to find out how many different languages are represented by those in attendance

As I think of our church, I would list the following: English, Spanish, German, Mandarin, Russian, Tagalog

How many languages are spoken worldwide?

Approximately 6500

How did all the world’s languages come into existence?

Was it through evolutionary linguistic advancement through time from supposed apelike cavemen right up to our present time?

The book of Genesis clearly answers this question

When Noah left the ark with his family it was around 2300 BC

Up to the time of chapter eleven, there was only one language spoken by the descendants of Noah

Before we look further into this text, to properly understand the events happening surrounding this account, one has to go back to Genesis nine, verses one and seven

“And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth…and you, be fruitful and multiply, teem on the earth and multiply in it’.”

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These descendants of Noah had no intention of continuing to obey what God had previously instructed

So they decide to stay put in the land of Shinar and establish a prominent city which will give them recognition, power plus status within the world of that time

Therefore, what transpires with building this tower in the city of Babel was an act of intentional disobedience against God’s commandment

It’s clear they had the intellectual capacity along with technical, architectural abilities to construct both a city and an impressive tower

From all appearances, they are in total control and nothing and no one can prevent them from achieving their goal

So now we come to a point of vital importance

The most significant truth coming out of this event is this: God’s absolute sovereignty supersedes man’s willful autonomy

Notice how they say “let us” three times, strongly inferring they have complete control over what they seek to accomplish without any concern for God’s potential interference

In other words, we can do this and God can’t stop us

They were saturated with a sense of great pride

They had no intention of humbly worshipping the one true God

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“With its top in the heavens” doesn’t necessarily indicate they were endeavoring to reach heaven itself

John MacArthur corroborates this: “Not that the tower would actually reach to the abode of God and not that the top would represent the heavens. They wanted it to be a high tower as a monument to their abilities, one that would enhance their fame. In this endeavor, they disobeyed God and attempted to steal His glory.” (The MacArthur Study Bible, p. 32)

God’s response to their arrogant boasting and intentions is recorded in verse five

It is somewhat perplexing since we know God is omniscient

Perhaps this was the first instance of an O. T. Christophany

God clearly recognizes where their intentions can take them

Notice the use of the same terminology, “let us” by God

He always has the final word

So His divine solution to this was to confuse their speech

It’s very challenging to successfully build anything together without being able to communicate in the same language

Thus, their imposing building project comes to a halt and this serves as a catalyst for them disperse globally

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5

However, according to verse eight, God was the One who was actually behind this, yet again confirming His sovereignty

What do we see in the N.T. which mirrors this story?

First, the Parable of the Rich Fool in Luke 12:16-21

Next, there’s the very instructive words of the apostle James in his fourth chapter, verses 13 to 17

Will there be only one language in heaven?

The Scriptures do not tell us but we will understand one another perfectly

We can’t finish our sermon series on Genesis without going to Revelation 21:1-8; 22:1-5; 20-21

What is one of the most important truths we learn from these chapters within Genesis?

Practicing humility before God is paramount to life itself

We must acknowledge God’s sovereignty and continually practice obedience

What is true of the way we’re living right now?