**Babel (Genesis 11:1-9)**

* The Bible points out that all people possessed one common language in the beginning of human history (**Genesis 11:1**). Babel occurred earlier than some of the events in **Genesis Chapter 10**. **Genesis 11:1–9** seems to describe the origin of languages. But in **chapter 10** the many peoples and languages are described already before Babel in **Genesis 11 [see Genesis 10:5, 8-12, 20, 25, and 31-32 (a total of 70-72 languages)].** Then we get to **Genesis 11:1** and it says, “Now the whole earth had one language and the same words.” The solution is these two accounts are not in chronological order. First the spread of the peoples and languages are described in **chapter 10.** Then how and why that happened is provided in **Genesis 11:1–9**. Similar to **Genesis 1** where we read of the creation of man and then **Genesis 2** goes back and provides additional details on how that came about. After the flood, God had said to Noah in **Genesis 9:1**, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth.” That’s what **chapter 10** describes. It was happening as peoples and languages multiplied. It seems like a simple fulfillment of God’s command. Then **Genesis 11:1–9** shows us it wasn’t obedience; they weren’t spreading; they were clustering; and they were in rebellion to God. Instead of obeying the Lord’s command found in **Genesis 9:1**, the people opposed God’s will (**Genesis 11:4**). One of the reasons for building the city was “lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth”.
* They wanted to build a city: They wanted to build a tower that reached to the heavens. This was the first attempt to construct a skyscraper. Note **Isaiah 2:12-18**.
* They wanted to make a name for themselves (**Psalms 10:4, Proverbs 16:18**). God’s will for humans is not that we find our joy in being praised, but that we find our joy in knowing and praising him (**Psalm 104:33, 146:1-2**). He does not want us to find our security in cities but in Him. Even after the flood, man is not much different than they were before. The human condition is just like it was with Adam and Eve. They will decide for themselves what is best.
* (**Genesis 11:5-9**) God (plural Us) came down and shattered their disobedience and made their clustering impossible. He confused their language and broke humanity into many peoples and languages over the face of the earth. God dispersed them over the face of all the earth. Settling in one location [a city] prevented the people from obeying God’s command. So the Lord caused them to scatter over the face of all the earth. The people ceased building the city. The city’s was named Babel, or confusion.

**LESSONS FOR US TODAY**

* If we want to do something, we need to do it according to God’s will. Nothing was wrong with building a city; but in this case building the city was in order to rebel against God’s commands (**Genesis 6:22, 9:1, 11:4, John 14:15**). Good works are defined in Scripture (**2 Timothy 3:16-17**). If a thing is not authorized in Scripture, it cannot be classified as a “good work”.
* Before we do something, let us consult with the Lord. Let’s make sure it is according to his will (**Joshua 9:14-15, Luke 6:12-13**). The people of Babel should have asked God about building the city and the tower, before they started.
* God said there was nothing withheld/impossible for these people (**verse 6**) – they were only limited by their own imagination. When people go outside of God’s Word, their imagination can take them far, far away from God’s Will (**2 Timothy 3:13**). Because of this Christians must oppose error (**Romans 16:17, Galatians 2:4-5**). If we fail to oppose error, there will be consequences (**1 Corinthians 5:6, 2 Timothy 2:17**).
* Our name is not the important one to glorify. Our boasting and profession of a name should only be that of Jesus (**Acts 4:12, Galatians 6:14**). If we find we want to promote our name above the Lord’s name, we need to repent and reevaluate our thinking. Our purpose is to hear and do the Lord’s will and commandments and glorify Him (**Matthew 7:21-24**)!
* Unity in what we speak, think, and do, should be our goal in order to please God. Obey the Lord’s gospel, encourage one another, and spread that same gospel to others (**Philippians 2:1-2, 3:16, 4:2**). Unity is what God expects of His children. Not being united in a cause that gets around or excuses ourselves from His commands like those at Babel. Instead we must be united in fulfilling God’s purpose for us – peace with God, then peace with each other. If we seek peace and unity in some other way, God will not be pleased (**James 3:16-18**).

***Lots of good lessons from Babel!***

**For those who are Christians this morning. Are you at peace with the Lord and your brethren? I**f not, you need repent and be reconciled.

**If you are not a Christian, you can become one this morning.** Believe in the Lord, be willing to make the good confession that Jesus is the Son of God, repent or turn away from your sins, and be immersed in the waters of baptism to wash all your sins away. Let’s go to our last reading this morning from **Ephesians 4:3-6**. We need to be united in one Lord, one God, one faith, and in the one baptism that brings salvation! If we can help you now, please make your wishes known while we stand and sing.