

FAMILY DEVOTIONS

Humanities/Physics

Lesson 3 Physics

DEVOTIONS: GENESIS 11:1-9, ACTS 2:5-11

GENESIS 11:5-7 ⁵*But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. ⁶The Lord said, “If as one people speaking the same language, they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. ⁷Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.”*

Language is an amazing gift we often take for granted. Think about taking on a large, joint project with hundreds of people who couldn't communicate with one another. Your project challenge just multiplied a “1000 times” over. Without a common language, leaders are of little value. Commands are reduced to grunts and groans, pictures, or a game of charades. There are two instances in the Bible where language was a major issue. The first one appears in Genesis Chapter 11 at the Tower of Babel. The second is in Acts Chapter 2 when numerous language groups were gathered for the Feast of Weeks (aka Pentecost, 50 days after Passover). In 33 AD (the year Christ died), 50-days after Passover, the Holy Spirit descended upon the crowds breaking the language barrier. Each person was able to hear and understand the Good News in their own tongue.

ACTS 2:5-11 ⁷*And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, “Behold, are not all these which speak, Galileans? ⁸And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?”*

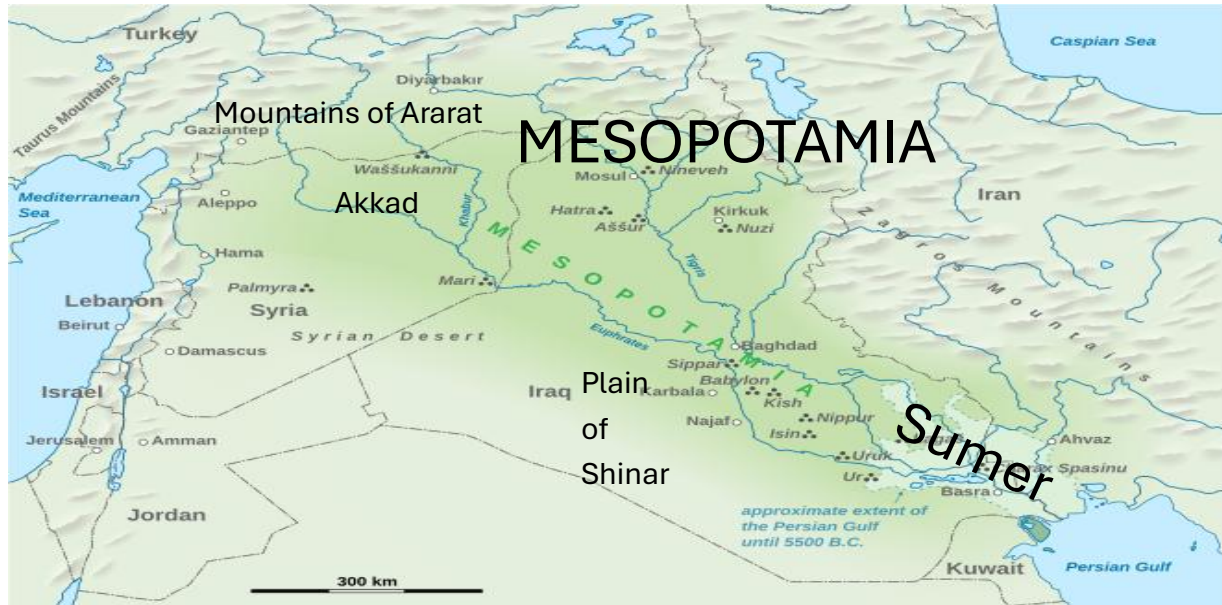
The opposite occurred on the Plain of Shinar where Nimrod led a quest to build an immense tower to reach heaven. Although Shem (aka first inhabitants of Sumer) and Ham (Nimrod's grandfather) were united by a common language (Sumerian) and purpose, Nimrod's goal was in opposition to God. Their single language aided them in an unholy quest; therefore, God intervened and confounded their language. The workers were confused, unable to understand each other or their leaders.

Both events were miraculous and demonstrate the Holy Spirit's power over our amazing gift of language. Unlike the ark project, the Tower of Babel was contrary to God's desire. Although they had increased knowledge, capabilities, and tools, they had failed miserably in following God's purpose and plans. Like many young people today, Nimrod probably viewed his great-grandfather Noah as an “out-of-touch” old person far removed from their contemporary world. Nimrod's hope that a tower would attract people to “his kingdom” rather than see them scattered throughout the region/world may have been a good idea in his own eyes, it was not godly. God is known for sending out people, as He did with all those who were part of the Babel project, and as He later did with Abraham.

GENESIS 11:3-4 ³*They said to each other, “Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly.” They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. ⁴Then they said, “Come,*

let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise, we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth."

In the ***Epic of Gilgamesh*** (a story written in Sumerian cuneiform), the king of Uruk thought his people could achieve immortality and construct a tower high enough to avoid flood waters. This story is widely believed to date back more than 4000 years ago as a



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compilation of tales by many authors. Most likely, real events inspired the story. Remember, nearly everyone who was alive during the time of Babel knew about the flood and the ark from their grandparents or great-grandparents.

By the time of Nimrod, the third and fourth generations were born to Noah's family. Many had grown complacent to events that happened in the past. Perhaps their times weren't much different than our own today. The past is forgotten over a generation or two. But, we know God's Word can be trusted for 1000's of years and to eternity.

Making a name for ourselves or seeking immortality apart from God should never be our goal. It didn't work out well for Nimrod at Babel. His name is now synonymous with "fool or idiot." Today, the word babel is used to describe a child's sounds before they learn how to talk. The only "name" Nimrod made for himself or his tower, is memorialized as ignorance.

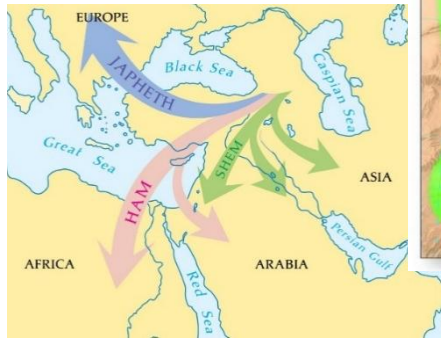


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TIMELINE/Introduction (History): After the Flood

2400-1500 BC Bricks and Ovens, Metallurgy, Wheels, the Tower of Babel/Pyramids and Ziggurats. Establishing standards for measuring weight.

As flood waters receded, Noah's family (the only living humans) moved down from the mountains of Ararat (Turkey). Within a few years, a cooling period and ice age began covering higher latitude and altitude regions with



snow and glaciers. The descendants of Ham and Shem soon occupied the warmer, unglaciated region known as Sumer, which is a reference to Shem. In western Sumer, however, the city of Uruk was built by Nimrod, Ham's grandson. Uruk is known as the home of Gilgamesh (the hero-king in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*), the beginning of cuneiform writing, and the site of the first ziggurat temple.

In a relatively short time, Noah's family members were able to rebuild and recreate tools lost during the flood. Ingenuity fueled the progress. Communities and cities were soon founded by Noah's children and grandchildren. Ruins of cities/temples built more than 4000 years ago remain even today. The people made brick, some fired in ovens, and mortar to build walls, homes, temples, ziggurats, and cities.



After the flood, it's likely that hydrothermal quartz veins with precious metals were more prominent at the surface. The intense heat energy from the fountains of the deep and the fractures in the earth's crust (plate tectonics) released mantle elements into these fractured spaces or veins.

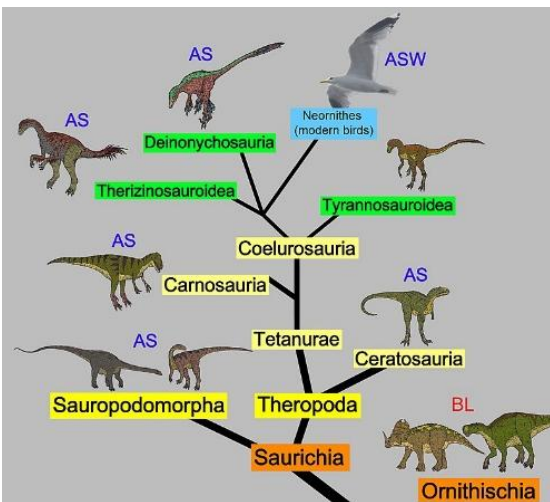


Early civilizations mined for ore and continued Tubal-cain's metallurgy skills. They knew how to search for gold and other metals by crushing and separating the rock from the metal ore, and by panning or spotting heavy metals in gravel and streams. These metals were used to develop durable tools and simple machines.

GOT-IT/Apologetics:

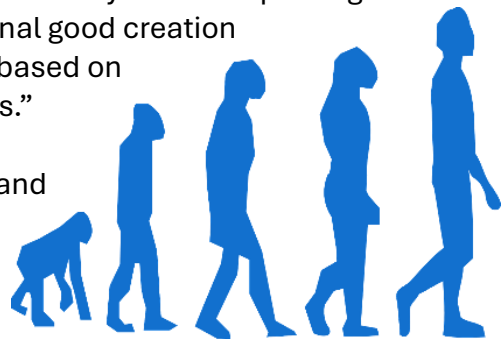
Only 100 years after the flood, on the plain of Shinar, the Tower of Babel was under construction. Thousands lived nearby on the plain; whereas others had “scattered” or migrated. Nimrod may have worried that migration away from Shinar would weaken his power. Whatever he was thinking, it’s clear Nimrod’s goals were opposed to God. In his own mind, Nimrod’s intentions may have been good, but they weren’t godly. He was only three generations removed from Noah, yet his mindset had already “dethroned” God. God was not “in charge” in Nimrod’s mind.

Romans 1:21-22 *Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools...*



Like Nimrod’s quest to reach heaven on his own, science has a goal of explaining natural laws and nature without supernatural origin or cause. Its scales lack a true balancing framework or guide, which means an entire scientific paradigm could be wrong. Although science lacks a truth guide, the Holy Spirit can serve as a personal guide for believers. Both creationists and naturalists can do good science, but only a believer can access the wisdom, historical narrative, and truth God provides.

One of these faulty scientific paradigms is: “complexity evolved from simplicity” denying an original good creation full of complex and diverse organisms. This theory is based on human thought, “what I think and not what God thinks.” Thinking we know what’s best can lead to foolish imaginations such as, “humans were once monkeys and dinosaurs turned into birds.” These theories were imagined because science forgets: “God created.”



With supernatural causes deliberately “off the table” (in the 20-21st century), it’s possible for an entire scientific community to be led astray like those at Babel. When an idea is conceived with a “finger on the scale” of human bias, true balance can’t be achieved. While science is an important endeavor, one must keep in mind that not all scientific arguments or theories are in obedience to the knowledge of God.

2 COR 10:5 *We demolish arguments and every pretense that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

REFLECTION/Devotion:

Whenever “man” ignores God, His laws, or His desires for mankind, foolishness takes over. The Tower of Babel is a prime example. Imagine if all man’s creative talents, work, knowledge, and understanding were applied to serving God and others. In Genesis 11:6, God declared “...nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them.” Scriptures indicate that men using their ingenuity and working together can accomplish seemingly impossible tasks. Choosing to “make a name for themselves” over making God’s ways known, or building a tower to heaven when God has clearly declared only sinlessness can bridge the gap between earth and heaven, is simply foolishness. In contrast, using faith-filled ingenuity like Noah to create the greatest wooden structure on earth that saved his family and all the creatures God brought to the ark.

Humans tend to repeat the same mistakes over and over again. God’s solution, scattering and confusing languages, allowed remnants of faith to flourish while others were in utter rebellion. God knows the future and how to control it to accomplish His will. We become foolish when we try to control future events by disregarding God’s desire for His people.

REMEMBER THESE THINGS/Devotion:

Remember God is the Creator of All. Remember the Fall of Man and the consequence of man’s choice to disobey. Remember the Flood, the result of man’s refusal to repent. Remember the Tower of Babel and the consequence of trusting in your own “power, strength, knowledge” over believing God. Clearly, mankind needs reminders to avoid repeated forgetfulness, foolishness, and failing to honor God and His gifts.



Romans 1:10 *None are righteous, no not one.*

A rainbow reminds us of the flood, God’s judgment and promise. An entirely different world awaited Noah’s family, but because they listened to God’s instruction, they were equipped to survive. We can be assured that God will never judge the earth with flood waters again; however, we can also be assured that righteous judgment will come to all.



Matthew 7:2 *For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.*

Scales are symbols for justice, fairness, weight, and measures. The framework needs to be true and accurate. By weighing substances, chemical properties can be determined and identified. It’s essential to know density and mass to calculate potential value, “For I, the LORD, love justice; I hate robbery and wrongdoing. In my faithfulness I will reward my people and make an everlasting covenant with them.” God is just; therefore, man who is created in God’s image has an innate desire for justice – both punishment and reward.