

## POPULAR STORIES

### CHAPTER 6

#### THE TOWER OF BABEL: MAN THE DIVIDER

**Genesis 11: 1: And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. 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. 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. 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. 5: And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. 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. 7: Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. 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.**

After the flood, over one hundred years being passed, “the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.” (Gen 11: 1) Noah and his wife, Noah’s sons and their wives, came out of the ark as one family. They multiplied greatly in the earth. Still, they were all one people, one nation, of one family. Every inhabitant in the earth had one common language and one dialect. There was no confusion or misunderstanding due to diversity of languages.

Yet, we certainly know that is not the case now. So how did Noah’s family end up being divided into many nations like we see in our day? How did they go from speaking one language and one speech, to many different languages? What is the spiritual significance of this division? This passage is not in the Bible simply to give us a history of nations and languages. Christ said the scriptures are “they which testify of me.” (Jn 5: 39) God used Moses to write the first five books of the Bible and Christ said, “Moses wrote of me.” (Jn 5: 46) The main point we will see is that depraved man is the divider. Our text shows it was man’s ambition for God’s glory that resulted in man being divided into so many different nations and languages. The chief desire of the depraved heart is the desire for the glory that belongs to God the Father and his Son, Christ Jesus.

#### **NIMROD**

The man who rose to be the leader in this revolt against God was a man named Nimrod. He was the grandson of Ham, Noah’s cursed son. Ham had a son named Cush. “And Cush begat Nimrod.” (Gen 10: 8)

His name means rebellion. In many ways, Nimrod stands as a figure of Satan, the chief rebel against God. He also is like all sinners who rebel against God and his Christ as they seek the glory that belongs to God alone.

A.W. Pink aptly shows from the scriptures how Nimrod fits the description of anti-christ. But as much as we love to read Brother Pink, like so many others, he thought of anti-christ as one man who shall rise up in the end of the world as the “man of sin.” But the one man that scripture speaks of as anti-christ is the united body of self-made religionists, together with all non-religionists, who trust in their free will and works while

rejecting the gospel of salvation by grace through God-given faith in Christ. Though scripture speaks of them as one man, that one body is made up of many anti-christs.

From the scriptures, we have heard that anti-christ shall come. But, listen to the apostle John give us the meaning of those scriptures. In two of his epistles John wrote, "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time." (1Jo 2:18); "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." (1Jo 4:3); "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." (2Jo 1:7)

In Nimrod, together with those who joined him, we see an example of every self-made, false preacher, together with their self-made, self-exalting followers. All false religionists will unite with others like them. They will even unite with the non-religious in the cause of opposing Christ and his people. Together, all rejecters of Christ make up, "that man of sin,...the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." (2Th 2:3-4)

### **SHOWING HIMSELF THAT HE IS GOD**

How do sinners with the spirit of anti-christ sit in the temple of God showing that they, themselves, are God? They do so by boasting that they have done for themselves the works which God alone is able to perform for spiritually dead sinners.

First, he who has the spirit of anti-christ would steal God's glory in order for himself to have the glory. We read of Nimrod that he "began to be a mighty one in the earth." (Gen 10: 8) Nimrod began to make a name for himself by which he began to get glory to himself. He wanted more. As we will see, he even wanted God's glory for himself. Apply this to those with the spirit of anti-christ.

Concerning God the Father and sovereign election, he who is anti-christ desires glory for his might making him a child of God. Truth is, sinners are made children of God by the might of God our Father, who chose Christ, along with his elect in Christ before the foundation of the world. Among many other scriptures, the apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesian believers, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." (Eph 1:3-6; 2 Thess 2: 13-14) The Lord Jesus told his disciples, ""Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you...If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (Joh 15:16, 19)

Concerning God the Holy Spirit, he who is anti-christ desires glory for his might making him born again. Truth is, only the might of the Holy Spirit makes a dead sinner to be born again. When speaking to Nicodemus, "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (Joh 3:5-8; Ti 3: 5)

Concerning God the Son, he who is anti-christ desires glory for his might making him righteous and holy. Truth is, Christ is the Righteousness and Sanctification of his people. The apostle Paul wrote, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." (1Co 1:30-31)

## **A MIGHTY HUNTER BEFORE THE LORD**

He who is anti-christ is not content to wait on the Lord Jesus Christ to "add to the church such as should be saved." (Acts 2: 47) Instead, he compasses the globe, not to simply preach the gospel of Christ as we ought, but to hunt sinners to make them into his own converts. That is what Nimrod was doing in order to build his own following, "He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD." (Gen 10: 9)

"Before the LORD" indicates that Nimrod was not a hunter of animals. He was the kind of hunter that God hates, a hunter of souls. In Ezekiel 13, we have God's condemnation of false prophets. God says to the self-made preacher, "Will ye hunt the souls of my people, and will ye save the souls alive that come unto you? And will ye pollute me among my people for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread, to slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live, by your lying to my people that hear your lies?" (Eze 13: 18-19)

These were religious preachers who hunted men to make them their converts. Using their lies, speaking their own word rather than God's word, they slay God's true people. They do not comfort the believer by declaring that Christ has accomplished the warfare of God's elect by his one offering. (Is 40: 1-2) But, rather, the false preacher rejects the true believer because Christ's saints give Christ all the glory and will not follow a false preacher. Christ said, "A stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they not the voice of strangers." Though the true believer is one that should not die (be rejected and cast out) yet the false preacher slays him with his lies. But they keep alive men who come to them and submit to them. These are sinners that should be slain. The will-worker and their works should be declared vanity according to the scriptures. But the false preacher will not tell them so. Why not? So he can make them converts to himself to build himself a church. Christ condemned the Pharisees for this, saying, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves." (Mt 23:15) That is what Nimrod was doing in order to establish a kingdom for himself over which he alone would reign.

## **BABEL-BUILDERS**

He who is anti-christ, like Nimrod, is not the builder of God's church but the builder of Babylon, "And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel." (Gen 10: 10) It was called Babylon at first but called Babel when God finished with it.

"Mystery Babylon" is God's name for all who are united in falsehood in opposition to God. They are described as a harlot, "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus...For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." (Re 13: 5-6; 18:3-4; to see the end of all who die without Christ read Rev 18: 1-24)

Though we read of the anti-christian religion in the way God describes her, make no mistake, Babel-builders do not appear evil to the natural eye. They are very zealous as we see in Nimrod, "And the

beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Out of that land went [he] forth [unto] Asshur [Assyria], and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah, And Resen between Nineveh and Calah: the same *is* a great city.” (Ge 10:10-12) Those in Israel who rejected Christ were very zealous as well. The apostle Paul said, “For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” (Ro 10:2-4)

So we see the desire of anti-christ religion is the desire of Nimrod, the desire for the preeminence and glory that belongs to God alone.

## **REJECTING CHRIST**

In chapter 11, we are taken back to the beginning when Nimrod and his converts began to build their kingdom. “And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, [eastward] that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.” (Gen 11: 1-2)

We have here an illustration of those who turn their back on Christ for their own way, “they journeyed eastward”. God cast Adam out of the garden, east of Eden. (Gen 3: 24) Lot was God’s elect, but when he left Abraham he travelled east to Sodom. (Gen 13: 11) The picture is that Nimrod led his followers eastward, further away from God. Those with the spirit of anti-christ turn their back on Christ.

Rather than seeking Christ for their habitation, they make their dwelling place where it appears pleasant to the natural eye. Nimrod and his followers, “found a plain in the land of Shinar and dwelt there.” “Shinar” means “country of two rivers.” This plain appeared to be a fertile plain. The picture is that natural man sees no attraction in the Christ of scripture. He has no spiritual discernment. Therefore, left to himself, a sinner will always choose for his dwelling place that which appeals to his natural senses. The vain religionist’s dwelling place may give him what he wants in this life. Shinar proved fertile and prosperous as far as temporal riches are concerned. Men may enjoy a false church and think they are greatly blessed. But in the end they will find themselves under the judgment of God as did Nimrod and his kingdom.

It is foolish to build on a sandy plain. Spiritually, “other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor 3: 11) The Lord Jesus said, ‘whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. (Mt 7:24-27)

## **NATURAL METHODS AND MEANS**

Christ gives his saints the charge to go forth into all the world and preach the gospel. We are never to use other methods only the plain preaching of Christ and him crucified. Christ builds his church, not of natural stones, but of sinners regenerated, made new by his grace, so that by Christ we are “as lively stones are built up a spiritual house.” But anti-christ religion uses their own methods to convert sinners to their way. With Nimrod and his followers, “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.” (Gen 11: 3)

They exhorted one another when “They said to one another, go to.” The Lord’s people provoke one another to love and to good works, to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, to sit at Christ’s feet, to hear

his word preached, to submit to his word. But like Nimrod and his followers, vain religionists provoke one another to vanity. They said, "Let us make brick." This is the heart of all man's religion. Vain religion wants to be the builder themselves. They seek to build a monument to their own glory.

But Christ builds his kingdom, through his gospel, by his Spirit working in our hearts. When the second temple was being built, it pictured the LORD's temple which is his people. So the LORD spoke to Zerubbabel, saying, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts." (Zech 4: 6) By his Spirit, Christ builds his house—not of natural, unregenerate rebels—but of regenerated, living, believers—"ye also, as lively stones are built up a spiritual house." (1 Pet 2: 5)

Yet, using their own might and their earthy, sensual means, Babel-builders make their church of earthy, unregenerate, sinners, "let us make brick." They refuse to preach the gospel of Christ, but insist on using the fiery law of Moses by which they "burn them throughly." So they create their finished product, "And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar." They create unregenerate converts by natural methods who are earthy and natural as the bricks used to make Nimrod's kingdom.

Historians say that when they found the ruins of Babel, the mortar was so strong that the bricks were impossible to detach from one another. Sinners who worship the works of their own hands have their hearts so hardened, it impossible to turn them from their vain refuge, except God do so in sovereign, irresistible power.

## **THE MOTIVE OF THE HEART**

God showed us a general description of Nimrod, then a more detailed description of how they built the kingdom, now God gives us the motive of their hearts.

First, we read, "And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top *may reach* unto heaven." (Gen 11: 4) This was man's attempt to take God off his throne and make themselves gods. Such is the pride of Satan and all men that he rules. When a man's heart is set on exalting himself over God there is no limit to his blasphemous presumption. As God describes Lucifer, notice how many times that fallen devil says, "I will."

Isaiah 14: 12: How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! 13: For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. 15: Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

What were they really building? They were making for themselves a stronghold other than Christ. They were building a tower to heaven rather than coming to God in Christ. Christ said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (Joh 14:6) But zealous, self-made religionists will work their way through life expecting God owes them for all they have done until they meet God in judgment. Christ said, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Mt 7:22-23)

Secondly, in their heart, they did this to make a reputation for themselves, "and let us make us a name." (Gen 11: 4) By building this impenetrable city, with this high tower, they intended to make for themselves a "name", even though it meant polluting God's name. Remember, the space race! Why were doing that? To make for ourselves a name. Do men do this spiritually? Christ said of all the self-righteous folks who rejected him when he walked this earth, "But all their works they do for to be seen of men." (Mt 23: 5) Christ

said, “Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.” (Mt 6: 2) Sinner, be sure to understand, it is not by our name that we are saved. “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Ac 4:12 AV)

Thirdly, in their hearts, they were deliberately rebelling against God. God commanded “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” (Gen 9: 1) In order to replenish the earth they must be scattered throughout the earth. But they said the reason they were building this fortress was “lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.” (Gen 11: 4) It was direct, deliberate rebellion against God’s command.

What is God’s command to us? He said of Christ, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him!” (Mt 17: 5) Christ said, “This is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent!” (Jn 6: 29) God calls his child, making us cease from our works for salvation, making us willing to rest in Christ our Righteousness. But the man who goes on building his false refuge, doing all his wonderful works, is declaring, “We will not have this man to reign over us.”

Everything a man does—though they appear to be good deeds—is rebelling against God’s command if he refuses to cease from his works and rest in Christ. Salvation is not by our works, not even by a mixture of our works together with Christ’s work. Salvation is by Christ through faith in Christ, apart from our works. “But without faith it is impossible to please God for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” (Heb 11: 6) Sinner, understand, Christ is only the end of the law for righteousness to all who believe on Christ. “For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” (Rom 10: 10) But if we go on thinking God will receive us because of our decision or our works, we might as well be building a stone fortress and tower to heaven. God will not have it!

## **THE JUDGMENT OF GOD**

At last we see the judgment of God upon all Babel-builders, “And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. 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.” (Gen 11: 5-6)

What a testament to the depravity of our natural hearts! When we were one people, with one language, rather than seeking God in truth, this we began to do: we set out to exalt ourselves over God, to make a name for ourselves, by rebelling against God. But we ended up building a monument to our totally depravity.

So to restrain us from some greater evil work, God confounded our language, “Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; [confusion] 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.” (Gen 11: 7-9)

When Christ returns he shall do more than this, he shall scatter all anti-christ’s abroad into outer darkness. Oh, that Christ would come down in power, that Christ might give us one language so that you might understand our speech. May Christ be pleased to make you leave off building your vain refuge! Our prayer for our lost loved ones is that Christ might make you willing to run to Christ our Tower, the only refuge for sinners! Part two to this message is “The Tower of Babel: Christ the Unifier.”

**Amen!**