

POPULAR STORIES

CHAPTER 7

THE TOWER OF BABEL: CHRIST UNITES

Genesis 11: 1: 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.

Man is the great divider. God said, "Your sins have separated you from your God." (Is 59: 2) In the garden, man's sin separated us. But God waited to prove what is in sinful man. Between the fall and the flood, man's sin continued to separate us. But God delivered Noah and his family to prove what is in sinful man. After the flood, in less than 150 years, sinful man built the tower at Babel in direct rebellion against God. So God confounded their language and scattered them to inhabit all the land as the heathen Gentiles. God's judgment is not random, it is earned by the sinner.

Romans 1: 21: 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. 22: Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, 23: And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. 24: Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves... 25: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. 26: For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections...28: And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

It was only after fallen man proved by our own sin that we can never repent and believe on God, that God began to carry out that which he purposed from eternity. "After that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." (1 Cor 1: 21)

Shortly after God scattered the sons of Adam into the various nations and confounded the languages into various languages, God sent the gospel to Abraham and called him out from among them, "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." (Gal 3: 8-9)

In Genesis 12, we hear as God preached before the gospel unto Abraham, calling him out of the world into his holy nation in Christ, "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great

nation.” (Gen 12: 1-2) Nimrod and his followers sought to make of themselves a great nation. Yet, purely by grace, God promised Abraham, “I will make of thee a great nation.”

God said to Abraham, “and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.” (Gen 12: 2) Nimrod sought to make a great name for himself. Yet, by grace, God promised Abraham, “I will make thy name great.” Abraham is a sinner saved by grace, the “father of all who believe”; “the friend of God”—what a great name!

God said to Abraham, “And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee.” (Gen 12: 3) Nimrod sought to protect himself from their enemies by a fortress and tower. Yet, by grace, God promised to bless Abraham and give him constant protection from all his enemies in Christ our Fortress and our High Tower.

God said to Abraham, “and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” (Gen 12: 3) Nimrod sought to make the families of the earth come under his rule in his kingdom so that they would have to come to him for blessing. God put an end to that rebel’s rebellion. Yet, by grace, God chose Abraham and made him the father of all who believe--“In thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” God promised Abraham he would call out his elect and save them out of all the nations of the earth. And this was so particularly because it was through Abraham that Christ our Redeemer would come according to the flesh.

“So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him.” (Ge 12:1-4) Having proven three times, man’s ruined condition, God in irresistible grace and power quickened and gave Abraham the gift of faith and God himself began to establish his heavenly nation himself. So we read, “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God. (Heb 11:8-10)

The same God who scattered the sons of Adam at Babel due to our sins is the only one who is able, and shall, unite his people together in one, in Christ, by his free and sovereign grace.

GOD OUR FATHER

God does everything in the salvation of his chosen people with whom he builds his heavenly city and kingdom. When God permitted it, Satan could not even use Nimrod to keep a people together who started out as one people with one language. But God manifests his great glory in Christ by making us one, as he calls each chosen child out of this great division of nations and languages of the earth. How this sheds light on one of our favorite scriptures: “Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.” (Ps 76:10)

Not a single act of Satan, or of sinful man, is out of God’s control. If man carries out his wrath against God—as they did at the tower of Babel—it is because God works it together to bring glory to his name. God simply restrains the rest.

God our Father purposed the whole plan of salvation determining the end from the beginning. He chose Christ his Son to be the Redeemer. Our Father chose who he would save, electing us unto salvation in Christ and blessing us with all spiritual blessings in him in eternity. (Eph 1: 3-6) This entire work of salvation is of the LORD.

GOD THE SON

As God the Father promised, Christ came into this world. He came to save God's elect—Jew and Gentile—who God scattered in all the earth. Christ came to redeem us “that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.” (Eph 2:16) And Christ is calling each redeemed child out of this sea of separation “that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.” (Jn 11: 52) Christ declared what shall be the end of his work as he prayed to the Father, “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us:...I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one...” (Joh 17: 21, 23)

Therefore, at the appointed hour, God made all the sins of God's elect to meet on our one substitute, on one cross, at one time, by which God made us perfect in One. Out of all that sea of division Christ made his people one by his blood, “for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” Now, having redeemed us out of this great division, after he calls us to faith in Christ, the result shall be that we are “fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;” (Eph 2: 19) I love that! “Out of EVERY nation into THE household of God.”

If all his elect are scattered in all the nations and speaking so many different language how will we be brought to understand the gospel? By his invincible call Christ promises “then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent.” (Zeph 3: 9) That people are all those Christ perfected by his one offering and that pure language is the one, pure gospel of Christ and him crucified.

We see our risen Redeemer begin to do this on a grand scale on the day of Pentecost. In our text, God created the various languages and divided the people into many nations. Therefore, at Pentecost what do we find “there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven...Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, 1Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians.” (Acts 2: 5, 9-11)

But Christ had sent the Holy Spirit, giving each of his disciples the ability to speak that pure language in the language of each one of his elect at Jerusalem. “Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.” What was this pure language, this message they preached? The hearers said, “We do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God.” (Ac 2: 6, 11) Peter declared man's only work was the rejection of Christ. His message was the message of redemption accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ. That is our message “the wonderful works of God.”

Through the pure language of the gospel, Christ gave his people the pure language of the gospel so that they could call on Christ in faith and serve him with one consent. Just picture what took place as Christ called them to faith. He called them out of their nations, into his one holy nation; out of their families, into his one holy family; out of their brothels, into his one holy church.

GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

When Christ calls his child, through the Holy Spirit, our Savior does what no Babel-builders can do. He unites us in Spirit and in Truth, “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us...For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. (Eph 2: 14, 18) God's family is the “the whole family in heaven and in earth.” (Eph 3: 15) “*There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.” (Eph 4:4-6) “For ye are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal 3: 28) “There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but CHRIST is ALL, and IN ALL.” (Col 3: 11) When Christ makes us one so then

we delight to provide for each other, “And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.” (Acts 4: 32) He is still doing that today!

THE BELIEVERS CITY AND TOWER

We have this great peace because Christ promises he shall not lose one, neither shall any an pluck us out of his hands. Not one of his blood-bought people, shall ever be scattered so as to be separated from him. We need no earthly walls like they built at Babel because our walls are Christ our Salvation and our gates are Christ whom we Praise, “Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.” (Is 60: 18) Believers need no earthly tower like they built because Christ is our Tower, “The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.” (Pr 18:10) We want no plain in Shinar because we are built upon Christ the Rock, “The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer.” (Ps 18: 2)

Our oneness shall only get better and better! When the last elect, redeemed, child is regenerated to faith in Christ through the gospel, “In the dispensation of the fulness of times he [shall] gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:” (Eph 1:10)

This is God’s kingdom. Our city is not in this plain. We look for a city whose builder and maker is God. In a little while, we shall each behold our King in his kingdom. With this good hope, Brethren, I do not know a better way to wrap this up than with the words which the apostle Paul continually wrote, “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” (1Co 1:10) “Striving together for the faith of the gospel;” (Php 1:27) “That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom 15: 6)

Amen!