One of the things about working as I do, I deal primarily with Christians. And granted this means that I see familiar struggles, basically the same ones I deal with in myself, self-absorption. But must of the time there is some awareness of what God wants from us. The struggle for many believers is remembering that God is to take the highest priority, not personal wants and desires.

But back in the day, I was working with more non-believers than usual. I was reminded of the huge gap between children of God and children of the devil. The degree of self-absorption, self-centeredness and myopia is phenomenal. The world circles around them, and while they are willing to be concerned about the needs of others, the degree to which they are is the degree to which it doesn’t unnecessarily impact their personal wants.

And whatever you do, don’t talk about God. If there is such a being, he isn’t relevant to their daily life. A discussion of God is synonymous with recognizing they don’t have the freedom to live anyway they want. That isn’t acceptable.

Don’t get me wrong. The non-believer can demonstrate unselfishness for family and loved ones. But without grounding in absolute standards, and empowered by the Lord it can be very difficult, and finally impossible to do what scripture identifies as the appropriate action. We know that even as believers it can be pretty hard.

I know that I shouldn’t be surprised when I see blatant selfishness in a non-believer, but sometimes I forget. I do know though, God wasn’t at all surprised when humanity tried to have things their own way, even shortly after the Flood, when God had demonstrated the fact He had no intention of letting humanity run the asylum. And so as we will see, within about a hundred years of the Flood, God again has to step in.
Introduction: This morning we enter a new section of Genesis. Creation is over. God’s judgment on the antediluvian world is over. Chapter 10 is transitionary giving us the lineage of Noah and his sons. It moves us from God’s judgment on a fallen world to a picture of the fact that humanity had learned nothing from that judgment. Left to its own devices humanity would shortly be right back to where it had been. But this time God interferes.

Chapter 10 provides a listing of the descendants of Noah. It starts with Japheth, moves on the Ham and ends with Shem. We again see the pattern of God first listing the ungodly lines, getting them out of the way. And then moving on to the godly line, in this case Shem. The godly line is, of course, the one that leads to Christ.

This genealogical listing can be seen as an ethnological table identifying the foundation of the many peoples of the world. Needless-to-say, I will give an overview of this chapter, touching on any specifics that need attention.

The following information was taken from Dr. McGee’s commentary on Genesis:

“... This is a chapter of genealogies, of families, which are the origin of the nations of the world. ... If you are interested in ethnology and anthropology and the story of mankind on the earth, you may want a far deeper study than you will find here. H. S. Miller, who has his master’s degree in ethnology, has charted the origin of the nations, using Genesis 10 as the basis for the threefold division of the human family, which is revealed in these three sons of Noah: Ham, Shem and Japheth. Ethnology makes it evident, by the way, that neither sons of Japheth nor the sons of Ham ever comprised what some folk call the lost ten tribes of Israel.”

E. Epilogue - The Sons of Noah: 1. Japheth: First is an introduction to the details that follow. Then the descendants of Japheth are identified. Let me quote from Dr. McGee:

“According to H. S. Miller’s chart, the Scythians, the Slavs, Russians, Bulgarians, Bohemians, Poles, Slovaks, Croatians came from Magog. The Indians and the Iranian races—Medes, Persians, Afghans, Kurds—all came from Madai. From Javan we have the Greeks, Romans and the Romance nationalities such as French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, etc. Coming from Tiras are the Thracians, the Teutons, the Germans and then from that we have the east Germanic and the European races, the north Germanic or the Scandinavians and the west Germanic from which come the Angles and the Saxons and the Jutes, the Anglo-Saxon race, the English people.

Well, I simply can’t go into the whole chart, but it is an interesting study. You can see that the majority of us in America descended from these lines.”

Let me quote the anthropologist Dr. Arthur C. Custance, author of Noah’s Three Sons, and Genesis and Early Man, as he speaks of Japheth:

“... The contribution of Japheth has been in the application of philosophy to technology and the consequent development of the scientific method. As the application of Japheth’s philosophy to the technology of Ham produced science, so the application of his philosophy to the religious insights of Shem produced theology.

I believe that in Adam and his descendants, until the Flood brought an end to the old world, these three capacities were by and large combined within each person individually ... each man carried

2 Ibid.
within himself a threefold potential which after the Flood was very greatly reduced and more often than not was limited to a capacity chiefly in one direction.”

2. **Ham:** Here we find a listing of Ham’s descendants. As we look at this line remember Noah’s curse fell only on Canaan and therefore we can see that many have played fast and lose with the passage for their own purposes. Let me now go back to Dr. McGee:

> “From Canaan came the Phoenicians, the Hittites, the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgasites, the Hivites, etc.
> From Ham’s son Cush came the Africans—the Ethiopians, the Egyptians, the Libyans, etc. All of these races are Hamitic, you see …”

**Verses 8-11:** Moses takes a break at this point to give us some specific information on Nimrod, the son of Cush. Nimrod’s name means insolent, contumacious, (rebellion, resisting authority), son of rebellion. He is described as a mighty hunter, a warlike giant. The sense of the Hebrew is “not so much in reference to the pursuit of game in the forest, as to a violent invasion of the persons and rights of men.” It seems that he was a tyrant over his fellow men.

Calvin sees the statement, “before the Lord,”

> “… to declare that Nimrod attempted to raise himself above the order of men; just as proud men become transported by a vain self-confidence, that they may look down as from the clouds upon others.”

Nimrod was the founder of four cities in Shinar. The one of primary interest though was Babel, and we will expand on the subject of Babel/Babylon as we move into Chapter 11.

Some commentators believe that as a result of the expansionist practices of Nimrod, Asshur the son of Shem was forced to leave the area in which he had settled. This may be the reason that he is mentioned here, in the Authorized Version, in the accounting of Ham’s line.

I think that the New International Version is probably more accurate. It is based on this rendering of the Hebrew that presents the view that Asshur is simply the name of a place. This would be more consistent with the way these sections are set up. Now that being the case the place more than likely did derive its name from Asshur and Nimrod pushed the boundaries of his country into Assyria, building more cities.

**Verses 12-20:** Let’s finish up these verses and return to Custance again.

> “In the case of Ham and his descendants, history shows that they have rendered an extraordinary service to mankind from the point of view of the physical developments of civilization. All the earliest civilizations of note were founded and carried to their highest technical proficiency by Hamitic peoples. There is scarcely a basic technological invention which must not be attributed to them.”

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4 McGee, p. 51.
7 Willimington, p. 34.
3. **Shem:** Last, we take up the godly line, the one that leads to Christ, the line of Shem. The “great” religions of the world, both true and false, have had their roots in Shem. He is the father of the Semitic peoples including the Arabs, the Hebrews, Persians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syrians, etc.

The statement in verse 25 referring to the earth divided is most likely speaking to the breaking up of the human race at the Tower of Babel.

**Verse 32:** The chapter ends by tying up the loose ends, making it clear that the sons of Noah were the fathers of mankind, the sources of the nations of the world.

Let me give you Custance’s summary of these three peoples:

“*What we have been trying to show is that the historical process reflects the interaction between three families of people descended respectively from the three sons of Noah whom God appears to have apportioned specific responsibilities and equally specific capabilities for the fulfillment of them; to Shem, responsibility for man’s religious and spiritual well-being; to Japheth, his mental well-being; and to Ham, his physical well-being.*”

Anthropologists, who hold with scripture, may not be able to trace all peoples to this “table of the nations,” but nevertheless, it is clear that all of humanity is to be found here.

Now we need to move on to Chapter 11 and begin our discussion of the Tower of Babel. Here we find the founding of Satan’s world system, personified by Babel, the forerunner of mystery Babylon.

**A. The Tower of Babel 1. The Sin:** While this may have been a significantly different world from the pre-Flood one, there was one thing that hadn’t changed. The world was still of one language. Nothing would have changed that except for the fact God chose to intervene.

**Verse 2:** Significant representatives of humanity chose to live in the plain of Shinar. It was probably some hundred years after the Flood and men generally spread out from the site of the landing of the Ark. The peoples moved eastward from this area.

**Verses 3-4:** So they decided to build a city and a tower. Their words demonstrate that their motive was to disobey God. God had commanded they fill the earth. But they rejected being scattered and so wanted this center to be the basis of their stability.

What is the most obvious reason for their sin? These were a completely self-centered people. There are four personal pronouns found here. “Let us build ourselves a city … we may make a name for ourselves.” This is all about what they wanted, not what might concern God. This continues to be the human condition. So the tower becomes the rallying place for rebellion.

The tower was probably a ziggurat, a place used for observing the stars, a place of worship and astrology, a place where man would place himself high enough to do away with God.

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8 Ibid.
It is not by accident the city was named Bab-EL—the gate of God. It was God who changed it to Babel meaning confusion, and the city rose again as Babylon—the gate of gods. It became the capital of the land of Babylonia. The city is seen again in the visions of the Apostle John as the picture of Satan’s worldly kingdom.

Today man still tries to dethrone God through science, secular humanism and New Age philosophy which tries to make man himself god. Religion is often though the most effective way to keep men from God. I have talked to many people over the years with backgrounds in Mormonism who having left want nothing to do with any religion.

I remember a pastor, who had been an evangelist in Africa, state that religion was like a vaccine. People catch just enough to prevent them from finding God. Can you give an example?

(Next week I want to start off by taking a step back and tracing Babylon from Babel, to Mystery Babylon in the book of Revelation.)

**Conclusion:** As we can see here, when men are left to their own devices they are incapable of acting in anyway other than to rebel against God. With the Flood having occurred only about one hundred years previously and all those who went through it still alive, after all Noah lived three-hundred-fifty years beyond the Flood, you would think people would be more fearful of God. If they didn’t fear God in an appropriate way, at least they should have feared what He might do to them. But this doesn’t seem to be the case. They didn’t want God to interfere with how they wanted to live.

And this is the human condition today. This is why the Old Testament is so applicable, because we can understand people now if we realize that they are exactly the same as they were then. Nothing has changed.

The only difference is today there are more crazy people than in Noah’s day. The earth has reached a level of insanity that is in direct proportion to humanity’s sophistication. Why do I say crazy? I don’t! David does when he said, “The empty-headed person says in his heart, “There is no God”” (Psalm 14:1).

It is only in contemporary times that we find significant numbers of people who actually hold there isn’t any God. Though I suspect if you would pin them down, many making this claim don’t believe it themselves.

It is this truth about the human condition which shows the mercy of God. The human nature is such that if God didn’t directly intervene, no one could be saved. Here, by intervention, I am not referring to the work of the cross, but that it is only by God’s election and the working of the Holy Spirit that any would be saved. If God did not predestine individuals to salvation, but left it up to the individual to accept that salvation, all would be lost.

The human condition is such that no one even has enough faith to accept the gift of salvation that God offers. Consequently, He had to predestine those to be saved. His Spirit had to quicken their spirits, so that they could hear and receive the message of salvation.
And so, humanity continuing in rebellion is individually dependent on God’s direct intervention to be saved. Where we are blessed is that He chooses to use us as the instrument of that intervention. While He has decided who is to be saved, and therefore who will be saved, He has still commanded us to be part of the process. This is not for the sake of the lost, but for the sake of our relationship to God and our opportunity to be blessed by being obedient.

As we look at those around us, and as we see how mankind is trying to build another tower, the inter-net possibly, we never need to be concerned. God is in as much control today as He was when He confounded the languages of men, as we will see shortly.

Psalm 14

*For the director of music. Of David.*

_The fool says in his heart,_
_“There is no God.”_  
_They are corrupt, their deeds are vile;_  
_there is no one who does good._

_The LORD looks down from heaven_  
on the sons of men  
to see if there are any who understand,  
any who seek God.  
_All have turned aside,_  
_they have together become corrupt;_  
_there is no one who does good,_  
_not even one._

_Will evildoers never learn—_  
_those who devour my people as men eat bread_  
_and who do not call on the LORD?_  
_There they are, overwhelmed with dread,_  
_for God is present in the company of the righteous._  
_You evildoers frustrate the plans of the poor,_  
_but the LORD is their refuge._

_Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion!_  
_When the LORD restores the fortunes of his people,_  
_let Jacob rejoice and Israel be glad!_
**Genesis**  
*10:1-11:4*  
The Human Race

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