

# Scattered

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 27 April 2014

Preacher: Chris Trousdale

[ 0 : 00 ] I want you guys to open up your Bibles to the book of Genesis. We're back in Genesis. We took a few weeks off of Genesis to do Easter related things. And now we're back in this series that we've been walking through for the last several months over the first 11 chapters of Genesis.

And we're actually finishing up the first 11 chapters. Well, we're going to stop in the middle of chapter 11. And when we come back to cover in a few months, when we come back to cover Abraham and the other patriarchs, we'll pick up in the middle of chapter 11.

But we're going to finish in chapter 11, verse 9 this morning. And so as you turn there, if you don't have your Bible, there's some Bibles scattered around in the chairs. Turn there to Genesis chapter 10. And we're going to read down through chapter 11, verse 9.

So you guys stand together as we read God's Word. Moses tells us, These are the generations of the sons of Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Sons were born to them after the flood. The sons of Japheth, Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tirosh. The sons of Gomer, Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah.

[ 1 : 06 ] The sons of Javan, Elisha, Tarshish, Ketim, and Dodanim. From these, the coastland people spread in their lands, each with his own language, by their clans in their nations.

The sons of Ham, Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan. The sons of Cush, Seba, Havilah, Sabta, Rahamah, and Sabteca.

The sons of Rahamah, Sheba, and Dadan. Cush fathered Nimrod. He was the first on earth to be a mighty man. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord.

Therefore, it is said, Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the Lord. The beginning of his kingdom was Babel, Erech, Akkad, and Calneh in the land of Shinar. From that land he went into Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-ir, Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah.

That is the great city. Egypt fathered Ludim, Anamim, Lehabim, Naphtuhim, Pathrusim, Kasluhim, from whom the Philistines came, and Kaphturim.

[ 2 : 10 ] Canaan fathered Sidon, his firstborn, and Heth, and the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, the Archites, the Sinites, the Arvidites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites.

Afterward, the clans of the Canaanites dispersed, and the territory of the Canaanites extended from Sidon in the direction of Gerar, as far as Gaza, and in the direction of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, as far as Lasha.

These are the sons of Ham, by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations. To Shem also, the father of all the children of Eber, the elder brother of Japheth, children were born.

The sons of Shem, Elam, Asher, Arpachshad, Lud, and Aram. The sons of Aram, Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mesh. Arpachshad fathered Shalah, and Shalah fathered Eber.

To Eber were born two sons. The name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided. And his brother's name was Joktan. Joktan fathered Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, Hadaram, Uzal, Diklah, Obol, Abimelech, Sheba, Ophir, Habel, and Jobab.

[ 3 : 23 ] All these were the sons of Joktan. The territory in which they live extended from Meshah in the direction of Sephar to the hill country of the east. These are the sons of Shem by their clans, their languages, their lands, and their nations.

These are the clans of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies and their nations. And from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood. Now, the whole earth had one language and the same words.

And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. And they said to one another, Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone and bitumen for mortar.

Then they said, Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of man had built. And the Lord said, Behold, they are one people, and they all have one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do.

[ 4 : 28 ] And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech.

So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth, and from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of the earth.

Help us now, Father, to understand this portion of your word. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. We come to another genealogy.

We've seen a few of these already in the book of Genesis, and the temptation oftentimes is to skip through the genealogy, to just move past them very quickly and get to the action part.

So we typically want to move from the story of the flood in chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9, and we want to jump over chapter 10 and get into the Tower of Babel, because there's more action there in the beginning of chapter 11 in the Tower of Babel.

[ 5 : 33 ] So let's not bother with the genealogy of chapter 10. But we're going to cover this genealogy because, first and foremost, it's part of God's word, and the Holy Spirit inspired Moses to write it for a reason.

But secondly, because I'm not sure that you can really fully or properly understand the incident that happened at the Tower of Babel apart from the genealogy of chapter 10.

Now, the genealogy here in chapter 10 is different from one that we looked at, gosh, it's been a few months now since we looked at the genealogy in chapter 5. It's a little bit different from that genealogy, because if you'll remember, in the genealogy in chapter 5, I told you that that is a fairly straightforward historical genealogy of this person fathered this person fathered this person, and it's consistent in the way that it's worded.

So so-and-so lived X number of years and fathered so-and-so, and then he fathered X number of years after that and had other sons and daughters. And then the genealogy moves to the next generation.

That's how chapter 5 works. But if you notice here in chapter 10, it's different. It's not just a straightforward linear genealogy following one family line from one individual getting all the way down to the individual that they want to talk about next.

[ 6 : 51 ] That's not the way that this works. The purpose of this genealogy in chapter 10 is not simply to get you from Noah to the next major character, who is Abraham in chapter 12.

That's not the purpose of this genealogy. In fact, turn over. Look in chapter 11. Look at verse 10. We left off in verse 9. But beginning in verse 10, you start over again with Shem, another genealogy of Shem.

This one is like chapter 5. This one moves you from Shem all the way down to Terah, Abraham's father. And the point of that genealogy is to get you from Noah all the way to Abraham.

That's the point. That's not the point of chapter 10. Chapter 10, in fact, is divided into three sections, as you would expect. You can see it there pretty clearly. First, in the first few verses, the first five verses, you have the descendants of Japheth.

Pretty clear. It's very short, but it's there. And then, beginning in verse 6 and all the way down to verse 20, you have the descendants of Ham. And then lastly, finally, you have, beginning in verse 21 to the end of the chapter, you have the descendants of Shem.

[ 7 : 59 ] And it's not just so-and-so fathered so-and-so. It's a mixture here. Look through there. You can see there are a lot of eems and ites. I know that sounds funny. But there are a lot of eems and ites here in this genealogy.

Here's the best, probably the best example is in verse 15, where Canaan not only fathered Sidon, his firstborn, and Heth. Those sound like just regular sons. Those are his firstborn son, Sidon, and another son, Heth.

And now, it doesn't just list individual sons. Now it lists ites. And ites would be people groups, nations. Look at them there. Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, Hivites, Archites, Sinites, Arvidites, Zemarites, Hamathites.

I mean, I'm proud that I've said that twice now without messing it up. A whole lot of ites just right there running in a row. And then at other places in here, you'll see some eems. And the I am ending on a word is the same thing as the ite ending.

It indicates a people group. Not merely an individual, but a whole group of people. So one that you can't see very well, if you're reading from the English Standard Version like I'm doing, in verse 6, Cush, Egypt, Put, and Canaan are the sons of Ham.

[ 9 : 07 ] But in some of your translations, it gives you more or less the Hebrew word that we have translated here as Egypt, which is Mitzrayim. It's an im word, which means it's a whole nation of people that come from this person.

So this is a mixture. It's a mixture of individuals and where they came from, and also whole people groups, whole clans, whole nations, and where they came from.

And really, that's the point of chapter 10. Chapter 10 is helping us to see and understand where the various nations of the biblical world came from. From whence did they all originate?

And chapter 10 is going to help us to understand that. Chapter 11, with the incident of the Tower of Babel, is going to tell us how they spread out, how they became dispersed. But chapter 10 is just telling us where they all came from.

And there's some really, really important lessons that I think that we can learn from these first two chapters. In fact, the first thing that I want us to take note of here just has to do with what's included here.

[ 10 : 15 ] Because we don't see here an account of every nation of people that are on the face of the earth today, or even every nation of people that were on the face of the earth during the days of ancient Israel, even when Moses was writing this.

So, for instance, there's no account of where any of the nations of the Far East come from. We're not told where the people who live in Japan came from, or people who lived in China came from, or Taiwan or the Philippines.

We don't know where people from Australia came from, according to this list. It doesn't tell us all of that. So, this is not an exhaustive list of all the nations that then existed.

It's selective. In fact, it's so selective that you can see that it's written almost as if someone were standing in the land of Palestine, or near it, in Israel, and surveying sort of the nations that surround them.

And the nations that get the most attention are the ones that would have been most familiar to the people of Israel. Nations that wouldn't have been known by them at all are not mentioned at all.

[ 11 : 27 ] So, the Celts are not really mentioned in any detail. We can possibly trace them back to a particular individual, but if you're of Irish ancestry, we can't give you 100% biblical origin for your people.

If your people are from Korea, we can't give you a 100% origination of your people from this chapter. We can't do that. If they were known somewhat to the Israelites, then a little bit of detail is given.

And if they were historically, frequently dealing with Israel, then we're given a lot more information. So, let me just sort of show you this by looking at some of the genealogy here.

Take a look at the sons of Japheth. Starting in verse 2. The sons of Japheth. He lists them out.

Gives us a few of them. Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshach, and Tiros.

And then you get a little bit more detail. Well, you get a couple of those sons. We get grandsons or more descendants. So, from Gomer, you get Ashkenaz, Raphoth, and Togarmah.

[ 12 : 36 ] And then also, you get some of Javan. You get Elisha, Tarshish, Ketim, and Dodanim. So, you get two of the sons of Japheth are detailed further.

And even that, it's not a whole lot of detail. I mean, it doesn't even begin to compare to the sons of Ham, which take up verse 6 all the way down to verse 20. I mean, that's a lot more information we get there about Ham's descendants.

We just get a little bit of information about Japheth's descendants because of who they are. So, for instance, we don't know who all of these peoples are, but we know who some of them most likely are.

Take Gomer. Take Gomer. Gomer. Probably the people known in the ancient world as the Sumerians or the Chimerians. And they migrated and dwelt sort of north of Israel in what we would today...

It's on the news a lot right now. The Ukraine and Russia. Around and near the Black Sea. This is the area occupied by the descendants of Gomer. And some of them that are listed, we can sort of guess at some people groups throughout history and who they might be tied to.

[13:43] We can do that. So these descendants of Gomer went into sort of the northern parts, into Russia and Ukraine and that area, north of Palestine. That's where they were. So the Israelites would have known a little bit about them.

Not a lot about them, but a little bit about them. And so they're mentioned just briefly. And then you have, of course, the sons of Javan, from which we get the word Ionian, which is really just another word for a Greek.

So that the sons of Javan, really, this tells us where did the Greek nations come from? Where did all of these city-states later on in history, where did they come from? They traced their ancestry back to Javan.

That's where they come from. And so you have some detail there. You have Elisha, you have Tarshish, which could be Tarsus or it could be all the way over in Spain. We're not sure.

You have the Ketim, you have the Dodenim, just a few peoples that Israel would have been familiar with. But not a lot because their contact, at least in ancient Israel, with people spread further out in the Mediterranean area would have been limited.

[14:50] So there's not a lot of information given for them. But for the sons of Ham, there's a ton of information given to them. Because look at the nations listed. You have Cush, which is Ethiopia.

There's a lot of trade back and forth between Israel and Ethiopia. In fact, Moses' wife was in Ethiopia. I mean, you have these sorts of things. You have Egypt mentioned next. Of course, we know the history of Israel with Egypt being in slavery there for 400 years.

And Egypt at times was an ally to Israel. At times was Israel's worst enemy. Lots going on there. Put is just to the side of Egypt. Libya is what we call it today.

Libya. That's put. Not any more information given about put. They're just right next to Egypt, so they're mentioned. Alright? And then there's a lot of information about Canaan. Look at that.

I mean, down in verse 15. We've read it twice already. Verse 15 and on. All this information about the peoples descended from Canaan. We know who these people groups are. These are the people that Israel's constantly fighting against in the lands.

[15:50] These names are going to come up over and over throughout the Old Testament. It's frequent. We know who these people are. And then, of course, the sons of Shem.

There's a familiar sounding word here. Eber. From which we get the word Hebrew. That's where the term Hebrew comes from. It's from this individual. And they trace their line all the way down.

Eventually, they will trace their line down to Abraham. And his descendants are, of course, among those who are called Hebrews. So, what's the point in showing you these things?

Here's my point. That we shouldn't think of the Bible. We shouldn't think of the process of God revealing His word to the prophets and the apostles.

We shouldn't normally think of it as something that just suddenly falls down from heaven into their lap. Or just an immediate voice that they hear sort of dictating down every word that they're supposed to write without any regard for what the writer of Scripture actually knows and what they can actually really understand.

[16:51] That's not normally. Occasionally that happens. But that's not normally how God reveals His word to the prophets and the apostles. He reveals His word to them in such a way that though it's entirely His word and every word in there is inspired by Him.

Nevertheless, it's also the words of those writing it down. You can see that when you read especially through the New Testament. If you compare Paul's letters with John's writings, it becomes pretty clear that these guys have different writing styles.

I mean, they use sort of different vocabulary a lot of times. They write in different ways. Well, why is that? I mean, if they're both writing revelation received from the Holy Spirit, why is it that in speaking through Paul the Holy Spirit would speak one way and in speaking through John the Holy Spirit would speak another way?

Or for that matter, why would the Old Testament be written in Hebrew and Aramaic and the New Testament in Greek? I mean, why? Why does it work like that? Because God, when He reveals His word to the prophets and the apostles, does it in such a way that He doesn't just override them.

They don't just become robots. That's not how it works. They're involved in the process. And yet God is so sovereign that He can ensure that though it's written in their language, in their style, and from their perspective, nevertheless, it is fully and completely His word.

[ 18 : 21 ] In fact, I want you to hold your place in Genesis and turn all the way over to 2 Peter. 2 Peter. It's a really important, very crucial verse for us to hear and understand about the process by which we get God's word.

We carry around our Bibles all the time. They come off of printing presses. And we don't often think about, how do we get this stuff? How do we have this? Well, in 2 Peter, Peter gives us a glimpse. In 2 Peter 1, verse 21, He says that no prophecy, that is written prophecy here, primarily, no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

So pause there and just note three things. Scripture doesn't come about as merely the work of the will of man. Well, I want to write a book and talk about divine things, so I'll write a book and talk about divine things.

That's not the way it happens. God initiates the process of revelation. God chooses to reveal things about Himself. And He does it through the power of the Holy Spirit, guiding these men as they write. And yet, men spoke, we're told. Men speak and write down God's word in the Bible so that it's not merely a voice from heaven. It is God speaking through real human beings.

[ 19 : 41 ] That's how revelation normally happens. Now, what does that have to do with Genesis chapter 10? Genesis chapter 10 is written from the perspective of Moses and the Israelites.

It's written from their perspective. And so we shouldn't be surprised that He didn't include in this list what's often called the table of nations. We shouldn't be surprised that He doesn't tell us where the Aborigines came from or that He doesn't tell us where China came from.

We shouldn't be surprised by that at all. Because while this is God's word supernaturally delivered through Moses, nevertheless, it's a word meant to be understood by Moses and by the people of Israel.

And God's not going to reveal things about nations that they've never heard of. This is how the word of God normally, normally operates. Which means that when you come to read and attempt to understand the Bible, you've also got to have at least some knowledge of the people to whom and about whom it was originally written.

You've got to. That's one thing we can definitely learn from this chapter here. Because these names are not familiar to most of us. Oh, a few stand out like Egypt or Cush or Canaan.

[ 20 : 49 ] A few stand out to us and we recognize them. But on the whole, we don't know who these are and we skip over things like chapter 10 because we think, if these are just a list of names that I've never heard of, what good does that do me?

How does that help me? Well, it helps you to see and understand the perspective from which the book of Genesis is written. And it can help you to understand the rest of the book of Genesis.

You've got to understand the world in which Moses lived and the world in which the ancient Israelites lived if you're going to understand many of the events that are recorded throughout the book of Genesis. You've just got to understand that.

And you've got to understand that the Bible is inspired in such a way that the people who were involved in the process were not just overwritten like puppets. They weren't.

That they were actively involved. So that we have in the Bible a word that is absolutely 100% the word of God, inerrant and infallible, and yet also involves many, many different human beings in its composition with their personalities and their writing styles all tied up into it.

[ 22 : 00 ] And that changes the way that you read the Bible. Of course, it also helps you to understand that the missing nations that are not included here do not in any way indicate that there are things missing from the Bible that ought to be there or that there are any sort of mistakes in the Bible.

I mean, if I stood up here and I said to you, Genesis chapter 10 tells us where all the nations on the face of the earth came from, then either I'm wrong about Genesis chapter 10 or Genesis chapter 10 made some mistakes and left a lot of stuff out.

But if I were to stand here and say, Genesis chapter 10 tells us about where the nations came from, that Israel would have been familiar with, then you understand this is not some random collection of nations.

This makes sense. This is intentional. And everyone that's mentioned here, as far as we're able to research back in history, the ones that we know about, the line of descent given for them matches with what we know about the histories of those peoples and those nations.

Europeans. I'll give you an example that relates most closely to most of us. Because most Europeans are most likely descendants of Japheth. These descendants of Gomer, who went into Ukraine and Russia area, most likely eventually spread westward a bit, and the Greeks would have spread northward a bit, or other descendants who came from those where the Greeks came from. [ 23 : 26 ] They would have spread northward a bit, so that most Europeans, which I think most of us in here are European ancestry today, most Europeans would trace our ancestry in some sense back to Japheth, and probably through Gomer, and maybe even a bit through Javan to a certain extent.

That's how we would trace our ancestry. But notice some of the other names in there are not completely unknown to us. For instance, you've got Medai. You see that there in verse 2? Medai. Who is this Medai? Well, that's a reference to the Medes. The Medes. You've heard maybe of the Medo-Persian Empire and things like that. The Medes and the Persians, who lived in what we today call Iran.

Okay? They live in Iran. Now, we tend to sort of just paint the world with broad brushes, and we today look at things through modern lenses, and we assume that the vast majority of Muslims in the world all have the same ancestry, and yet they don't.

They're an entirely different group of Muslims living in the country of Iran today than you find right next door in Iraq, than you find in Arabia.

[ 24 : 43 ] Why is that? Well, for one thing, because the people of Iran are of Medo-Persian descent. Now, why does that matter in terms of historical accuracy? Why does that matter?

Because we're going to see in a minute, as we look at the Tower of Babel incident, that this fracturing of nations has everything to do with languages. That's how God accomplishes the creation of individual nations.

Well, the language that we're speaking right now, English, and most other European languages, all those that come from Latin, like Spanish, Italian, Romanian, Portuguese, those sorts of languages, all what's called the Germanic languages, which would be German, obviously, Dutch, and some others, all those languages, they're all what we call Indo-European languages.

That's the language family that they belong to. Guess what other languages belong to that language family? The ones spoken by the Persians and the Medes in ancient history, and today spoken in Iran.

And down south of there, spoken in India today. All the languages in India belong to the same category as all the European languages would belong to the same category as the Persian languages.

[ 25 : 58 ] Why is that the case? I mean, why do you have... That's an odd sort of configuration of languages that we all know originated from one source. I mean, this is not sort of my...

This is broadly accepted among those who study the history of language. Why do they all have one source? Why would people in India and Iran, Persia and Europe...

Why are all these languages able to be traced back to a common source? Why? The Bible tells us because they're all descendants of Japheth. There's an incredible amount of historical accuracy contained even in this limited account of the origins of the nations and languages and families of the earth.

And if you understand the perspective from which it's written, your confidence in the Bible and your ability to understand the Bible rightly can be greatly, greatly increased.

That's the first thing I want you to sort of glean from this genealogy from the story in chapter 11. But there's another thing that should be obvious to us but a lot of times we don't see it.

[ 27 : 03 ] And that's just a real simple truth that regardless of where we live or what language we speak or what our color of skin is or what our hair texture is or where our ancestors come from, regardless of all of those things, if this chapter teaches us anything, it teaches us that we all have a common source.

I mean, sure, we all have a common source in Adam. That's true, we saw that back in Genesis chapters 1 and 2. But we also all have a common source in Noah and his sons.

Which means that there are not races in the world today. There are not various races. There is one race. There is a human race. And it's composed of various ethnicities that God Himself created when He spread the people out at the Tower of Babel.

But we are not fundamentally different from people who may externally look very different from us. We are not fundamentally different. We are all the same. We are all a part of one race.

In fact, not long ago I was reading a book called *The Forging of the Races*. This book was about where do we get our concepts of race and how does that tie into the interpretation of the Bible throughout history and all those sorts of things.

[ 28 : 19 ] And the main point of the book was to say that if you dig beneath the surface both of the Bible and properly interpret and of what we observe in humanity around us you will begin to see that the racial categories that we have set up are not real.

They don't correspond to reality. So that we set up racial categories generally speaking according to hair texture and skin color. Those are the main things, right, that we use to categorize somebody in a race.

So if you have like really tight curls and really dark skin we put you, you know, of African descent automatically and we call that a race. And if you look somewhat like me especially if you look like Bill then you're European, okay, descent.

Whereas if you have somewhat medium skin and straight dark hair we'll usually put you in some sort of Asian descent category. and a lot of people divide it just into those three races although some have divided it into four, seven, or even dozens of races.

But these categories based upon external physical characteristics don't really correspond with reality. What if we chose other characteristics? As the book said, if instead of choosing skin color and hair texture what if we chose the patterns of fingerprints?

[ 29 : 37 ] What if we chose the patterns of fingerprints? And compared various people's different fingerprints around the world and then divided people into races based upon the types of swirls and loops you find in fingerprints?

Then we would draw the racial maps completely differently. I mean, they would look totally differently and they wouldn't correspond. There are groups of people in Africa who have one type of fingerprint that matches some groups in Europe and some groups in Asia and they would, if we were basing it on that physical characteristic form, they would form a racial category.

This is kind of gross but this book also said that if you divided races up on the kind and consistency and texture of earwax around the world you can find different people groups different sort of clans that have particular types of earwax that are very different than our neighbors next door but are very similar to people in other parts of the world or maybe just down a little further so that if you used earwax as a category another arbitrary physical characteristic no more arbitrary than hair or skin you would draw the racial maps very differently.

The point that I'm making here is that we don't have to do all of that research to figure this out. The Bible tells us this. The Bible tells us that we are not fundamentally different races.

We have one source. All of these nations all of these clans all of these family groups and all the ones not mentioned can be traced back to Noah and his three sons.

[ 31 : 12 ] In fact, turn over to Acts. Turn over to the book of Acts. I just want you to see this one verse because it's really important for us in understanding this issue. Acts chapter 17.

If you can't get there in time I think it's going to be on the screen. But in verse 26 the Apostle Paul preaching in Athens says this to the Greeks the descendants of Japheth and Javan.

He says And he, God made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place.

He, God made from one man every nation of mankind to live upon the face of the earth. When did he do that? When did he begin the process of determining boundaries and splitting people up?

He did that here in Genesis chapters 10 and 11. We are fundamentally one race of people. And if we're going to continue to just use arbitrary physical characteristics to divide ourselves into groups and to begin to label people us and them we at least need to acknowledge that's not biblical.

[ 32 : 26 ] The Bible doesn't it doesn't do that. The Bible divides people up according to families languages ethnic groups but never according never according to races.

So if we understand these chapters rightly we can have confidence in the historical accuracy of the Bible rightly understand the Bible and also understand that we all have one common source.

But we can also understand something else from these chapters that we all have in common besides having a common origin and that is that we all share the same kind of sinful nature passed on from Adam to Cain and Abel and Seth passed on to their descendants and now passed on to all of these various nations scattered all over the face of the earth.

Take a look at the middle genealogy we haven't looked at Ham very much but look at Ham to Ham we're told these are the peoples or nations born to Ham Cush Egypt Put and Canaan and then he's going to spend some time focused on the descendants of Cush what we call Ethiopia today and he lists some of the sons but then in verse 8 he focuses on a particular descendant of Cush a son of Cush Cush fathered Nimrod he was the first on earth to be a mighty man verse 9 tells us he was a mighty hunter before the Lord therefore it is said like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the Lord and we're told that Nimrod was a city builder and he built of all cities one of them that he built was the city of Babel and a kingdom called Babel now when we're told that Nimrod was a mighty hunter it does not simply mean that Nimrod was really great at tracking down prey and killing it and cooking up the meat that's not that's not what this means this means that Nimrod was a trained skilled killer of both man and beast

Nimrod was a violent murderous man and a builder of cities and kingdoms chapter 11 will give us insight into the kind of kingdoms and cities that Nimrod built remember he's responsible for Babel and of course chapter 11 tells us that Babel is altogether a debacle it is a it is it is a point at which human sinfulness our depravity inherited and passed down from Adam once again just like we see before the flood human depravity brings us to a point of judgment in fact notice notice notice what lies behind what's the motive for the building of this great tower in Babel take a look in chapter 11 verse 4 the people of Babel that is the people under

[ 35 : 30 ] Nimrod's rule the people of Babel say in verse 14 come let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens and let us make a name for ourselves lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth now notice there are two motives here in building this tower and this great city this great kingdom two motives here number one they want to make a name for themselves that's what they want to do and that's the essence of sin sin at its very core is a desire to steal and rob God of the glory that rightfully belongs to only him that's why the apostle Paul says that when we sin we fall short of the glory of God we fail to give to God the glory that he deserves and we want to retain some of that glory for ourselves I mean that's the problem with the fall in the garden of Eden Adam and Eve wanted to decide what was right and wrong on their own they wanted to decide their own course of action and they did not want to any longer submit to

God's sovereign authority over their lives and so they rebelled they sought to make a name for themselves to know for themselves what was good and evil to determine it for themselves and now here we are again God has already judged the world in the flood and we're not too far removed from that event and now once again humanity taken together rebels against God and wants to make a name for themselves but their rebellion is seen in more than just that why do they want to build this tower why do they want to build this great city because they don't want to be dispersed all over the earth but when God created Adam and Eve you recall he told them to multiply and then to fill the earth and subdue it part and parcel of what it is to be a human being created in the image of God is that we scatter and we fill the earth in fact one of the things that God said to Noah after the flood and they left the ark is he reiterated that command he told them to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth

God's plan for humanity is that we would scatter out that we would spread out over the whole earth and rule over the earth as people made in his image representing him to the rest of creation and yet here the people of Babel are in rebellion against God's creative purposes for them we will not scatter we will not disperse as you've commanded us to do we will not fill the earth we will gather together because we're stronger together and together with our combined strength we'll make a name for ourselves rather than spread the fame of your name across the world we'll make a name for ourselves it's human depravity put on display passed from generation to generation found among every language and nation and people group mentioned in chapter 10 and found in the world today and put on full display for us in the incident that occurred at Babel it's human depravity once again shown to us in chapter 2 in chapter 3 of Genesis shown to us in chapter 4 with the first murder in Genesis shown to us in chapter 5 because everybody dies in chapter 5 except for one person showing that the wages of sin continue to move on shown for us in chapter 6 of Genesis because God sees the wickedness of man and his heart is evil all the time shown for us in chapters

7 and 8 in that God brings judgment upon sinful humanity shown for us in Genesis chapter 9 because after the flood

Noah gets drunk and Ham sins against his dad by looking upon his nakedness now shown for us again in chapters 10 and 11 through the spread of sin throughout humanity rebellion it's bound up in who we are as fallen sinful people it's who we are and the only hope for a sinful rebellious people is that someone might pay the price for our rebellion which is really the last thing that I want you to see here you see in the midst of all of this sin in the midst of all of the depravity of humanity God is working out a plan he's accomplishing his sovereign purposes no matter how sinful we are no matter how much we might stray no matter how much humanity might rebel against God God is in the process of accomplishing his purposes and we can see that if we understand chapters 10 and 11 in the context of the whole Bible

God has said I want you to spread out over the whole earth humanity refuses to spread out so what does God do look in chapter 11 now the whole earth had one language verse 1 verse 6 God says behold they are one people and they all have one language one language here which contrasts with chapter 10 because over and over in chapter 10 listen to this refrain chapter 10 verse 5 from these the coastland people spread in their lands each with his own language verse 20 these are the sons of Ham by their clans their languages languages again in verse 31 these are the sons of Shem by their clans their languages people are divided in chapter 10 according to languages there are multiple languages but chapter 11 hits the rewind button let's show you how all these languages came to be God intended for people to spread and he uses the confusion of their language to accomplish his purpose in the face of human sin take a look

[ 41 : 46 ] I lost my spot there take a look in chapter 11 verse 6 the Lord God said behold they are one people they all have one language and this is only the beginning of what they will do their depravity will know no bounds they are still the people made in God's image capable of incredible things and their depravity will lead them in it to use those gifts for bad this is only the beginning of what they will do and nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them come let us go down and there confuse their language so that they may not understand one another's speech verse 9 therefore the name of this city that they built was called Babel because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth now there's a play on words here because the Babylonians the word that they used for Babel meant city of the gods despite their history they still viewed their city as the place where mankind could attain some sort of godhood that's still how they considered their city and they built up a whole mythology around that and yet Moses comes and records this and he says no we call it Babel because that's all they do they Babel and God made them

Babel he just made them say nothing and spread them out this is where God confused their languages this play on words meant to grab our attention because in the face of human sin God will accomplish his purposes and his purposes begin step one spread humanity throughout the earth so that humanity becomes composed of clans languages peoples and nations all over the world why why would God have it in mind for humanity to be spread out and segmented into these different people groups what is he doing what is he trying to accomplish find the answer to that question at the end of your Bible Revelation chapter 7 as John sees a vision of the multitude of people that God has redeemed out of sinful humanity verse 9 in chapter 7

John says after this I looked and behold a great multitude that no one could number from every nation from all tribes and peoples and languages standing before the throne and before the Lamb clothed in white robes with palm branches in their hands and crying with a loud voice salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb do you see that?

God's intention is to gain praise for his son from people from every nation from all tribes from all peoples from all languages all of this culminates one day in a picture in a reality in which all of these peoples from all of these languages are all with one voice in many languages singing praise to Jesus Christ the Lamb of God God has a purpose God has a plan from the beginning of it all he will gain glory he will be exalted he will be praised and he'll be praised among a multitude of people from all over the place and if humanity wants to rebel against that plan it will not change it it will not alter it it will not slow it down in fact our sin becomes the means by which God will accomplish his sovereign purposes if you can see that and if you can understand that you can gain great insight into the rest of the Bible you can gain great insight just into the rest of the book of Genesis because when we come later on to study Abraham and the other patriarchs and even on down to the story of Joseph what we're going to see is that the story of these patriarchs these fathers of Israel is not a

story of human virtue it's a story of human sin that's what it is because they're sinful people just like we are and Abraham

Isaac Jacob the brothers of Joseph they're in constant rebellion against God's plans and purposes and yet God's plans and purposes are accomplished in and through their rebellion so that Joseph's brothers sell him into slavery that's okay because God wanted Joseph in Egypt so that when the famine came God could rescue his people by having his man in place in Egypt in power oh but it's more than that God wanted Joseph in Egypt so that through the famine God could bring all of his people to Egypt so that as he told Abraham he could remove his people for 400 years till the iniquity of the Amorites the people living in the land was full and they deserved the judgment God would bring on them through Israel you see there's a massive sovereign plan at work in the book of Genesis that plays itself out in the rest of the Torah the rest of the Pentateuch and all of that plan involves God at work in and through human sin to accomplish his plans he does it ultimately in Christ in Acts we are told that God

[ 47 : 19 ] God himself put Herod and Pontius Pilate along with all the Jews and the Gentiles he raised them up he put them in positions of authority why? so that Acts chapter 4 his plan and his purpose might be accomplished through them the very crucifixion of God's own son for the salvation of God's people required the sinful activity of Herod and Pilate and the Jewish leaders and the Gentile Roman soldiers they didn't thwart God's plan they didn't stop God's plan they didn't alter God's plan God accomplishes plan through them that's a sovereign God at work in all things at all times accomplishing his plan despite and even through our sinful behavior so that sometimes we have a tendency to look upon our past or maybe a mistake that we make today and we begin to think to ourselves

I've blown it I did a thing or I walked down a path that I knew that was wrong I knew that was against God's word I knew it wasn't his will and I walked down that path and so now I've blown it now I mean maybe God will be nice enough to give me a plan B or a plan C or a plan Z and maybe you know there's going to be some blessing but now I've blown it and I'll never get the real blessing that God intended for me God doesn't have a plan B doesn't have a plan C D or Z it's his plan that's it and your sin doesn't thwart it your sin doesn't overcome it you acknowledge your sin you repent of your sin and then you give thanks to God that your sin is the means by which he accomplishes the plan he already had in place now we mess up all the time we make mistakes all the time but if we begin to think that our sin is so great and so powerful as to remove us and to limit God's ability to accomplish what he wants to accomplish in our lives then we're fools and we don't understand the power of God and the nature of his sovereignty the Tower of

Babel would have us believe differently that God accomplished his purposes through human sinfulness this is a word that we can trust it's historically accurate if you understand the way that it's written and you get it and you see it from the perspective of the writers and original readers you can understand it and it makes sense and it's true and it's accurate and it tells us things about ourselves and it tells us things about who God is and if you believe it if you believe this word then it changes everything for you let's pray father we come across strange stories a lot of times in your word strange to us that a people would think that they could build a tower and overcome your infinite power strange to us that you would reveal in your word these peoples and nations that many of us have never heard of some of them find strange things but even in the midst of those things we find hope and we find the good news of Christ crucified for sinners saving a people from every language and every nation for himself and I

I pray father that all of us here in this room would be someday among the multitude singing praise to the lamb and so I ask father that you would not allow any of us to continue to walk apart from Christ but that your spirit who inspired your word and who opens it for us to see and understand would now work in the hearts of those who do not know Jesus and give them new hearts and new desires and birth faith in Jesus into their hearts now I pray this in Christ's name Amen God