

A Dream, Nightmare, & Reality

Genesis 10:31-11:9



KICK OFF

Martin Luther King's 'I have a dream' speech was powerful because it struck a cord with humanity's dream for humanity.
Discuss.



KEY VERSE

Genesis 11:4
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."



BIG IDEA

God's judgement in the diversity of languages at The Tower of Babel, was a grace-full diversity.



INVESTIGATE

I HAVE A NIGHTMARE

Read Genesis 10: 31-11: 9

- From Genesis 10: 31-32 what is the purpose of chapter 10? How does it relate to the history of Israel.
- What reasons did man have for building the city?
- Who were they trying to impress?
Among whom were they trying to 'make a name' for themselves?
- Do you think their actions were similar at all to those of Adam and Eve? If so, how?
- What was God's reaction to the plan?

BIBLICAL THEMES

- Although The Tower of Babel passage is not directly quoted in the rest of the Bible, its thinking is reflected.
Read: Deuteronomy 32: 8, Acts 17: 26-27, Daniel 3.



DIG DEEPER

Genesis 10-11 By Richard P. Belcher, Jr.

It is also significant that names are used in a variety of ways in Genesis 10. Some names are of persons (Japheth, Nimrod), some names are of people groups (Ludites, Caphtorites), and some names are of place names (Mizraim, Sidon). Thus the sons of Noah are divided by ethnicity, geography, and language. The fact that there are seventy nations in the genealogy shows that the table of nations is representative of the totality of all peoples.

The Tower of Babel

There is an obvious parallel between the developments here and those we saw in the line of Cain. Remember that Cain build a city. They wanted to make themselves a 'name' Compare also the 'men of the name' who lived in the period of violence before the flood. (6:4). Here we have human progress and technical ability, but turned to the purpose of man's exaltation once more. There is a connection between building the city and not being scattered abroad. Here was an attempt to unify the human race around one great enterprise. They were not after a landmark to guide their way home.

Continued over

THINK &
APPLY

REALISTIC IDEALISTS



7. In what way was their dream half-true?
(Genesis 1:26-28)

8. What should our thinking be towards technology, diversity in society?

9. In what was the dream true?
(Revelations 22: 1-5)

They were after a technical accomplishment which would unite mankind in the making of it, and whose glory would service to promote the unity. They wanted to establish a *name*, that is a reputation; fame; a unifying object and accomplishment. To catch something of flavour, we can remember the way the moon landings were portrayed by some as a great human technological accomplishment in which all men could somehow join in praising the glory of man.

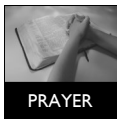
God frustrated that. The confusion of tongues was to obstruct the united attempt to build a kingdom to the glory of man. The text is not clear as to who was involved in this project. 'They' is all that is mentioned. Were these all the descendants of Noah, who at that stage were still together? Note the statement in 10:25. Is this a reference to the division of tongues? If so it happened during the lifetime of Eber, who was at least the great grandson of Shem, if not further removed by generations being left out.

PRAISE GOD for humanity's diversity of ethnicity, geography, and language.

CONFESS our struggle to appreciate the density, diversity of people in our city.

ASK GOD that we would understand the dreams and the struggles of people in the CBD.

PRAY ALSO for the witness of Scots' Church in the City.



PRAYER

Praise God for the challenges raised by God's word through this study

Praying for others in your group:

Pray for others in your group



FAMILY
DISCUSSION

How do we apply this passage in our daily life?



READ AHEAD

Next week's topic is:

Real Security & the call of God

Read: Genesis 11: 27-12: 9