

# The Tower of Babel

## 11: 1-9

In this section, primeval history reaches its fruitless climax as man, conscious of his new abilities, prepares to glorify himself by his collective effort to build a monument to himself. The elements of the story are timelessly characteristic of the spirit of **the world (First John 2:15-17)**.<sup>201</sup> This is a flashback narrative that gives us the reason for the scattering of the nations just described, and these two chapters link the time of Noah to the days of Abraham. The Flood had a worldwide impact on humanity, and so would the confusion of languages here at **the Tower of Babel**.

Although the curtain had now been drawn, as it were, on his activities, there can be little doubt that **the Adversary** was still energetically working behind the scenes. **He** pressed **his** advantage, gained when **he** capitalized so well on the fatal weakness in Ham's character, and soon gained the allegiance of **his** family in general and of **Nimrod** in particular.<sup>202</sup>

**Romans 1:18-32** graphically relates the resulting moral and spiritual decay of **Nimrod** and his followers. **They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator (Romans 1:25)**. The result was the beginning of pantheism, or *the belief that God is everything and everything is God*; polytheism, or *the belief in many gods*; and idolatry, or *the worshiping of idols*. How much of this new religious system came by direct communication with **Satan** himself we do not know, but there is plentiful evidence that all forms of paganism have come initially from **the Tower of Babel**. The basic identity of the various gods and goddesses of Rome, Greece, India, Egypt, and other nations originated from the ancient Babylonian religion. **Nimrod** would be worshiped as a god. **His** wife Semiramis was worshiped as the Queen of Heaven (**Jeremiah 17-19**). Their son, Tammuz, was worshiped as the sun god (**Ezekiel 8:14-17**). This religious system would later become **MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH (Revelation 17:5)**. These pagan deities were also identified with the stars and the planets.

Like everything else, **the Destroyer of souls** corrupts everything that is good and righteous on the earth. **He** takes the truth and turns it into lies. Indeed, **Jesus** calls **him the father of lies (John 8:44)**. **He** has done this from the beginning (**Chapter 3**). And one of the greatest ancient counterfeit mythologies that **he** has unleashed on mankind is the study of the stars today. After **the Tower of Babel** the counterfeit religions of the world would be practiced continually and **the LORD's** true message of salvation was distorted (see **Lw - The Witness of the Stars**).

The entire account of **the Tower of Babel** follows an antithetical structure. There is a parallelism, where the first letter is antithetical to the second letter, and so on, with the letter **E** being the turning point.

- A The whole world had one language (11:1)
- B They settled on the plain in Shinar (11:2)
- C Man said: **Come let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly** (11:3)
- D Man said: **Let us build ourselves a city and make a name for ourselves** (11:4)
- E But the Lord came down to see** (11:5)
- D The Lord said: **If they do this, nothing will be impossible for them** (11:6)
- C The Lord said: **Come let us confuse their language** (11:7)
- B They were scattered from the plain of Shinar (11:8)
- A The Lord confused the language of the whole world (11:9)

This section provides a fitting climax to primeval history. It describes the families of the earth hopelessly scattered throughout the then-known world. There was then no record of a **mark** for the fugitive (4:15), no **rainbow in the clouds** (9:13), and no ray of hope or token of grace. This leaves the reader looking for a solution. And after a connecting genealogy (11:10-26), that solution is provided. Out of the scattered nations of the world, **ADONAI** formed one nation that would become **His** channel of blessing. Consequently, **God** was not done with the human race. This chapter simply prepares the reader for the next step of **the LORD's** plan, the calling of **Abraham** (12:1-9).<sup>203</sup>