

Text— Genesis 11:1-9

Fellow redeemed sinners, redeemed by the blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,

Early in this world's history, only Noah and his wife, with his sons and their wives, survived on earth when the Lord destroyed the rest of the human race by drowning them in a world-wide flood, for we read in Genesis 6:5-8 and 7:11-24, "GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. ...In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark; They, and every beast after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort. And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life. And they that went in, went in male and female of all flesh, as God had commanded him: and the LORD shut him in. And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth. And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered. And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of

fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained alive, and they that were with him in the ark. And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days."

Thus, eight people survived the worldwide flood by being on an ark which the Lord had commanded Noah to prepare before the deluge.

Subsequently, Genesis 9:18-19 reports, "And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan. These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread." So, repopulation of the earth began to take place as Noah's sons together with their wives had children. Sadly, when additional generations of people arose, they did not all continue in faith of the Lord which Noah had held. Hence, human history repeated itself as folks again drifted away from faith in the Lord God while they indulged their sinful flesh. Our Old Testament Scripture selection relates an incident which demonstrates the wickedness of men.

Today, we must beware of getting caught-up in the falsehoods being touted by wicked human beings who are filled with high self-esteem. Therefore, our sermon text can be of help to us as it in effect warns:

"BEWARE OF SINFUL PRIDE"

With that as our theme, may we, in view of our text and with the help of the Holy Ghost, see—

- 1) How sinful pride manifested itself after the worldwide flood
- 2) What the Lord did to stifle sinful pride for a time after the flood and why

Verses 1 & 2, -----. (Genesis 11:1-2)

It was over 100 years since the flood had taken place; and so, people had multiplied, *And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. 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.*

Observe that the people ALL journeyed TOGETHER to one place, rather than dispersing to different areas. The people were determined to remain united, despite the fact that Genesis 9:1 tells us, “God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” Yes, God commanded that those people born to the survivors of the flood would overspread the earth, NOT that they would remain together in one area. Accordingly, the people were failing to heed God’s commands as they chose to do-their-own-thing.

Note well that our text does NOT tell us the people knew the LORD— so quickly had unbelief taken place as men multiplied after the deluge.

The land of Shinar was later known as Babylonia and was located between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in the area we know today as Syria and Iraq. The name “Shinar” was appropriately derived from the terms “sheni” and “ar or nahar” meaning “two” and “rivers.” [Fausset’s Bible Dictionary]

Verses 3 & 4, -----. (Genesis 11:3-4)

Consider the ambitious plans made by the unbelieving people who were stuck on themselves and refused to obey the Lord’s command to, “Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.” (Genesis 9:1) The people refused to spread out into the world; instead, *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.*

The area was not one of massive stones, but was rather an area with immense quantities of clay which could be cast into the form of bricks and bake-hardened with fire. Slime is bitumen which comes from what was known as slime-pits, and is, according to one commentator:

“a mineral pitch, which, when hardened, forms a strong cement, commonly used in Assyria to this day, and forming the mortar found on the burnt brick remains of antiquity.” [JFB Commentary]

And what did the people wish and encourage one another to do with those building materials? *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.* Yeah, they wanted to make themselves a big-name; they wanted to be united in being big-shots; they wanted to reach into heaven themselves to be the highest of all beings. The people did not wish to be scattered all over the face of the whole earth, even though the Lord God had commanded them to replenish the earth. Thus it was that the people’s sinful pride manifested itself after the worldwide flood.

Indeed, our text relates that the people wanted to make a name for themselves; the people did NOT wish to honor God and His holy name. It’s no different today, for again and again we see sinful human beings boasting about how they will save what they call “mother earth”; and, how they will see with their own eyes through their 10 billion dollar telescope recently launched into space the details of how the earth came into being by a supposed big-bang millions or billions of years ago. Accordingly, we are beholding masses of people’s sinful pride again manifesting itself, while the Lord God and His holy Word is ignored by all except His little flock of believers.

Nevertheless, the widespread sinful pride of people will NOT save them from the judgment which is to come, for Holy Writ declares in no uncertain terms, “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; [and] the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus

Christ our Lord. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. [For] When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." (Romans 3:23;6:23; John 3:36; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Matthew 25:31-34, 41, 46)

Realize that sinful human beings will NOT and CANNOT save themselves or the sin-cursed planet earth, for 2 Peter 3:10 clearly states, "the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." Yeah, an immense global-warming is coming; so, people had better sincerely repent of their sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior while they yet have time to do so. The message is clear to all of us: beware of sinful pride!

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As we ponder the remaining verses of our text, let us see what the Lord did to stifle sinful pride after the flood and why.

Verse 5, ----- (Genesis 11:5)

Think about what our text is getting at here, for

God actually always sees all and knows all. It's as we read in Psalm 33:13-14, "The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the inhabitants of the earth." Therefore, when our text informs us that *the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded*, it is evidently emphasizing the fact that the Lord God was very concerned about the people and what they were doing in opposition to Him.

Verse 6, ----- (Genesis 11:6)

To put the scene in perspective, we can sort of picture the Lord God shaking His head in disgust and disappointment, saying, *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.* Yes, the people were united, but they were NOT united in serving the one true God; NO; they were united in their self-serving sinful pride in doing-their-own-thing rather than doing what God had commanded them. The people, if unchecked, would not cease to serve themselves and their own interests in total disregard of the Lord God and His Word.

My friends, if the Lord would not have restrained those people, if the Lord simply let them do everything they intended to do, the human race would have destroyed itself many years ago and the Savior – the Messiah promised to our first parents, Adam and Eve – would never have arrived on earth; consequently, all mankind would have been lost and damned. Christ is the ONLY WAY to God and heaven, for Acts 4:12 declares, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Accordingly, the Lord stepped in to stifle men's sinful pride before mankind could completely destroy itself.

Verses 7 & 8, ----- (Genesis 11:7-8)

Observe the discussion the LORD had with Himself, for He said: *Go to, let us go down, and there*

confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. Yes, the LORD said let US go down, for although there is but one true God, He is three distinct Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one," declares 1 John 5:7.

Thus, the one true God in His grace and mercy prevented those human beings who were filled with sinful pride from completing their project, for *the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.*

Despite the sinful ambitions of the people who were determined to disobey the Lord and to consider themselves gods as they reached toward heaven with their tower, the Lord dispersed them in order that His plan to replenish the earth might be accomplished; and, in order that thereby the Savior might later come into the world to redeem the world.

God was NOT being too harsh; God was rather loving in that He desired to send undeserving human beings the Savior we all need. Yes, my friends, let us never forget that Galatians 4:4-5 tells us, "when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Our Redeemer would never have come if man had succeeded in destroying himself by his sinful pride not long after the world-wide flood.

Thankfully, *the LORD scattered* the pride-filled people *abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.* Luke 1:51 states the case well, where we read, "He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts." Thus, the Lord stifled sinful pride; the people settled in different areas and had different languages. God then continued with His plan of sending the Savior when He later called a man named Abram to

faith— Abram whose name God changed to Abraham, from whom Christ later was descended according to the flesh.

Verse 9, ----- (Genesis 11:9)

The tower and the city which ceased to be built was 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. Babel means "confusion" and was later called Babylon.

Interestingly, Acts 17:24-28 states, "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." Therefore, by separating the peoples into different nations it was God's intended purpose that people would seek Him out, rather than being filled with sinful pride and being stuck on themselves.

The separating of people into different areas to become various nations which speak different languages was all to the glory of God, who desired individuals to seek Him and His will rather than banding together to worship themselves and elevate themselves in sinful pride.

Different languages does not indicate God thinks more of one people than another, for John 3:16-18 informs us, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through

him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Yes, God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time," relates 1 Timothy 2:4-6. Therefore, holding fast to Jesus Christ in heart-deep faith, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," 1 John 1:9 assures us.

Hence, let us daily and sincerely repent of our sins; let us keep our full trust and confidence in Christ Jesus as our personal Savior and Lord; and, let us beware of sinful pride. Amen.

m.e.l.