



# GENESIS

## All Nations, Lands, and Languages - Genesis 10-11

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**Genesis 10-11 portrays the biblical world as increasingly corrupt and completely under God's sovereignty.**

### Important Threads

- The Line of Corruption
  - a. Adam, Cain, Lamech, Sons of God & the Gibborim | Noah, Ham, Nimrod the Gibbor, and Babel
  - b. Adam was naked and Ashamed | Noah was naked and then shamed
  - c. Cain Built First City | Nimrod Builds Rebellious Cities
- Points of Corruption
  - a. Fill the earth with image bearers vs. Filling the earth with violence
  - b. Right Desires, Wrong Means: Wisdom in Genesis 3, Unity in Genesis 11
  - c. Sons of God corrupt the move of heaven to earth in Genesis 6 | Humanity corrupts the move of earth of heaven in Genesis 11
- Plan for Corruption
  - a. God covered Adam's Nakedness | Shem/Japheth covered Noah's Nakedness
  - b. Shem means, "Name." This "Name" is the one through which Abraham would come, the one who would carry the name of God into the world and through whom the light of the world, Jesus, would come.
  - c. Genesis 12
    - i. Don't go conquer a land, I will give you a land.
    - ii. Don't go destroy a people, I will make a people.
    - iii. Don't make your name great, I will make your name great.

“The peoples listed amount precisely to seventy... There are fourteen Japhethites, thirty Hamites, and twenty-six Shemites. The figure seventy, even if not explicitly given, can hardly be fortuitous. The mere recognition in verse 5 of the existence of additional, unnamed “coastal nations” lends added significance to the enumeration as being deliberately chosen. In the biblical world the number seventy is “typological”; that is, it is used for rhetorical effect to evoke the idea of totality, of comprehensiveness on a large scale, as opposed to the use of seven on a smaller scale. Thus, according to Genesis 46:27, the entire household of Jacob that went down to Egypt comprised seventy people. The representative body of the entire community of Israel in the wilderness consisted of seventy elders, as recorded in Exodus 24:9 and Numbers 11:24... In light of this convention, one may safely assume that making the offspring of Noah’s sons total seventy is a literary device to convey the notion of the totality of the human race... This device affords an insight into a major function of the Table, a document thus far unparalleled in the ancient world... **[It] is no mere academic or scholastic exercise. It affirms, first of all, the common origin and absolute unity of humankind... then it tacitly, but effectively, asserts that the varied instrumentalities of human divisiveness are all secondary to the essential unity of the international community, which truly constitutes a family of man.**” – Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis, The JPS Torah Commentary*, p. 69.

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### **Babylon's Origin and End**

The Enuma Elish vs. The Biblical Record

**Babylonian myth** glorifies empire as heaven’s mirror: the gods rule through violence, and Babylon is their sacred city.

**Biblical revelation** exposes Babylon’s pride: humanity grasps at heaven and is humbled. True cosmic order comes not from Marduk’s war, but from Yahweh’s word — a creation of peace, fulfilled in Christ who unites scattered nations under one kingdom of grace.

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## I. Ancient Babylonian Perspective: *Enuma Elish*

Stage	Key Event	Theological Message
<b>Primordial Chaos</b>	Apsu (fresh water) and Tiamat (salt water) exist before creation.	Chaos precedes order; the gods themselves emerge from chaos.
<b>Divine Conflict</b>	Younger gods kill Apsu; Tiamat creates monsters to avenge him.	The cosmos is born out of <b>violence</b> and <b>divine rivalry</b> .
<b>Rise of Marduk</b>	Marduk offers to defeat Tiamat if made supreme ruler.	Order requires one god's dominance – a divine monarchy mirrors empire.
<b>Creation through Violence</b>	Marduk slays Tiamat; splits her body to form heaven and earth.	Creation = conquest. Power and violence are creative forces.
<b>Humanity Created</b>	Made from Kingu's blood to serve the gods.	Humans exist to <b>labor</b> for divine beings, not to bear their image.
<b>Establishment of Babylon</b>	Marduk builds <b>Babylon</b> and the temple <b>Esagila</b> as the gods' meeting place.	Babylon is <b>divine center of the world</b> . Empire = sacred order.
<b>Marduk Enthroned</b>	The gods crown him king; he receives fifty names.	Babylonian kingship is <b>cosmic</b> , ordained by the gods.

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## II. Biblical Perspective: Genesis 10–11

Stage	Key Event	Theological Message
<b>Human Expansion</b>	After the Flood, people multiply; Nimrod founds Babel (Gen 10:8–12).	Empire-building begins as <b>human ambition</b> , not divine order.
<b>Unified Rebellion</b>	Humanity settles in Shinar; one language, one purpose.	Unity apart from God leads to <b>collective pride</b> and oppression.

<b>Project of Self-Exaltation</b>	"Let us build a city and tower with its top in the heavens, to make a name for ourselves."	Self-made glory replaces worship. Babel = human-centered religion.
<b>Divine Descent</b>	The LORD "came down" to see the city and tower.	God's transcendence dwarfs human power; divine irony.
<b>Confusion &amp; Scattering</b>	God confuses languages and scatters the people.	Pride leads to <b>division</b> ; rebellion dismantles its own unity.
<b>Name and Meaning</b>	"Babel" (confusion) puns on Akkadian <i>Bab-ilu</i> (Gate of God).	God overturns Babylonian propaganda.
<b>Covenant Response</b>	Next chapter: God calls <b>Abraham</b> to bless all nations.	God's true kingdom will unite, not dominate.

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### III. Theological Comparison

<b>Theme</b>	<b><i>Enuma Elish</i></b>	<b>Genesis 10–11</b>	<b>Contrast</b>
<b>Origin of Order</b>	Comes through divine war.	Already established by peaceful command.	Creation by conflict vs. creation by word.
<b>Human Role</b>	Slaves of gods.	Image-bearers of God.	Dignity of humanity restored.
<b>Babylon's Role</b>	Divinely built cosmic center.	Human rebellion and confusion.	Subversion: Babylon's glory = humanity's folly.
<b>Language &amp; Unity</b>	Unified under Marduk's authority.	Divided to restrain arrogance.	Human unity can be corrupt; divine unity is redemptive.
<b>God's Presence</b>	Dwells in temple Esagila.	Visits earth to judge pride.	God is not contained by empire or ziggurat.
<b>Means of Power</b>	Violence, coercion, domination.	Judgment, mercy, scattering.	True power is moral and redemptive.

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#### IV. Biblical Reversal of Babylon's Storyline

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Text</b>	<b>Fulfillment / Reversal</b>
<b>Scattering of Nations</b>	Genesis 11	Humanity divided for pride.
<b>Gathering of Nations</b>	Acts 2 (Pentecost)	Spirit unites diverse tongues under Christ and then sends them out to “make disciples of all nations”/”fill the earth and subdue it”
<b>False City (Babylon)</b>	Revelation 17–18	Empire judged for arrogance and oppression.
<b>True City (New Jerusalem)</b>	Revelation 21–22	God dwells with humanity; all nations healed.

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