

## Read Genesis 11:1-4

**v1** Hang on, 10:31 said that everyone had their own language! Yes, but if you remember our discussions in chapter 2, the Bible isn't always written in strict chronological order between chapters or books. The genealogy of chapter 10 covered a lengthy bit of time on a macro scale. Chapter 11 takes a step back to examine man's behavior shortly after the flood on a micro scale. That is, the events of chapter 11 take place somewhere in the middle (so to speak) of chapter 10.

**v2** The location mentioned here appears to be where Babylon and modern Iraq would be. Some have figured the Garden of Eden was originally in this area. Perhaps these people were attempting to make their way back after The Flood to see if it was still around? That's heavy speculation, but it would make sense considering where their hearts were at...

**Q (v4):** What did the people want to do here? Why?

**Build a tower...that reached to the heavens. We don't know if the intent was to create a wonder-of-the-world-type monument, or a [futile] attempt at actually physically reaching heaven. In either case, they were motivated by pride. This sounds like the Nephilim or Lamech all over again. I guess God really knew what He was talking about in 8:21, huh?**

**v5, 7** Did God need to come down to see/affect what humans were doing?

**Some have said that this is figurative or anthropomorphizing God's omniscience again. While that's possible, we do see Him coming down or sending angelic observers elsewhere in Scripture (too many to list, but *chapter 18* is a nearby example) despite not needing to. Perhaps He intended to interact with the people somehow, since we have consistent documentation of that in other visits.**

**Q (v6):** How does this verse make you feel about humanity?

**This verse both frustrates and amazes me. On one hand, it's sad that we constantly get into trouble due to our sinful nature. On the other hand, God really did make awesome creatures in humanity: we're bold, determined, clever, artistic and nigh-unstoppable when unified and coordinated. It's too bad we can't work together for good instead of evil...yet.**

**v7** Like chapter 1, here we have God speaking of Himself in the plural – a reference to the Trinity and also His majesty (think of how monarchs refer to themselves in the third person plural..."we are not amused" etc.)

**v7-8** This begins the concept of nations, cultures, languages etc. While it's possible that God literally scattered the people around the world by hand, it seems more likely that each language group gathered up and spread out, no longer able to work with the others. Humanity's prideful attempt to prevent their dispersal caused exactly that.

**v9** The Hebrew word for confusion sounds like Babel. This was a pun of sorts but has carried on to modern times with the similar term "babble" or "babbling".

Read Genesis 11:10-26

**v10-26** This genealogy is slightly different from the one in *10:21-29* in that it only lists those in the line from Shem to Abram (renamed “Abraham” later). As we mentioned in chapter 5, these genealogies may skip certain generations, so we don’t have a precise duration between Shem and Abram. For us regular joes, scholars tend to place Abram around 2,000 BC.

**Q (v10-26):** What do you notice about the lifespans of each successive generation?

**They’re dropping...dramatically. We discussed this in previous chapters regarding (among other things) The Flood’s possible effects on the atmosphere, and the gradual breakdown of our DNA due to environmental changes, interbreeding and sin.**

Read Genesis 11:27-32

**v27-32** This section serves as a setup to Abram’s journey starting in the next chapter. The following notes will come into play later:

1. Abram married his half-sister, Sarai (renamed “Sarah” later).
2. Sarai could not bear children.
3. Abram’s brother, Haran died, leaving Haran’s son, Lot fatherless.
4. Lot appears to have been taken in by Abram as a sort of son.
5. Abram’s father, Terah dies.

We’re going to see that God allows this heartache to set Abram, Sarai and Lot up for where He wants them. Another important note, not mentioned here, is that Abram and his family likely served gods besides The God (*Josh 24:2*).