

THE JOURNEY  
JOURNEY I — FORMATION & DISCERNMENT  
“Infinity” — Identifying ourselves before the eternal God.

GENESIS 11:1–9  
THE TOWER OF BABEL

Student Study Edition

BIG IDEA

Humanity drifts when it seeks identity, security, and significance apart from God's revealed purpose. God remains sovereign over human plans and redirects history according to His will.

 THE JOURNEY MAP

| WHERE WE CAME FROM                                                                       | YOU ARE HERE                                                   | WHERE WE'RE GOING                                               |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>GENESIS 1–10</b><br>Creation • Fall • Flood • Nations                                 | <b>GENESIS 11 — BABEL</b><br>Identity • Pride • Fear • Control | <b>GENESIS 12 — ABRAM</b><br>Call • Promise • Faith • Obedience |
| THE BRIDGE • Genesis 11:4 “make us a name” → Genesis 12:2 “I will...make thy name great” |                                                                |                                                                 |

STUDY-BIBLE CORE

| WORD STUDY                                                                                                                                     | SCRIPTURE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | CROSS-REFERENCES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| SHEM — “name”<br>Hebrew: שֵׁם (shem)<br>In context: name, reputation, renown.<br><br>Babel — the narrative associates the name with confusion. | Genesis 11:1–2 — One language; the people settle in Shinar.<br>Genesis 11:3–4 — They build a city and tower, seek a name, and seek to avoid dispersion.<br>Genesis 11:5–7 — The LORD sees, evaluates, and acts.<br>Genesis 11:8–9 — The LORD confuses language and scatters them. | Genesis 1:28 — Fill the earth.<br>Genesis 9:1, 7 — Command repeated after the Flood.<br>Genesis 4:26 — Call upon the name of the LORD.<br>Psalm 127:1 — Building apart from the LORD.<br>Acts 17:26–27 — Nations and boundaries.<br>Acts 2:1–11 — Many languages hear God's mighty works. |

FOOTNOTES / CONNECTIONS TO NOTICE

- God's earlier direction was to fill the earth — Genesis 1:28; 9:1, 7.
- Compare Genesis 4:26 with Genesis 11:4: the name of the LORD / “make a name for ourselves.”
- Compare the builders' stated fear in Genesis 11:4 with the outcome in Genesis 11:8–9.
- Genesis 11:10–32 traces the line through Shem toward Terah and Abram, preparing Genesis 12.
- Acts 2:1–11 gives a later biblical scene in which many languages hear God's mighty works.

 KEY INSIGHT

Babel should be read from the motives and actions the text actually gives us. Agreement, organization, innovation, and visible accomplishment must still be examined in light of what God has said.

 ANCHOR — WHAT HAS GOD SAID?

Scripture Trail: Genesis 1:28; Genesis 9:1, 7; Genesis 11:1–2

- What purpose had God already given humanity?
- What do these passages show about who establishes humanity's direction?

 DRIFT — WHERE DID HUMANITY MOVE AWAY?

Scripture Trail: Genesis 11:3–4; Genesis 4:26

- What did the people decide to build, and what reasons did they give?
- What do “make a name for ourselves” and “lest we be dispersed” reveal?
- What contrast do you notice between Genesis 4:26 and Genesis 11:4?

 DETOX — TEST THE THINKING

Use the Scripture trails to discuss these ideas. Do not answer from culture or assumption first; test the thought by Scripture.

| THINKING TO EXAMINE | SCRIPTURE TRAIL |
|---------------------|-----------------|
|---------------------|-----------------|

If everyone agrees, it must be right.

Genesis 11:1–4; Exodus 23:2

If it succeeds, God must be in it.

Genesis 11:3–5; 1 Samuel 15:22

I need to make a name for myself.

Genesis 11:4; Jeremiah 9:23–24

Security comes from controlling the outcome.

Genesis 11:4, 8–9; Proverbs 3:5–6



## **SAIL — HOW DO WE FAITHFULLY LIVE GOD'S TRUTH?**

Scripture Trail: Genesis 11:5–9; Proverbs 3:5–6; James 4:13–15

1. How did God respond to the people's plan?

---

2. What does this passage teach us about holding our plans before God?

---

3. Where might I be tempted to measure direction by success, popularity, agreement, or security instead of Scripture?

---



## **TREASURE CHEST — THINGS TO CARRY INTO DISCUSSION**

- Genesis 4:26 ⇔ Genesis 11:4 — two uses of “name” worth comparing.
- Genesis 11:4 ⇔ Genesis 11:8–9 — compare what the builders fear with what happens.
- Genesis 11:10–32 — watch how the genealogy moves the story toward Abram.
- Genesis 11:4 ⇔ Genesis 12:2 — humanity seeks a name; the next chapter introduces God's promise concerning Abram's name.



## **THE TAKEAWAY**

Bring your observations, questions, and Scripture connections into the discussion. The goal is to stay anchored in what God has said, recognize drift, and learn how to sail faithfully in His direction.