

NEW DAY SERMON OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

Today we learn about the beginning of languages and nations. This coming weekend we're celebrating America's 250th birthday. Today's passage teaches us why God created nations, why we don't want a one-world government, and why we should be thankful for the nation God has given us.

I. SCRIPTURE

A. THE TABLE OF NATIONS (Genesis 10:1-32)

1 This is the account of Shem, Ham and Japheth, Noah's sons, who themselves had sons after the flood.

The rest of chapter ten is primarily a list of names!

(1) Verses 2-5 list the sons of Japheth and a few of his grandsons.

(2) Verses 6-20 list the sons and grandsons of Ham.

(3) Verses 21-31 lists the sons of Shem.

Each section ends by saying their descendants spread out into clans, languages, territories, and nations.

"The Table of Nations."

This chapter tells us where most ethnic groups come from. By combining this information with historical research, we conclude:

Japheth: Father of the Indo-European people (Europeans, Persians, Greeks, etc.)

Ham: Father of North African and Near East peoples (Egyptians, Lybians, Sudanese, Ethiopians, etc.)

Shem: Father of the "Semites" (Jews, Arabs, Syrians, etc.)

Note: We're not sure which branch eventually went to the Far East. There have been several proposals through the years, but we don't know.

From Noah's three sons came every person and ethnicity on earth. We are all brothers. There aren't "many races," only one human race. Therefore, there should be no racism, no ethnic superiority or class system.

It's not a sin to marry someone of a different race, because we are all one race from the same family.

It is, however, a sin to judge people and look down on them because of their ethnic background.

Be careful about saying, "these are my people," or "those are not my people." All humans are your people. Jesus died for every human of every ethnicity.

32 These are the clans of Noah's sons, according to their lines of descent, within their nations. From these the nations spread out over the earth after the flood.

This begs the question: What caused them to spread out into all these nations? That's the subject of chapter 11.

B. THE TOWER OF BABEL (Genesis 11:1-9)

Chapter 11 looks back to the early part of the genealogies of chapter ten and explains why they scattered.

1 Now the whole world had one language and a common speech.

For a few generations after the flood, there was only one language.

The entire tribe of humans moved out of the mountains of Ararat to plains of Shinar. They learned how to make bricks.

3 They said to each other, "Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly."

4 Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth."

What's wrong with this thinking?

(1) God had told them to fill the earth. They're being disobedient.

(2) This tower to the heavens is almost definitely a temple. And they already have a false view of God, so this is a temple to a false god!

NOTE: This was most likely the first ziggurat.

5 But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. 6 The LORD said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them."

God knew people would become too powerful and too wicked too quickly if he allowed them to remain united.

7 Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other." 8 So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city.

Many cultures have legends of a time when everyone spoke one language. But then suddenly there were multiple languages. What happened? God supernaturally confused their language.

That day they stopped building the tower and the city. They called the city "Babel" which means "confusion."

9 That is why it was called Babel--because there the LORD confused the language of the whole world. From there the LORD scattered them over the face of the whole earth.

Why do we speak different languages and live in different nations? Because God didn't want us to have a one world government. The people wouldn't listen. So, for our own good, he confused their languages so they would scatter.

C. CONCLUSION OF GEN 1-11

These 11 chapters we've been studying are a story of tragedy: Though God created us in his image, man fell into sin and rebellion. It got so bad that God flooded the whole earth, started over with eight people. But sin made its way onto and off the ark. Within a few generations, humanity was headed in the same dark direction. So God confused their languages to keep them from uniting in rebellion.

But God had a plan from the beginning to reconcile the world to himself. The rest of chapter 11, following the Tower of Babel, provides the genealogy of Shem.

10 This is the account of Shem's family line. Two years after the flood, when Shem was 100 years old, he became the father of Arphaxad.

We read that Arphaxad had a son named Shelah; Shelah had a son – Eber. Eber had Peleg, Peleg had Reu, Reu had Serug, Serug had Nahor. Nahor had Terah, and Terah had 3 sons. One of his sons was Abraham. The rest of Genesis slows way down and tells us the history of the first three generations of God's special people, the Jews.

II. APPLICATION

Since we're about to celebrate the semiquincentennial of the United States of America, let's apply this passage to this unique time.

A. GOD APPOINTED US TO LIVE IN A NATION

[Act 17:26 NIV] 26 From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands.

(1) Every Christian should thank God for the nation God has given us.

(2) As a Christian, I should be thankful for the USA and wisely discern why this nation has been exceptional.

Our founders understood something today's passage teaches: God appointed nations because of the sinful nature of man.

B. THE HISTORY OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

The first major skirmish happened on April 19, 1775, at _____, Massachusetts. "The shot heard 'round the world."

The Second Continental Congress convened in the town of _____ to determine what to do.

C. THE UNIQUENESS OF THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

The Declaration of Independence was signed by _____ men.

The opening paragraph reads, "*When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with one another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to separation.*"

Note three biblical principles reflected in the Declaration of Independence.

a) Government gets its authority from God.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

b) Government is accountable to the people.

"That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

c) Government is capable of horrible evil and must be restrained.

"That whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

The Declaration of Independence closes:

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved...

And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

D. THE SIGNERS OF THE DECLARATION

(1) They were Christian men.

(2) When they pledged their lives, fortunes, sacred honor, they meant it. Many of them suffered greatly for our country over the coming years.

CONCLUSION

All of this should lead us to be incredibly thankful for our nation.

The Bible says God ordained every nation of man. Therefore, every Christian should love their country and thank God for it. Every Christian should work to make their country as good as possible for next generation, especially remembering to protect this one principle: Man is a sinner. Governments are necessary, but their power must be restrained.

INVITATION

Maybe you've been slow to recognize your own sin nature. No government can save you. Turn to the only perfect man Jesus!

NEW DAY SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Embracing Our Shared Humanity

Genesis 10:32 (NIV) *"These are the clans of Noah's sons, according to their lines of descent, within their nations. From these the nations spread out over the earth after the flood."*

- **Discussion Question:** The outline reminds us that despite our different backgrounds, cultures, or ethnicities, we are all part of one human race stemming from Noah's family line. In what ways can we practically guard our hearts against subtle favoritism, prejudice, or saying "those are not my people" in our everyday interactions at work, school, or in our neighborhoods?

2. Guarding Against Self-Sufficiency

Genesis 11:4 (NIV) *"Then they said, 'Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth.'"*

- **Discussion Question:** The people at Babel wanted to build a name for themselves and secure their own safety rather than trusting and obeying God. How do you see this same temptation to build "our own personal towers" manifest in our modern lives, and how can we catch ourselves when we shift from trusting God to relying solely on our own achievements or security?

3. Understanding God's Boundaries

Genesis 11:6-7 (NIV) *"The LORD said, 'If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.'"*

- **Discussion Question:** Sometimes God disrupts our unified, human-made plans—just like He did at Babel—because He knows that unchecked power or misguided unity can lead us down a dark path. Can you think of a time in your life when God lovingly disrupted your plans or created a "detour" that ultimately protected you or grew your faith?

4. Gratitude for Our Cultural Context

Acts 17:26 (NIV) *"From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands."*

- **Discussion Question:** This verse reveals that God is entirely intentional about where and when we are born. As we approach America's 250th birthday, what are some specific freedoms or blessings unique to our nation that you are most thankful to God for, and how can we avoid taking them for granted?

5. Restraining Power in a Broken World

Genesis 11:5 (NIV) & Acts 17:26 (NIV) *"But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower the people were building." / "...and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands."*

- **Discussion Question:** The sermon highlights a foundational biblical principle that our founders understood: human nature is sinful, which is why earthly power must be restrained. Knowing that power can corrupt, how can we as citizens and Christians constructively support accountability and integrity within our local communities and institutions?

6. Passing on the Legacy of Sacrifice

Genesis 10:1 (NIV) *"This is the account of Shem, Ham and Japheth, Noah's sons, who themselves had sons after the flood."*

- **Discussion Question:** Just as the generations after the flood benefited from the fresh start given to Noah, we benefit today from the immense sacrifices of those who signed the Declaration of Independence and pledged their lives and fortunes. What does it look like for us, as a small group or as individuals, to actively work to ensure the next generation inherits a faithful, strong, and God-honoring legacy?