

# GENESIS 11

Written and compiled by Gary Kukis

**Genesis 11:1–32**

**The Tower of Babel/The Line of Shem**

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

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This is a collection of the weekly lessons of **Genesis** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) interspersed with the complete word-by-word exegesis of this chapter from the Hebrew with some information from one-volume study of Genesis ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) thrown in. Furthermore, the examination of this chapter has been expanded with additional commentary as well. However, much of this material was thrown together without careful editing. Therefore, from time to time, there will be concepts and exegetical material which will be repeated, because there was no overall editing done once all of this material was combined. At some point in the future, I need to go back and edit this material and consider other source material as well. Links to the [word-by-word](#), [verse-by-verse studies](#) of **Genesis** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)).

One more thing: **it is not necessary that you read the grey Hebrew exegesis tables.** They are set apart from the rest of the study so that you can easily skip over them.<sup>1</sup> However, if you ever doubt a translation of a phrase or a verse, these translation tables will tell you exactly where that translation came from.

**Preface:** Genesis 10 and 11 are not in a strict chronological order. There is a population explosion; the people decide to gather together in a particular geographical location. God confuses their languages so that the people can no longer communicate with one another. This causes them to separate and go out on their own. That describes Genesis 10 and the first nine verses of Genesis 11. The latter two-thirds of chapter 11 follow the line of Shem all the way to Abram. Arranging everything in a chronological order would have been a nightmare.

This should be the most extensive examination of Genesis 11 available, where you will be able to examine in depth every word of the original text.

### Outline of Chapter 11:

#### Introduction

vv. 1–9	<b>The Confusion of Languages</b>
intro. 10–26	<b>The Line of Shem—the Introduction</b>
vv. 10–26	<b>The Line of Shem—the Exegesis</b>
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v. 25	<b>The Biblical Chronology of Genesis 11</b>

<sup>1</sup> This was done as a result of the complaints of a close friend, now face to face with the Lord, who said that I intermingled the Hebrew and the explanation so much that he did not like it. Therefore, all of the Hebrew exegesis is visually set apart and may be easily skipped over.

- v. 25 **Special Section: Ancient Biblical Texts**
- v. 25 **Ancient Manuscripts of the Bible**
- v. 26 **The American English Bible Explains Genesis 11:26**
- v. 26 **The Meaning of the Names in Abram’s Line**
- v. 26 **Special Section: Population Growth; Abram’s Line**
- v. 28 **Transitional Point in the Book of Genesis**
- v. 29 **The Genealogies of Genesis (chart)**
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- v. 31 **Map of Haran**
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<a href="http://www.kukis.org">www.kukis.org</a>		<b>Exegetical Studies in Genesis</b>

Doctrines Covered	Doctrines Alluded To		
	Genealogies	Laws of Divine Establishment	

Chapters of the Bible Alluded To			
Gen. 10			

Many who read and study this chapter are 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> generation students of R. B. Thieme, Jr., so that much of this vocabulary is second nature. One of Bob’s contributions to theology is a fresh vocabulary along with a number of concepts which are theologically new or reworked, yet still orthodox. Therefore, if you are unfamiliar with his work, the definitions below will help you to fully understand all that is being said. Also, I have developed a few new terms and concepts which require definition as well.

In addition, there are other more traditional yet technical theological terms which will be used and therefore defined as well.

Sometimes the terms in the exegesis of this chapter are simply alluded to, without any in-depth explanation of them. Sometimes, these terms are explained in detail and illustrated. A collection of all these terms is found here: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

**Definition of Terms**

<b>Cluster Genealogy</b>	A genealogy where the patriarch is named along with several of his sons and several of their sons. Generally, this is only for 3 or 4 generations.
<b>Linear Genealogy</b>	A linear genealogy follows one particular line for 5 or more generations. Very rarely is more than one son named in any generation.

Some of these definitions are taken from  
[http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page\\_id=1556](http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=1556)  
<http://www.bibledoctrinechurch.org/?subpages/GLOSSARY.shtml>  
<http://rickhughesministries.org/content/Biblical-Terms.pdf>  
<http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d>  
<http://www.wordoftruthministries.org/termsanddefs.htm>  
<http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics.html>  
<http://www.theopedia.com/>

**An Introduction to Genesis 11**

**Introduction:** Genesis 11 is a chapter where one might spend a little time in the first 9 verses, jump over the middle section of genealogy, and then touch on the final 5 or 6 verses. However, this is a great amount of commentary which can be done on this chapter; and there are things unique to this chapter and to the genealogical line found in this chapter which are well-worth exploring. You may think me an odd duck, but I got so into this chapter that one day, when I was nearly completing it, I spent 7 hours on it—I was that enthralled with the material.

There are a few minor issues found in this chapter which may alter your understanding of Abraham’s line and his family. For instance, it appears as though Abraham was spoken to by God on possibly two occasions asking him to move from Ur of the Chaldees to the land of Canaan. The first time, he and his family got halfway there (which God knew would happen). The second time, Abraham (Abram in this chapter) will do exactly what God asks him to do, which will be what we study when we get to Genesis 12.

We need to know who the people are who populate this chapter.

**The Principals of Genesis 11**

<b>Characters</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
The descendants of Shem, Ham and Japheth (which includes these patriarchs)	Genesis 11 essentially explains Genesis 10. Why did the various sons of Noah split up and go their separate ways? Why was this important to God? All of this information is included in this chapter.
The Line of Shem	Shem is the Semitic line; we go from Shem (Noah’s son) to Abraham in this chapter.

## The Principals of Genesis 11

Characters	Commentary
Terah	Terah is the father of Abraham and it appears as though both he and Abraham originally got the call from God to move west to the land of Canaan. However, they stopped in Charan and moved no further as a family. Terah means <i>delayed</i> ; and the blessings of God were delayed because of Terah.
Haran	Haran is one of Terah's sons, who died before his father Terah, and possibly was the impetus for Terah moving out west.
Abram	God clearly came to Abram in Genesis 12:1 and told him to move to the land of Canaan, forsaking his family and home. Abram obeyed this call. It appears as this was the second time that God called him.
Lot	Lot is the son of Haran, who died in Ur of the Chaldees. Abram essentially adopted Lot and took him with to the land of Canaan. Lot enjoyed blessing by association until he separated from Abram.

Sometimes, this little preparation can allow this chapter to play out, making much more sense as you go through it.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

It would be worth noting that, although Noah will die after the flood, his sons will likely all live very long lives, but their sons will live shorter lives and their grandsons will live even shorter lives. As a result, Shem, Ham and Japheth will all remain alive for a long time, through many generations of sons, grandsons, and descendants. At one time, in all of these 3 lines, we have anywhere from 5–20 generations alive simultaneously.

Also, only Shem, Ham and Japheth were alive during the flood and the antediluvian civilization. Therefore, they are a source of unique information known nowhere else.

## A Synopsis of Genesis 11

Genesis 11 is actually three chapters for the price of one. We have the Tower of Babel and the confusion of languages in Genesis 11:1–9; the line of Shem in vv. 10–26; and the focus on Terah's family and their initial move in vv. 27–32. These are all certainly interrelated. The family of Shem remains in Ur of the Chaldees, as the families of Ham and Japheth moved to the west. The line of Shem goes out approximately 10 generations, linking Shem to Terah, the father of Abram (Abraham). God calls Abram to move to Canaan, and we have the first leg of this move at the end of this chapter.

Originally, Noah and his 3 sons were the patriarchs for all the people on earth. Therefore, everyone spoke the same language. God told them to split up and cover the land, but they refused, building a tower as a beacon, so that all mankind from a distance could see where the center of man was. Vv. 1–4

God brought the angels down to see what was going on, and they confused the languages of man, causing them to disperse throughout the earth. This dispersion is covered in great detail in [Genesis 10 \(HTML\)](#) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Vv. 5–9

From here, we cover the line of Shem, a linear genealogy, which takes us all the way from Shem to Abram. Vv. 10–26

## A Synopsis of Genesis 11

At this point, we pick up with the family of Terah (Terah is Abram's father), and their life in Ur of the Chaldees (actually, very little of this life is actually covered). Vv. 27–28.

The wives of Abram and Nahor are introduced; and they move from Ur of the Chaldees to the city of Charan (which they possibly named after Terah's son Haran, who passed away in Ur). Vv. 29–32

This will help you make your way through the exegesis of this chapter.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

### Chapter Updates:

I will use this space to indicate any format changes.

Every verse will be hyperlinked from the first page, so that you can easily go to a specific verse in this chapter.

At the end of the exegesis of every verse, I will make certain that there is a Kukis mostly literal translation and a Kukis paraphrase, both of them marked as such.

I have decided to add spacing between the translation and the commentary.

In the future, I would really like to add a few translations, fill in the translation of this chapter (at the end of this document); and provide additional sources at the end of this document.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

## The Confusion of Languages

The final two verses of Genesis 10 read:

[Gen 10:31–32](#) These are the sons of Shem, with respect to their clans [or, *families*], with respect to their languages, in their lands, and with respect to their nations. These [are] the clans [or, *families*] of the sons of Noah, according to [or, *with respect to*] their genealogies, in their nations, and from these the nations spread abroad on the earth after the flood.

Despite these references to languages and different territories, it is quite obvious that Noah and his 3 sons, and their families would all speak the same language and that they first traveled as a group.

What we have here is a typical Semitic approach to the recording of history. We just finished looking at the sons of Noah, and their sons, and how these various men founded the nations of the earth, and how they were distinguished by their languages, families and geographical locations. Now, we go back, and look at one part of human history; how man went from being one family—the family of Noah—and morphed into a world of national entities.

Let's step back for a moment and see the overall organization. Noah and his sons get off the ark, and of all the historical events which occurred in Noah's life, only one is recorded: Noah getting drunk and laying around naked in his tent (how would you like something like this to be one of the defining events of your life?). The reactions of his sons provided the historical trends of their descendants. That logically led us to defining exactly who

descended from whom, which is Genesis 10. However, that required the author to record a pivotal event in human history, which explains how one family stepping off the ark became a world of national entities. That takes us to Genesis 11:1–9, to the first human attempt at internationalism, the Tower of Babel.

Slavishly literal:

Moderately literal:

**And so is all the earth a lip one [or, *one* Genesis 11:1 *speech, language*] and words [the] same.**

**All the earth is one language and the same words [or, *vocabulary*].**

**At one time the whole earth spoke the same language and used the same vocabulary.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Note: I compare the Hebrew text to English translations of the Latin, Syriac and Greek texts, using the Douay-Rheims translation<sup>2</sup>; George Lamsa's translation, and Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton's translation as revised and edited by Paul W. Esposito, respectively. I often update these texts with non-substantive changes (e.g., *you* for *thou*, etc.). I often use the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible instead of Brenton's translation, because it updates the English text.

The Septuagint was the earliest known translation of a book (circa 200 B.C.). Since this translation was made before the textual criticism had been developed into a science and because different books appear to be translated by different men, the Greek translation can sometimes be very uneven.

When there are serious disparities between my translation and Brenton's (or the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible), I look at the Greek text of the Septuagint (the LXX) to see if a substantive difference actually exists (and I reflect these changes in the English rendering of the Greek text). I use the Greek LXX with Strong's numbers and morphology available for e-sword. The only problem with this resource (which is a problem for similar resources) is, there is no way to further explore Greek verbs which are not found in the New Testament. Although I usually quote the Complete Apostles' Bible here, I have begun to make changes in the translation when their translation conflicts with the Greek and note what those changes are.

The Masoretic text is the Hebrew text with all of the vowels (vowel points) inserted (the original Hebrew text lacked vowels). We take the Masoretic text to be the text closest to the original. However, differences between the Masoretic text and the Greek, Latin and Syriac are worth noting and, once in a great while, represent a more accurate text possessed by those other ancient translators.

In general, the Latin text is an outstanding translation from the Hebrew text into Latin and very trustworthy (I say this as a non-Catholic). Unfortunately, I do not read Latin—apart from some very obvious words—so I am dependent upon the English translation of the Latin (principally, the Douay-Rheims translation).

Underlined words indicate differences in the text.

Bracketed portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls are words, letters and phrases lost in the scroll due to various types of damage. Underlined words or phrases are those in the Dead Sea Scrolls but not in the Masoretic text.

<sup>2</sup> I have begun to doubt my e-sword Douay-Rheims version, so I now use [www.latinvulgate.com](http://www.latinvulgate.com).

The Targum of Onkelos is actually the Pentateuchal Targumim, which are The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel. On the Pentateuch With The Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum From the Chaldee by J. W. Etheridge, M.A. Take from <http://targum.info/targumic-texts/pentateuchal-targumim/> and first published in 1862.

Targum of Onkelos Jerusalem targum	And all the earth was (of) one language, and one speech, and one counsel. And all the inhabitants of the earth were (of) one language, and of one speech, and one counsel:...
Latin Vulgate	And the earth was of one tongue, and of the same speech.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so is all the earth a lip one [or, <i>one speech, language</i> ] and words [the] same.
Peshitta (Syriac)	NOW the whole earth spoke one language and with one manner of speech.
Septuagint (Greek)	And all the earth had one language, and one speech.

Significant differences:

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	<b>Origin of languages and cultures</b> All people [Heb lacks people.] on the earth had one language and the same words.
Contemporary English V. Easy English	At first everyone spoke the same language,...
Easy-to-Read Version	<b>The *tower in Babel shows that people are proud, 11:1-4</b> All the people on the earth had one language and they had one set of words. {After the flood,} the whole world spoke one language. All people used the same words.
Good News Bible (TEV)	At first, the people of the whole world had only one language and used the same words.
<i>The Message</i>	At one time, the whole Earth spoke the same language.
New Berkeley Version	It came about when the whole earth used one language and the same words <sup>2</sup> that in moving in the East they came upon a plain in the Shinar territory and there they settled. V. 2 was included for context.
New Century Version	<b>The Languages Confused</b> At this time the whole world spoke one language, and everyone used the same words.
New Living Translation	<b>The Tower of Babel</b> At one time all the people of the world spoke the same language and used the same words.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	[At the time], the whole earth shared the same lips, because they all spoke the same language.
Beck's American Translation	<i>The Confusion of Languages</i> The whole world talked one language with the same words.
<i>God's Word</i> <sup>TM</sup>	The whole world had one language with a common vocabulary.
New American Bible	The whole world spoke the same language, using the same words.
New American Bible (R.E.)	<i>Tower of Babel.</i> The whole world had the same language and the same words. [11:1-9] This story illustrates increasing human wickedness, shown here in the sinful pride that human beings take in their own achievements apart from God. Secondly, the story explains the diversity of languages among the peoples of the earth.
NIRV	<b>The Tower of Babel</b> The whole world had only one language. All people spoke it.

New Jerusalem Bible	The whole world spoke the same language, with the same vocabulary.
New Simplified Bible	The entire world had one language and common words.
Revised English Bible	THERE was a time when all the world spoke a single language and used the same words.
Today's NIV	<b>The Tower of Babel</b> Now the whole world had one language and a common speech.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	All the land was of one lip and of one word.
Complete Jewish Bible	The whole earth used the same language, the same words.
The Expanded Bible	<b>The Languages Confused</b> At this time the whole world spoke one language, and everyone used the same words.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	All the country was agreed for settled objects.
HCSB	At one time the whole earth had the same language and vocabulary.
Judaica Press Complete T.	Now the entire earth was of one language and uniform words.
New Advent Bible	And the earth was of one tongue, and of the same speech.
NET Bible®	<i>The Dispersion of the Nations at Babel</i> The whole earth [The whole earth. Here "earth" is a metonymy of subject, referring to the people who lived in the earth. Genesis 11 begins with everyone speaking a common language, but chap. 10 has the nations arranged by languages. It is part of the narrative art of Genesis to give the explanation of the event after the narration of the event. On this passage see A. P. Ross, "The Dispersion of the Nations in Genesis 11:1-9," BSac 138 (1981): 119-38.] had a common language and a common vocabulary [Heb "one lip and one [set of] words." The term "lip" is a metonymy of cause, putting the instrument for the intended effect. They had one language. The term "words" refers to the content of their speech. They had the same vocabulary.]. When it comes to making an actual material change to the text, the NET Bible® is pretty good about indicating this. Since most of these corrections will be clear in the more literal translations below and within the Hebrew exegesis itself, I will not continue to list every NET Bible® footnote.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

International Standard V .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation .

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

Kretzmann's Commentary .  
Lexham English Bible .  
Translation for Translators .  
The Voice .

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

*The Amplified Bible* And the whole earth was of one language and of one accent *and* mode of expression.

Concordant Literal Version Now coming is the entire earth to be of one lip, all of one speech.

Context Group Version And the entire land { or earth } was of one language { lit., one lip } and of one speech.

*Emphasized Bible* So it came to pass that, all the earth, was of one manner of speech,—and of one stock of words.

English Standard Version **The Tower of Babel**  
Now the whole earth had one language and the same words.

LTHB And the whole earth was of one lip and of one speech.

NASB **Universal Language, Babel, Confusion**  
Now the whole earth used the same language [Lit was one lip] and the same words [Or few or one set of words].  
Now the whole earth had one language and the same words.  
{The Tower of Babel; the Generations from Shem to Abram}  
{Verses 1:9: Story of Internationalism}  
And the whole earth {erets} was of one language {saphah}, and of one speech {dabar - means to 'communicate categorically'}. {Note: In Hebrew style, a story is laid out and then later the details are given. So 'one language and one speech' tells us that now we have moved back before the separation of the earth into Nationalism laid out in Chapters 10:5.} {Note: Human viewpoint says that one language would be so 'good for the human race'. God protects the human race by keeping the peoples separate so everyone can have maximum freedom. The power lust of the Old Sin Nature is just to great too handle one world government. And, Satan is the ruler of this world. So if one world government did take control, we can be sure its policies would be those of Satan. 'The greatest good for the greatest number' is a Satanic policy that sounds very good to those who are NOT in power. It tickles their power lusts. And, false 'religions' are authored by the great deceiver - the devil. In these he has two basic campaigns -smear and fear. First he attacks and reference to the grace of God - building up 'salvation by some form of human works' instead - circumcism, baptism, 'living a good life', not eating pork, cows, whatever. Next, fear - Satan uses religion to 'beat' people over the heads so they are in a constant state of fear. Then they are distracted from seeing how God's plan of Grace is one of love, and happiness, and inner peace - here on earth and for eternity.}

New RSV *The whole earth was of one language and of one speech.*

Syndein/Thieme *And the whole earth is of one pronunciation, and of the same words,...*

World English Bible *The whole earth was of one language and of one speech.*

*Young's Literal Translation* *And the whole earth is of one pronunciation, and of the same words,...*

**The gist of this verse:** At one time, everyone on earth spoke the same language.

Genesis 11:1a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224

## Genesis 11:1a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75
sâphâh (שִׁפְהָ) [pronounced saw-FAWH]	<i>lip, tongue; words, speech; dialect, language; edge, border [or, lip] [of something], shore</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8193 BDB #973
This is the first occurrence of this word in Scripture; this was not the word used in the previous chapter.			
'echâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced eh-KHAWD]	<i>one, first, certain, only; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular; anyone</i>	feminine singular, numeral adjective	Strong's #259 BDB #25

**Translation:** All the earth is one language...

The previous chapter was nearly all wâw conjunctions. We rarely found a wâw consecutive followed by an imperfect verb (several of these together indicate successive or logically successive action). However, we have one wâw consecutive here with an imperfect verb, followed by 3 of them in the next verse and 1 in the verse after that. This suggests to us that we are dealing with narrative in the Hebrew and successive acts.

What we have here is not exactly one action following the next, but this verse sets us up with a perpetual state of affairs set up by the first wâw consecutive followed by the imperfect verb. This is how it has been and this is how it continues to be.

What this perpetual state of affairs is, is everyone speaks the same language, which is exactly what we would expect. If everyone is born of Noah, then they speak the same language that Noah speaks.

## Genesis 11:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
d <sup>e</sup> bârîym (דְּבָרִים) [pronounced daw <sup>b</sup> -vawr-EEM]	<i>words, sayings, doctrines, commands; things, matters, reports</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #1697 BDB #182
Although this seems nearly impossible to me, this appears to be the first occurrence of this word in Scripture.			
'ăchâdîym (אֶחָדִים) [pronounced uh-khaw-DEEM]	<i>the same; joined in one, united; some, a few</i>	masculine plural, numeral adjective	Strong's #259 BDB #25

Note that this is the exact same word from v. 1a, but it is in the plural here. Even though the plural meanings can be different, note the singular meanings already stated.

**Translation:** ...and the same words [or, *vocabulary*].

Also, it says here that their words are united or the same or joined. This simply means that they all had the same vocabulary.

Genesis 11:1 All the earth is one language and the same words [or, *vocabulary*]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:1 At one time the whole earth spoke the same language and used the same vocabulary. (Kukis paraphrase)

**And so he is in their pulling up stakes from east and so they find a plain in a land of Shinar and so they stay there.**

Genesis  
11:2

**Then it was when they journeyed from the east that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and, therefore, they stayed there.**

**As people moved out of the east, they found a plain in the country of Shinar where they settled.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos	In the holy language spake they, that by which the world had been created at the beginning. And it was while they were journeying from the east that they found a plain in the land of Bavel, and dwelt there.
Jerusalem targum	...for they spake the holy language by which the world was created at the beginning: while their hearts erred afterwards from the Word of Him who spake, and the world was, at the beginning; and they found a plain in the land of Pontos and dwelt there.
Latin Vulgate	And when they removed from the east, they found a plain in the land of Sennaar, and dwelt in it.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so he is in their pulling up stakes from east and so they find a plain in a land of Shinar and so they stay there.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And it came to pass, as men journeyed from the east, they found a plain in the land of Sinar; and they settled there.
Septuagint (Greek)	And it came to pass as they moved from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there.

Significant differences:

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V. Easy English	...but after some of them moved from the east and settled in Babylonia, ... When people moved to the east, they found a plain in the country called Shinar. And they stayed there.
Easy-to-Read Version	People moved from the East [This usually means the area between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers as far as the Persian Gulf.]. They found a plain in the country of Shinar. The people stayed there to live.
Good News Bible (TEV)	As they wandered about in the East, they came to a plain in Babylonia and settled there.
<i>The Message</i>	It so happened that as they moved out of the east, they came upon a plain in the land of Shinar and settled down.
New Century Version	As people moved from the east, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia and settled there.
New Life Bible	And as men traveled in the east, they found a valley in the land of Shinar and made their home there.

New Living Translation As the people migrated to the east, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia [Hebrew Shinar.] and settled there.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible Then as they migrated from the east, they found a flat area of land in Shinar, and they started living there.

Beck's American Translation As people traveled in the east, they found a plain in the country of Babylonia and lived there.

Christian Community Bible As people moved from east, they found a plain in the country of Shinar where they settled.

God's Word™ As people moved toward the east, they found a plain in Shinar [Babylonia] and settled there.

New American Bible (R.E.) When they were migrating from the east, they came to a valley in the land of Shinar and settled there. Shinar: the land of ancient Babylonia, embracing Sumer and Akkad, present-day southern Iraq, mentioned also in 11:2; 14:1.

NIRV They moved to the east and found a broad valley in Babylonia. There they settled down.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear As they were journeying east, they found a canyon in the land of Central-Iraq and they dwelled there.

Bible in Basic English And it came about that in their wandering from the east, they came to a stretch of flat country in the land of Shinar, and there they made their living-place.

The Expanded Bible As people moved [migrated] from the east [or eastward; 2:8; 4:16], they found a plain in the land of Babylonia [Shinar] and settled there.

Ferar-Fenton Bible But some of them marching from the East arrived at a plain in the Bush-land, and halted there.

JPS (Tanakh—1985) And as they migrated from the east, they came upon a valley in the land of Shinar and settled there.

New Advent Bible And when they removed from the east, they found a plain in the land of Sennaar, and dwelt in it.

NET Bible® When the people [Heb "they"; the referent (the people) has been specified in the translation for clarity.] moved eastward [Or perhaps "from the east" (NRSV) or "in the east."], they found a plain in Shinar [Heb "in the land of Shinar."] [Shinar is the region of Babylonia.] and settled there.

NIV – UK As people moved eastward [Or from the east; or in the east], they found a plain in Shinar [That is, Babylonia] and settled there.

The Scriptures 1998 And it came to be, as they set out from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shin'ar [Earlier name for Babel], and they dwelt there.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

International Standard V .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation .

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

- Kretzmann's Commentary .
- Lexham English Bible .
- Translation for Translators .
- The Voice .

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And as they journeyed eastward, they found a plain (valley) in the land of Shinar, and they settled <i>and</i> dwelt there.
Concordant Literal Version	And coming is it in their journey from the east, that they are finding a valley in the land of Shinar, and dwelling there are they.
<i>Emphasized Bible</i>	And it came to pass as they brake away onwards, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and dwelt there.
English Standard Version	And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.
The Geneva Bible	And it came to pass [One hundred and thirty years after the flood. ], as they [That is, Nimrod and his company.] journeyed from the east [That is, from Armenia where the ark stayed.], that they found a plain in the land of Shinar [Which was afterward called Chaldea. ]; and they dwelt there.
Green's Literal Translation	And it happened, as they pulled up stakes from the east, they found a level valley in the land of Shinar. And they lived there.
LTHB	And it happened, as they pulled up <i>stakes</i> from the east, they found a level valley in the land of Shinar. And they lived there.
New RSV	And as they migrated from the east [Or migrated eastward], they came upon a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.
Syndein/Thieme	{Migration of Peoples from the Mountain of Ararat} And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east {first began to spread out}, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar {in Chaldea}. And they 'dwelt in blessing' {yashab} there. {Note: Man's descent from the mountain was physically and spiritually as well.}.
World English Bible	It happened, as they traveled east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they lived there.
Young's Updated LT	And it comes to pass, in their journeying from the east, that they find a valley in the land of Shinar, and dwell there.

**The gist of this verse:** Mankind moved as a group from the east and settled in the Plain of Shinar, which became known as Babylonia.

<b>Genesis 11:2a</b>			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224

## Genesis 11:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
nâçã <sup>c</sup> (נָצַח) [pronounced naw-SAHÇ]	<i>to pull up [stakes], to pull out, to break camp and move out, to set out, to journey, to march, to depart; to bend a bow</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #5265 BDB #652

The infinitive construct, when combined with the bêyth preposition, can often take on a temporal meaning and may be rendered *when [such and such happens]*. It can serve as a temporal marker that denotes an event which occurs simultaneously with the action of the main verb.

This is the first occurrence of this word in Scripture.

min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
qêdem (קֵדָם) [pronounced KAY-dem]	<i>east, antiquity, front, that which is before, aforeside; in front, mount of the East; ancient time, aforeside, ancient, from of old, earliest time; anciently, of old; beginning; eastward, to or toward the east</i>	noun/adverb	Strong's #6924 BDB #870

**Translation:** Then it was when they journeyed from the east...

Recall that the earth had been flooded and that the waters had receded, but they were still receding from the land. They are in a mountain range where they may have been traveling in a south-easterly direction. However, when they looked toward the west, they noticed a great plain where the Tigres and Euphrates Rivers were. At this time, these would have been great rushing rivers and the ground would be quite green from the earth becoming covered with plant life. From the mountains, they would be moving from the east toward the west.

## Genesis 11:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mâtsâ <sup>a</sup> (מָצְאוּ) [pronounced maw-TSAW]	<i>to attain to, to find, to detect, to happen upon, to come upon, to find unexpectedly, to discover; to meet (encounter)</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
biq <sup>e</sup> âh (בִּקְעָה) [pronounced bik-ÇAW]	<i>valley, cleft, plain [country]; a widely extended plain</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #1237 BDB #132

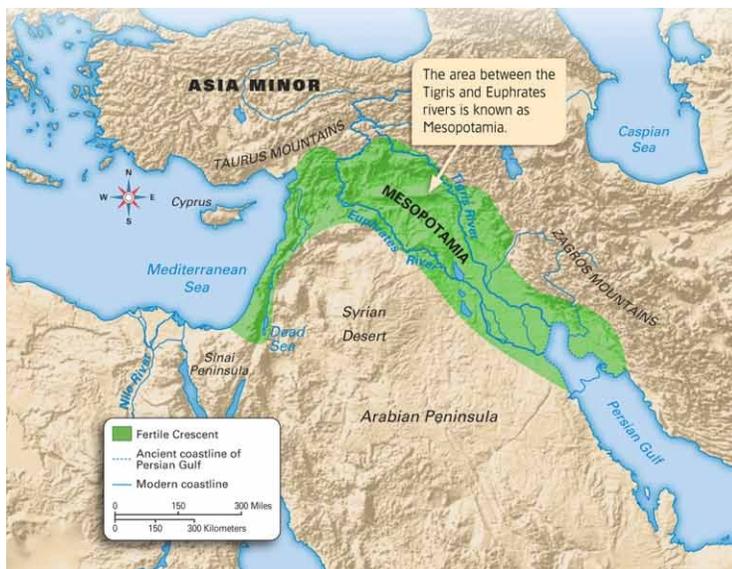
### Genesis 11:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #776 BDB #75
Shin <sup>e</sup> âr (שִׁנְאָר) [pronounced shin <sup>e</sup> -GAWR]	<i>country of two rivers; land of Babylon; transliterated Shinar</i>	proper singular noun location	Strong's #8152 BDB #1042

**Translation:** ...that they found a plain in the land of Shinar...

The population of man is growing quickly. They are able to remain together, but, apart from Noah, who was 600 years old at the beginning of the flood, everyone remains alive for a long time. Therefore, they need a great plain to plant crops and trees and they needed easy access to water, and they had both of these.

To the right is a **Map of the Fertile Crescent** (from [atil.blog.bg](http://atil.blog.bg)). The ark would have come to rest in the mountains of Asian Minor. As the water recedes, Noah and his son would have gone eastward and then south-east through the Zagros Mountains. As the water receded further, they would have gone into the fertile crescent, the valley through which the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers run. These would have been much larger rivers at this time; the countryside would have had much more moisture, so coming down to where the rivers run into the Persian Gulf is essentially where the Bible indicates that early man would have come. By this time, there would have been a population explosion, and as the waters continued to recede, the population would have moved further down the mountains and finally into the valley. This is where Shinar (Babylon) is located.



*Shinar* means *country of two rivers*. This would be where the Tigris and Euphrates rivers meet, in an area which was later called Babylonia and Chaldea, which most consider to be the cradle of civilization. Today, this is Iraq, where things have changed dramatically. One of the cities built in this area would be later called *Ur of the Chaldees*, Abraham's city of origin.

### Genesis 11:2c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

Genesis 11:2c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
yâshab (יָשַׁב) [pronounced yaw- SHAH <sup>AV</sup> ]	<i>to remain, to stay; to dwell, to live, to inhabit; to sit</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027

**Translation:** ...and, therefore, they stayed there.

This provided mankind with all that they needed at that point in time—level ground, tillable soil and a source of water.

Genesis 11:2 Then it was when they journeyed from the east that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and, therefore, they stayed there. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:2 As people moved out of the east, they found a plain in the country of Shinar where they settled. (Kukis paraphrase)

Gen 11:1–2 And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech. And it happened, as they traveled from the east, they found a valley in the land of Shinar. And they lived there.

As we saw, the ark probably came to rest in the mountains of Armenia, and the ever-expanding clan of Noah first traveled southeast through the mountain ranges, and then, as the earth continued to dry, moved westward from these mountains into the Euphrates valley.

Language is fundamental to a people, a culture and to technological growth. We have found, through the study of wild children, that if language is not developed at a very crucial stage—in both written and spoken form—it may never develop completely. In the study of wild children—children who have been fundamentally deprived in their developmental years—there is no making this up. A child whose language is not developed by age 7 or 8 will never catch up. Children who have been locked away in closets and rooms in their developmental years (or are raised by animals during this time) never develop their language or their thinking. It is not uncommon for a wild child, even when brought into some semblance of normality at, say, age 10, to be unable to develop a working vocabulary of even 30 words.

In our present-day culture—and I don't think any studies have been done on this—we have many children being raised in homes where there is no reading material whatsoever, and their first exposure to a written language is not until their first week at school (apart from what they see on television). Such children are able to develop a speaking vocabulary, but they seem to be forever behind in school due to their struggling with reading.

Specific vocabularies are necessary for technological development. Advances in science go hand-in-hand with a technologically-specific vocabulary. Even spiritual growth requires one to develop a spiritual vocabulary. I don't mean that, periodically, you bust out with a *praise God* or a *Lord willing*; but you develop concepts and attach to them a specific vocabulary (e.g., the phrase *divine institution*). In past lessons, we have studied *redemption*, *dispensations* and the *Angelic Conflict*. If these words mean something to you, then that probably indicates spiritual growth. No area of thought advances without a specific vocabulary, so you should not resist developing a spiritual vocabulary.

My point in this tangent is, language is fundamental to the human race, and it must be developed when a child is young. A technical language is required for any discipline.

Also important is control and saturation of the language: I write this in 2010 in the United States: who has not heard *tax cuts for the rich, institutional racism, [social] justice, cap and tax?* Simply establishing a vocabulary in the minds of the electorate—even when the vocabulary is essentially meaningless—can change the direction of a nation. A significant number of people in our 2008 election voted for the words *hope and change*, even though these words were intentionally undefined (this is not to say every Obama voter voted for those words, but a significant number did; I have spoken with college graduates who voted for Obama because *we needed a change*). One can drill down with many voters on either side of an issue, and sometimes their understanding of the issue is limited to a set of slogans and vocabulary words. I recall being dumbfounded when speaking to a college graduate who explained to me, quite seriously, that she voted for Barack Obama because she believed in hope and change. That was the depth of her actual knowledge that she could recall.

Controlling the language means, in many cases, influencing (and sometimes controlling) the thinking and volition of others. This is why, in the abortion debate, one side is pro-choice and the other side is pro-life. Neither side wants the other side to define them.

**Gen 11:1–2** And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech. And it happened, as they traveled from the east, they found a valley in the land of Shinar. And they lived there.

The sons of Noah all spoke the same language.

In this passage, which we are about ready to delve into, there is the false interpretation and the correct interpretation. Liberal theologians teach that this is a myth designed to explain the existence of different human languages. The correct interpretation is, God has commanded man multiply and to spread out across the earth. **God said to the man and the woman, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth [with people] and subdue the earth and exert dominance over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”** (Genesis 1:28b; compare Genesis 8:17 9:1, 7). The natural result of man spreading throughout the earth would be nations and, eventually, a separation of languages.

The emphasis here is upon nationalism and God’s disapproval of all international movements. God does not like Communism, socialism, Islam, international green movements, the UN, the League of Nations, etc., because all of these movements and institutions operate in opposition to God.

Most of these are easy to see as being anti-God and, ultimately, anti-human. Communism looks upon man’s function as part of a great economic scheme, separate from God, with dramatic limitations upon human freedom. This is why Communist dictatorships will, upon taking control, kill masses of people, including the *useful idiots* who helped to put them into power in the first place. This is why people are, en masse, subject to re-education camps, when they are borderline in their commitment to communism.

Islam is the merging of church and state. I recall one person<sup>3</sup> explaining the difference between Judaism, Christianity and Islam: Judaism is both religious and political, but it is not universal. Therefore, Judaism does not seek to subjugate others. Christianity is religious and universal, but not political. For this reason, Christianity does not seek to subjugate others (bastardizations of Christianity have). Furthermore, free will is important to both Judaism and Christianity, so neither seeks to remove a person’s free will (ideally speaking). However, Islam is religious, political and universal. Therefore, its goal is to subjugate all mankind (just as the goal of communism is world subjugation to a network of communist nations—no communist movement will ever morph into a system which lacks a ruling class).

The problem with the UN is more subtle. This brings with it the concept of international law, authorities outside of a national entity, and, as we have seen on numerous occasions, it often gives international voice to tyrants.

What will happen in Genesis 11 is, man will want to cluster into a single nation, and God will make certain that man is dispersed into national entities. This will be brought about by one of the few true miracles in the Bible.

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<sup>3</sup> Michael Medved, although I do not know if it was original with him.

**Genesis 11:1–2** And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech [lit., *one word*]. And it happened, as they traveled from the east, they found a valley in the land of Shinar. And they lived there.

We have already tracked Noah’s likely movements, first southeast, through the mountains, as the waters continued to recede, and then due east, into the fertile valley of the Euphrates. Obviously, being from the same father, they all spoke the same language.

V. 1 provides an excellent example of a metonym. It says that the whole earth was of one language and one dialect. The earth does not have a human language. The earth is huge and mankind upon it is a very small thing living on the earth (particularly, at this point in time). Yet the passage reads, *And the whole earth was of one language and one speech [lit., one word; one dialect, one vocabulary?]*. It is this group of men traveling together who all speak the same language. However, the intent here is to indicate that there are no other groups of people on this earth. The families which we are talking about—named in Genesis 10—is it, and, at this point in time, they all speak one language. Obviously, we are backtracking now, as a differentiation of language was alluded to 3 times back in Genesis 10.

The early population was not going to settle in the mountains, and not knowing which way to go, headed west, following the sun. They had no reason to separate from one another. *They journeyed from the east* could also be rendered as *they brake away onwards* and the word means *to pull up* as one would pluck up tent pins.

Given thousands of years, two groups of people with a common language will develop an entirely different dialect. However, we are speaking of only a few generations from Noah. Therefore, what occurs in this chapter would have to be miraculous (assuming that it is true, which I do).

Only three generations of Japheth are mentioned, but it is likely that several generations could have been skipped, since there was no specific information on these groups in this portion of Scripture. Only three generations of Ham’s line are traced, but there is a bit more detail. However, Shem’s line is followed linearly, as if the author is going somewhere with it.

**And so they say a man unto his neighbor, “Come, let us make bricks and let us burn them to fire.” And so is to them the brick for stone and the asphalt was to them for the mortar.**

Genesis  
11:3

**Therefore, one man said to another [lit., *each man said to his neighbor*], “Come, let us make bricks and bake them with fire.” So they had bricks for stone and asphalt for mortar [lit., *And to them brick was for stone and asphalt was to them for mortar*].**

**The men decided to make bricks and to cure them with fire. They therefore were able to use bricks and asphalt for building.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Targum of Onkelos	And they said, a man to his fellow, Come, we will cast bricks, and put them in the furnace. And they had brick for stone, and slime for cement.
Latin Vulgate	And each one said to his neighbour: Come let us make brick, and bake them with fire. And they had brick instead of stones, and slime instead of mortar.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so they say a man unto his neighbor, “Come, let us make bricks and let us burn them to fire.” And so is to them the brick for stone and the asphalt was to them for the mortar.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And they said one to another, Come, let us make bricks and burn them with fire. And they had bricks for stone, and slime for mortar.

Septuagint (Greek) And a man said to his neighbor, Come, let us make bricks and bake them with fire. And the brick was to them for stone, and their mortar was asphalt.

Significant differences:

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V. ...they said: Let's build a city with a tower that reaches to the sky! We'll use hard bricks and tar instead of stone and mortar. We'll become famous, and we won't be scattered all over the world.

Easy English These people said to each other, 'Come! Let us make bricks. And let us bake them hard.' So they used bricks as stones to build with. And they used bitumen (black stuff from the ground) in order to stick the bricks together.

Easy-to-Read Version The people said, "We should make bricks and put them in fire so that they will become very hard." So the people used bricks, not stones, to build their houses. And the people used tar [Or, "pitch," a thick oil that must be heated to become liquid.], not mortar [Cement used when building with bricks.].

Good News Bible (TEV) They said to one another, "Come on! Let's make bricks and bake them hard." So they had bricks to build with and tar to hold them together.

*The Message* They said to one another, "Come, let's make bricks and fire them well." They used brick for stone and tar for mortar.

New Life Bible They said to one another, "Come, let us make blocks and burn them until they are hard." They used blocks for stone, and tar to hold them together.

New Living Translation They began saying to each other, "Let's make bricks and harden them with fire." (In this region bricks were used instead of stone, and tar was used for mortar.)

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible Then one man said to his neighbor, 'Come on, let's make some bricks and bake them in an oven.' So, bricks became their stone, and tar served as their mortar.

New American Bible (R.E.) They said to one another, "Come, let us mold bricks and harden them with fire." They used bricks for stone, and bitumen for mortar.

Today's NIV They said to each other, "Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear They had brick for stone and had bitumen for clay. Man said to neighbor, "Brick whitens by burning it thus on a pyre."

Bible in Basic English And they said one to another, Come, let us make bricks, burning them well. And they had bricks for stone, putting them together with sticky earth.

The Expanded Bible They said to each other, "Let's make bricks and ·bake [burn; fire] them ·to make them hard [thoroughly; <sup>C</sup>in ancient times builders used mudbrick]." So they used bricks instead of stones, and ·tar [bitumen] instead of mortar.

Ferar-Fenton Bible Then each said to his neighbour, "Come let us set to work making bricks, and see that they are properly burnt; and bricks shall serve us for stone, and petroleum for mortar."

HCSB They said to each other, "Come, let us make oven-fired bricks." They had brick for stone and asphalt for mortar.

New Advent Bible And each one said to his neighbour: Come let us make brick, and bake them with fire. And they had brick instead of stones, and slime instead of mortar.

NET Bible® Then they said to one another [Heb "a man to his neighbor." The Hebrew idiom may be translated "to each other" or "one to another."], "Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly." [The speech contains two cohortatives of exhortation

followed by their respective cognate accusatives: “let us brick bricks” (מִיִּבְנֵי הַבְּרִיקִים, nilbbÿnah lÿvenim) and “burn for burning” (הַפְּרִשְׁלֵי הַפְּרִשָּׁן, nisrÿfah lisrefah). This stresses the intensity of the undertaking; it also reflects the Akkadian text which uses similar constructions (see E. A. Speiser, Genesis [AB], 75-76).] (They had brick instead of stone and tar [Or "bitumen" (cf. NEB, NRSV).] instead of mortar [The disjunctive clause gives information parenthetical to the narrative].)

NIV – UK

They said to each other, ‘Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.’ They used brick instead of stone, and bitumen for mortar.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

International Standard V .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation .

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

Kretzmann’s Commentary .

Lexham English Bible .

Translation for Translators .

The Voice .

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

*The Amplified Bible*

And they said one to another, Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly. So they had brick for stone, and slime (bitumen) for mortar.

Concordant Literal Version

And saying are they, each man to his associate, "Prithee! Let us mold bricks and burn them with a burning. And coming is the brick to be their stone, and asphalt becomes their mortar.

*Emphasized Bible*

Then said they, each man to his friend, Come on! let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly,—So the bricks, served them for stone, and bitumen, served them for mortar,...

English Standard Version

And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar.

LTHB

And each one said to his neighbor, Come, let us make brick, and burning burn them. And they had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar.

NASB

They said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and burn *them* thoroughly." And they used brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar.

Syndein/Thieme

{Verses 3-4: Human Viewpoint Policy of 'Internationalism'}

And they said {amar} one to another {idealism rebellion - interested in each - no interest in God}, "Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.

Webster’s Bible Translation

And they said one to another, come, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.

World English Bible

They said one to another, "Come, let's make brick, and burn them thoroughly." They had brick for stone, and they used tar for mortar.

Young's Updated LT

And they say each one to his neighbour, "Give help, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly:" and the brick is to them for stone, and the bitumen has been to them for mortar.

**The gist of this verse:**

Men determined that what they had there in the plain could be used as building materials.

Genesis 11:3a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
'îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
rêa' (עָרָא) [pronounced RAY-ahg']	<i>associate, neighbor, colleague, fellow, acquaintance; fellow citizen; another person; one, another [in a reciprocal phrase]</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7453 BDB #945

This is the first occurrence of this word in Scripture.

**Translation:** Therefore, one man said to another [lit., each man said to his neighbor],...

This is a key phrase. Men were able to work together and accomplish a great deal. As ought to be clear to you, no one man can do all things. And when an area becomes more and more specialized, and requires more training and preparation, the less that prepared and trained man knows about other things. The man or woman who delivers your baby is probably not the person you want on your roof laying down shingles nor is he the guy you wanting flying your plane from point A to point B.

When the United States was working on the Manhattan Project during WWII (the building of nuclear weapons), it was not this one guy who was really, really, really smart, who told everyone else what to do and they built the atom bomb; there were many people who contributed to this project.

I love the illustration of the pencil, where its wood is harvested in one country; the paint for the outside is manufactured in another, and the graphite is mined and manufactured elsewhere. Then these things come together in a plant which may even be in a fourth country, and the lowly pencil is made, for which we pay a nickel or a dime. Although the example of the pencil is used to teach what **free enterprise** actually is, it also shows how men cooperating with one another can develop things that no one person can build on his own. You do not want me to build a pencil for you. And I know you are unable to build one.

When men work together, there is a great deal that may be accomplished, even with their sin natures intact.

*They say to one another* indicates that there is no clearly established authority at this time. That is, there is not one particular person calling the shots here. According to the Masoretic text, this is about 100 years after the flood, where Noah and his 3 sons would all still be alive; but, according to the Greek text, this is about 500 years after the flood, which would be after Noah has died (we will examine this time frame more precisely in the second half of this chapter). At one time, at least among his 3 sons, Noah was their clear, established authority. He said that they were going to build an ark and fill it with animals (at the direction of God), and so they did. However, we do not have a clear authority here; we have what appears to various people at various times urging others into a specific course of action. The verb *to say* is a Qal imperfect, indicating that this discussion was ongoing. This may have been one meeting where several people suggested this course of action; or, this may have been informally, while the people were encamped in Shinar, thinking about their next move.

So, for whatever reason, Noah is no longer the undisputed leader who sets the agenda. Whether he is alive and irrelevant (for instance, Noah, for all we know, could be an alcoholic at this time), or whether he has died, we do not know. We simply know that there are going to be decisions made which affect everyone in Noah's family, and that these decisions will be made apart from Noah and, apparently, apart from God (in fact, this will be a human viewpoint, anti-God decision). What we have here is the first committee decision recorded in the Bible.

### Genesis 11:3b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
yâhab (יָהָב) [pronounced yaw-HAWB <sup>v</sup> ]	<i>come! come on! come now, go to</i>	Adverbial use of verb <i>to give</i> ; an adverb of exhortation	Strong's #3051 BDB #396
The form of this verb is hâbâh (הָבֵה) [pronounced haw <sup>b</sup> -VAW], which, although this is said by Owen to be a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative of yâhab, it is not the standard form of an imperative (which is often a shortened verb). It is used here as a stand-alone adverb of exhortation.			
lâbab (לָבַב) [pronounced law-BAHN]	<i>to make bricks</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect; with the cohortative hê	Strong's #3835 BDB #526
The cohortative hê, when applied to the first person, the idea is an expression of will or compulsion, and in the singular, may be expressed with <i>I must, I could, I would, I will, I should, I may</i> . When applied to the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, the verb is often preceded by <i>let us</i> (as in Genesis 1:26).			
l <sup>e</sup> bênâh (לֵבְנֵי) [pronounced leb-ay-NAW]	<i>a brick, a tile, a pavement</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #3843 BDB #527

**Translation:...**"Come, let us make bricks..."

Someone, early on, figured out how to use the clay of that region, to build bricks.

### Genesis 11:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## Genesis 11:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
sâraph (שָׂרַף) [pronounced saw-RAHF]	<i>to suck in, to absorb, to drink in, to swallow down; to absorb or consume [with fire], to burn; to bake [bricks]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect; with the cohortative hê	Strong's #8313 BDB #976
The cohortative hê, when applied to the first person, the idea is an expression of will or compulsion, and in the singular, may be expressed with <i>I must, I could, I would, I will, I should, I may</i> . When applied to the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, the verb is often preceded by <i>let us</i> (as in Genesis 1:26).			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
s <sup>e</sup> rêphâh (שֶׂרֶפָה) [pronounced sehr-ay-FAW]	<i>burning [with fire], setting on fire</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8316 BDB #977

**Translation: ...and bake them with fire.”**

They determined that the clay had to be fired in order to strengthen it. They found that fire transformed the nature of the clay.

## Genesis 11:3d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
l <sup>e</sup> bênâh (הַבֵּנָה) [pronounced leb-ay-NAW]	<i>a brick, a tile, a pavement</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3843 BDB #527
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

## Genesis 11:3d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'eben (אֶבֶן) [pronounced EH <sup>B</sup> -ven]	<i>a stone [large or small] [in its natural state, as a building material]; stone ore; used of tablets, marble, cut stone; used of a tool or weapon; a precious stone, gem; rock; a weight of the balance</i>	feminine singular noun; pausal form	Strong's #68 BDB #6

**Translation:** So they had bricks for stone...

This suggests that, in the mountains, they had used stone previously for whatever permanent structures that they build (which would have certainly included altars to offer sacrifices to Y<sup>e</sup>howah).

## Genesis 11:3e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
chêmâr (חֵמָר) [pronounced khay-MAWR]	<i>bitumen, asphalt, oil-based mortar; pitch; slime</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #2564 BDB #330
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
chômer (חֹמֶר) [pronounced KHOH-mer]	<i>clay, mortar; boiling [of water], foaming [of water]; a heap, a mound, a pile, a stack [of something]; a unit of measure [like a bushel]</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #2563 BDB #330

**Translation:** ...and asphalt for mortar [lit., And to them brick was for stone and asphalt was to them for mortar].

They determined that these bricks could be held together with mortar, also available to them in this region.

**Gen 11:3** And they say to one another, "Come, let us make brick and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar.

Genesis 11:3 Therefore, one man said to another [lit., *each man said to his neighbor*], “Come, let us make bricks and bake them with fire.” So they had bricks for stone and asphalt for mortar [lit., *And to them brick was for stone and asphalt was to them for mortar*]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:3 The men decided to make bricks and to cure them with fire. They therefore were able to use bricks and asphalt for building. (Kukis paraphrase)

At the beginning of each quotation in vv. 3–4, we have the Qal imperative of the verb *yâhab* (בָּהִי) [pronounced *yaw-HAWB<sup>v</sup>*]. The form of this verb in the text is *hâbâh* (הִבֵּה) [pronounced *haw<sup>b</sup>-VAW*], which, although this is said by Owen to be a 2<sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative of *yâhab*, it is not the standard form of an imperative (which is often just a shortened verb). It is used here as a stand-alone adverb of exhortation, meaning *come! come on! come now, go to*. Properly speaking, this ought to have its own Strong’s #, but it is incorporated as a form of the verb. We find it used this way in Genesis 11:3–4, 7 38:16 Exodus 1:10; therefore, we have plenty substantiating passages for this understanding. Furthermore, this verb/adverb is found alone and always in the same form (the 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine singular), even when the speaker is clearly speaking to a number of people (as is the case in our passage). Strong’s #3051 BDB #396.

You will note that they have bricks and asphalt. The former was likely made from clay, probably found throughout this water-rich valley, and fired. They understood that a fired clay product was quite superior to the simple clay version. The asphalt was probably a petroleum product, also common to that area.

Let me add that, I believe this is the first time in the Bible where fire is mentioned. It is not presented as some great discovery, but as a means to an end. Recall that, in Cain’s line, there were metal workers, which implies the use of fire.

Bear in mind that, at this time, man’s lifespan, after the flood, was a few hundred years and he had a much stronger and healthier body (obviously) as well as a sharper mind than we do today. Also recall that our modern technological explosion is a little over 300 years old (the patent for the first crude steam engine is 1698).<sup>4</sup>

Our actual time frame is about 100 years, according to the Hebrew text, and about 500 years, according to the Greek text. The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew and Aramaic. Around 200 B.C. (give or take a century), the Bible was translated into Greek, as most of that part of the world spoke Greek, including the Hebrews (who apparently spoke both Greek and Aramaic). This became the Bible used by Jesus and by the Apostles, for the most part (although, I am unsure which version was read in the synagogues).<sup>5</sup> One great area of disagreement is the ages of the men in Shem’s line in the latter half of this chapter, which line helps us to fix the time of the Tower of Babel.

And so they said, “Come, we will build for ourselves a city and a tower and his head in the [two] heavens. And we will make for ourselves a name lest we are scattered upon faces of all the earth.”

Genesis  
11:4

They also said, “Come, we will build a city for ourselves and a tower with its head in the heavens. And we will establish [lit., *make, construct*] for ourselves a reputation [or, a *monument*] so that we are not scattered over the face of the whole earth.”

They said, “Let us join together and build a city for ourselves as well as a tower with its head in the heavens. Furthermore, we will establish ourselves here as a focal point so that no one scatters us over the face of the earth.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

<sup>4</sup> The key to our technological advance is energy.

<sup>5</sup> Because of one incident in the gospels, my guess is, Greek, as the people understood Jesus’ reading of Isaiah in one very dramatic passage.

**Ancient texts:**

Targum of Onkelos	Come, we will build us a city and a tower, and the head of it shall come to the summit of the heavens; and we will make us (an image for) worship on the top of it, and put a sword in his hand to act against the array of war, before that we be scattered on the face of the earth. And the Lord was revealed to punish them for the work of the city and the tower which the sons of men builded.
Jerusalem targum	And they said, Come now, and we will build us a city and a tower, and the head of it shall reach to the summit of the heavens, and we will make us in it a house of worship at the top,.....and we will put a sword in his hand, lest there be set against him the array of war, before we be scattered upon the face of all the earth.
Latin Vulgate	And they said: Come, let us make a city and a tower, the top whereof may reach to heaven; and let us make our name famous before we be scattered abroad into all lands.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so they said, "Come, we will build for ourselves a city and a tower and his head in the [two] heavens. And we will make for ourselves a name lest we are scattered upon faces of all the earth."
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then they said, Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top may reach to heaven; and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.
Septuagint (Greek)	And they said, Come, let us build to ourselves a city and tower, whose top shall be to heaven, and let us make to ourselves a name, before we are scattered abroad upon the face of all the earth.

Significant differences:

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Easy English	Then they said, `Come! Let us build a city for ourselves. Let us build a tower (tall, narrow building) with its top in the sky. We will make ourselves great. Then we shall not scatter over all the earth.'
Easy-to-Read Version	Then the people said, "We should build a city for ourselves. And we should build a tower that will reach to the sky. We will be famous. {And this will keep us together.} We will not be scattered all over the earth."
New Living Translation	Then they said, "Come, let's build a great city for ourselves with a tower that reaches into the sky. This will make us famous and keep us from being scattered all over the world."

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	Tower with its top in the sky: possibly a reference to the chief ziggurat of Babylon, E-sag-ila, lit., "the house that raises high its head."
Beck's American Translation	Then they said, "Come, let us build a city for ourselves and a tower with its top in the sky, and let's make ourselves famous to keep from getting scattered all over the earth."
Christian Community Bible	They said also, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top reaching heaven; so that we may become a great people and not be scattered over the face of the earth!"
New American Bible (R.E.)	Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the sky,* and so make a name for ourselves; otherwise we shall be scattered all over the earth." <b>Tower with its top in the sky:</b> possibly a reference to the chief ziggurat of Babylon, E-sag-ila, lit., "the house that raises high its head."

New Simplified Bible Then they said: »Let us build ourselves a city, with a lofty tower that reaches into space, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth.«

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear They said, "Thus we *will* build a city and a tower with its head in heaven to make our name. Otherwise we *will* scatter over the face of the all the land."

Bible in Basic English And they said, Come, let us make a town, and a tower whose top will go up as high as heaven; and let us make a great name for ourselves, so that we may not be wanderers over the face of the earth.

The Expanded Bible Then they said to each other, "Let's build a city and a tower for ourselves, whose top will reach high into the sky [heaven; <sup>c</sup>a ziggurat or stepped pyramid at whose top was a temple thought to be in heaven]. We will become famous [<sup>L</sup>make for ourselves a reputation/name]. Then we will not be scattered over all the earth."

Ferar-Fenton Bible So they agreed. "We will build here for ourselves a City and a Tower whose top shall reach the sky; thus we will make a Beacon for ourselves, so that we may not be scattered over all the surface of the country."

New Advent Bible And they said: Come, let us make a city and a tower, the top whereof may reach to heaven; and let us make our name famous before we be scattered abroad into all lands.

NET Bible® Then they said, "Come, let's build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens [A translation of "heavens" for שָׁמַיִם (shamayim) fits this context because the Babylonian ziggurats had temples at the top, suggesting they reached to the heavens, the dwelling place of the gods.] so that [The form וְנִשְׁעָה (v'ynaseh, from the verb עָשָׂה, "do, make") could be either the imperfect or the cohortative with a vav (ו) conjunction ("and let us make..."). Coming after the previous cohortative, this form expresses purpose.] we may make a name for ourselves. Otherwise [The Hebrew particle וְ (pen) expresses a negative purpose; it means "that we be not scattered."] we will be scattered [The Hebrew verb פָּצַע (pavats, translated "scatter") is a key term in this passage. The focal point of the account is the dispersion ("scattering") of the nations rather than the Tower of Babel. But the passage also forms a polemic against Babylon, the pride of the east and a cosmopolitan center with a huge ziggurat. To the Hebrews it was a monument to the judgment of God on pride.] across the face of the entire earth."

NIV – UK 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.'

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

International Standard V .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation .

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

Kretzmann's Commentary .  
 Lexham English Bible .  
 Translation for Translators .  
 The Voice .

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version	And saying are they, "Prithee! Build will we for ourselves a city and a tower with its head in the heavens, and make for ourselves a name, lest we are scattering over the surface of the entire earth.
Context Group Version	And they said, Come, let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top [ may reach ] to the skies { or heavens }, and let us make us a name; or else we will be scattered abroad on the face of the entire land { or earth }.
English Standard Version	Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth."
The Geneva Bible	And they said, Go to, let us build [They were moved with pride and ambition, preferring their own glory to Gods honour. ] 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.
Green's Literal Translation	And they said, Come, let us build a city and a tower with its head in the heavens, and make a name for ourselves, that we not be scattered on the face of all the earth.
Syndein/Thieme	And they said {'amar}, "Go to, let us {volitional rebellion against God - mass numbers going against God's Word - God/'divine viewpoint' says - individual - 'whosoever believes' . . . human viewpoint 'collective' - 'let us'} build {banah} us a city {governmental rebellion - cities are ok, but this was built in defiance of God's decree to 'spread out'} and a tower {Tower of Babel - physical revolt against God - a flood proof shelter in unbelief of God keeping His Word}, whose top may reach unto heaven {Spiritual rebellion - international brotherhood - man working his way to heaven - picture of man's work getting him to heaven instead of relying on God's work (Christ on the cross) to get him to heaven}. And let us make us a name/reputation {for ourselves} {shem - name or reputation} {personal revolt - egotism}, lest we be scattered abroad {structural/geographical revolt - rejected God's decree to scatter} upon the face of the whole earth." {Note: God commanded them in 9:1 to 'spread out'. Instead, they decided to 'build up'. This is 'human viewpoint' attempting to overrule 'divine viewpoint'. Why did they do this? We need to remember that the flood has just occurred. These people do not believe the Word of God that there will not be another great flood! They think that they need a tall, tall tower just in case there is another one! So these dependents of Noah are unbelievers or believers 'in reversionism' meaning they have turned away from the Lord and His Word/Way.}
World English Bible	They said, "Come, let's build us a city, and a tower, whose top reaches to the sky, and let's make us a name; lest we be scattered abroad on the surface of the whole earth."
Young's Updated LT	And they say, "Give help, let us build for ourselves a city and tower, and its head in the heavens, and make for ourselves a name, lest we be scattered over the face of all the earth."

**The gist of this verse:** Mankind decided to settled in this place, build both a city and a tower (which would act as a beacon which could be seen from a far distance) so that they are not scattered all over the earth.

Genesis 11:4a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
yâhab (בָּהִי) [pronounced yaw-HAWB <sup>v</sup> ]	<i>come! come on! come now, go to</i>	Adverbial use of verb <i>to give</i> ; an adverb of exhortation	Strong's #3051 BDB #396
The form of this verb is hâbâh (הִבָּה) [pronounced haw <sup>b</sup> -VAW], which, although this is said by Owen to be a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative of yâhab, it is not the standard form of an imperative (which is often a shortened verb). It is used here as a stand-alone adverb of exhortation.			
bânâh (בָּנָה) [pronounced baw-NAWH]	<i>to build, to construct; to erect; to rebuild, to restore</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1129 BDB #124
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
'îyr (עִיר) [pronounced ġeer]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mig <sup>e</sup> dâl (מִגְדָּל) [pronounced midg <sup>e</sup> -DAWL]	<i>tower; an elevated stage [pulpit, platform]; a raised garden bed; a city fortified with a tower</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4026 BDB #153

**Translation:** They also said, "Come, we will build a city for ourselves..."

They plan that they developed was to build a city, a central area for all mankind. They were going to settle in to this particular area. Because of the circumstances, men had a comfort in living in close proximity with one another. Whenever Charley Brown was born, he knew all of his relatives going back to Noah (Noah would have died by this time); but he knew his parents back to Shem, Ham or Japheth. When you knew all of your relatives, and they all lived together or in close proximity, it does not cause a person to want to move off toward the sunset, to see what else is out there.

Genesis 11:4b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Genesis 11:4b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
rō'sh (רֹשׁ אוּ שָׂר) [pronounced <i>rohsh</i> ]	<i>head [of a man, city, state, nation, place, family, priest], top [of a mountain]; chief, prince, officer; front, choicest, best; height [of stars]; sum</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7218 BDB #910
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
shâmayîm (שָׁמַיִם) [pronounced <i>shaw-MAH-yim</i> ]	<i>heaven, heavens, skies; the visible heavens, as in as abode of the stars or as the visible universe, the sky, atmosphere, etc.; Heaven (as the abode of God)</i>	masculine dual noun with the definite article	Strong's #8064 BDB #1029

**Translation:** ...and a tower with its head in the heavens.

Building a tower so that his top is in the heavens does not mean that these men were hoping to see God. However, this was in defiance of God. "God is in heaven? We will be there too."

There is a good possibility that this tower had some religious significance, but the Bible does not specifically tell us of any. Recall that religion is in natural opposition to God. Religion is all about merit; and before God, we have no merit.

Genesis 11:4c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i> ]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l<sup>e</sup></i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced <i>shame</i> ]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027

**Translation:** And we will establish [lit., make, construct] for ourselves a reputation [or, a monument]...

This tower would be a focal point, a monument, for the center of mankind. One could always look up and around and see this tower, and see where mankind lived.

Genesis 11:4d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
pen (פֶּן) [pronounced <i>pen</i> ]	<i>lest, peradventure, or else, in order to prevent, or, so that [plus a negative]</i>	conjunction	Strong's #6435 BDB #814
pûwts (פּוּצְתָם) [pronounced <i>poots</i> ]	<i>to break, to dash into pieces; to disperse [sometimes, to disperse themselves; to be dispersed], to scatter; to overflow</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6327 BDB #806
‘al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
pânîym (פְּנֵיהֶם) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, ‘al and pânîym mean <i>upon the face of, facing, in front of, before (as in preference to), in addition to, overlooking.</i>			
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
’erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i> ]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

**Translation:** ...so that we are not scattered over the face of the whole earth.”

This is exactly the opposite of what God told them to do; God told Noah, upon exiting the ark, “Be fruitful and multiply; spread out over the earth and multiply on it.” (Genesis 9:7b; HCSB; see also Genesis 8:17). God has given mankind a clear and unequivocal command through Moses, and this city and tower stand in direct opposition to God’s commands.

It is likely that, by this time, Noah had died. However, these things appear to have been said to Noah and his sons (Genesis 9:1). So, there is no reason, apart from the function of the old sin nature, for mankind to do the opposite of what God told them to do.

**Gen 11:4** And they said, “Come, let us build us a city and a tower, and its top in the heavens. And let us make a name for ourselves, so that we are not scattered upon the face of the whole earth.”

Genesis 11:4 They also said, “Come, we will build a city for ourselves and a tower with its head in the heavens. And we will establish [lit., *make, construct*] for ourselves a reputation [or, *a monument*] so that we are not scattered over the face of the whole earth.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:4 They said, “Let us join together and build a city for ourselves as well as a tower with its head in the heavens. Furthermore, we will establish ourselves here as a focal point so that no one scatters us over the face of the earth.” (Kukis paraphrase)

Men decided, in this ancient time, to congregate in this area near the two rivers, and to build a city. One purpose of a high tower would be that, no matter which direction someone traveled, they could look around, find the tower,

and return to their settlements. It would act as a beacon commemorating the center of civilization—or, more accurately, commemorating the center of humanity.

My educated guess is, that, once they had moved to Shinar, they began to experiment with various types of building materials. Over some period of time (100–500 years after the flood), they have determined that they have 2 abundant raw materials to work with: bricks and a petroleum mortar. Within a few decades, they figure out how to fire bricks and to design and build very durable buildings.

In building this tower, there is an undefined pseudo-spiritual quality here. Literally, the phrase is: *...and a tower and its head [will be] in the [two] heavens...* Throughout the Bible, *narrative* is just like this—we are told what this or that person says or does, but there is rarely an accompanying moral judgment. Rarely is narrative ever stopped, and the writer inserts, “And God thought that was a very bad thing.” Therefore, in order to get the full impact of a passage, we have to look for clues. First of all, we can infer, simply because God’s name is not found here, that this is a pseudo-religious approach, which combined architecture, technological achievement and this tower has some undefined religious quality (*its head will be in the heavens*). Exactly what this meant to the people who built it, is not revealed. However, God will put a stop to this singular, centralized institution, which does give us God’s opinion of this matter (again, a rare thing to find in most narrative passages).

**Gen 11:4** And they said, “Come, let us build us a city and a tower, and its top [head] [will be] in the heavens. And let us make a name for ourselves, so that we are not scattered upon the face of the whole earth.”

They urge one another, “**Let us make a name for ourselves.**” Upon leaving the ark, the first thing that Noah does is, he offers up a sacrifice to God. Here, these men—Noah’s descendants—want to glorify themselves. They want to make a name for themselves. We do not know exactly how they will make a name for themselves. Let me suggest that, Noah has died (or is drunk in his tent), and they all understand, to some degree, their impermanence on this earth. It is normal for man to ignore death for much of his life. However, this would be even more so for this group of men who have not really observed much death.

This tower is going to be a permanent achievement, because, over a few decades, they have figured out how to fire brick and to build structures which withstand rain and the elements. So, perhaps a part of what is happening—and I take this from today’s politician’s incessant need to name every building, bridge or structure after himself—perhaps they will inscribe their names and exploits and contributions on the inside of this great tower.

Today, there are going to be times when a governmental building must be built—or, maybe I should say, will be built. Wouldn’t it be refreshing for a politician to take the name of a medal of honor winner and put his name upon that building, and, on the entryway of that building, have the text permanently set in stone along the wall?

Back to reality: Then these men indicate the reason for building this city and this tower: “*...so that we are not scattered upon the face of the whole earth.*”

Recall God’s command to Noah and his sons: “**But you, be fruitful and multiply; spread out over the earth and multiply on it.**” (Genesis 9:7). However, just 3 or 4 generations later, their mantra was “**Let’s build a city for ourselves and a tower with its top in the sky. Let us make a name for ourselves so that we won’t become scattered all over the face of the earth.**” These men are exalting themselves—“**Let us make a name for ourselves**”—and they have decided that, becoming scattered throughout the earth, separated from one another, is a bad thing.

You will note that this came about from discussions, where they urged one another, and did so totally apart from the Word of God. This was the decision of a committee. These men are not far removed from the flood, however, for the vast majority of mankind, the flood was some event in the distant past (for most people, whatever happened before they were born is the distant past). We know that antediluvian information was passed along—from parents to their children—because we have Genesis 1–9 today and we have both mythology and the story of the flood, which is a part of nearly every culture. However, even though Shem is definitely alive at this time, civilization is quickly moving away from God.

You may wonder, how is this possible? We are a 100–500 years out from the flood; how can man be this negative? Only 4 men actually witnessed the flood. Only 4 men have even seen the ark. It is now 5 or 6 generations later (this is not a guess on my part, but will be confirmed in the second half of this chapter—Genesis 11:17–19). If every family had 10 children, there could be as many as 300,000 people alive at this point in time, which is Peleg’s generation (who Peleg is, is coming up in a few lessons). Only 10 people saw the ark, lived in the ark and endured the flood (2 of them may even be dead by this time). For 300,000 people, it is just something their great, great, great, great grandparents talk about. They did not see the flood. They did not hear the voice of God. These old people have told them all kinds of things. I suspect that most of these people believed that a flood took place, but, still, they are the new generation, and they have a new way of thinking and a new way of doing things.

So they actually begin to build this city and this tower, which marks the center of humanity—a tower which reaches into the heavens and a city which establishes, in their minds, the greatness of mankind.

The narrative tells us that man is building this city and this tower, and that God doesn’t like it (we haven’t gotten to that yet). This would lead us to ask the question...

### What is the problem with this tower?

- ❑ The average reader has no concept of what is occurring here. God has mandated that man fill to the earth (Genesis 1:28 9:1). They are choosing to remain in one place.
- ❑ Instead of building an altar to God, as did Noah (Genesis 8:20–21), they built a monument to themselves (Genesis 11:4). Therefore, they were glorifying themselves, not God.
- ❑ This tower and city are all about the glorification of mankind. “Let us make a name for ourselves,” is part of the urging which first took place.
- ❑ The tower references heaven rather than God. Controlling the vocabulary means that you can control the thinking of a people. The idea behind this tower sounds holy, but it is not. As I write these words, there is a parallel to this in the news. There is an Islamic imam who is behind building a 13 story mosque/community center in New York City within a block or so of the fallen Twin Towers. This imam says that he is all about *building bridges* (whatever that means), so the mosque is presented as one thing, but its purpose is something entirely different (it clearly marks and celebrates the killing of 3000 Americans by Muslims).
- ❑ Often towers were built for pagan deity worship; archeology has discovered in Mesopotamia terraced towers, ziggurats, designed for that purpose. It is possible that they had this in mind, to worship the deities of the antediluvian era.
- ❑ Why does this tower have to reach into the heavens? This is so they have a place to flee in case there is another flood, which God has promised them that there would not be. They are building this because they do not believe God's Word.
- ❑ God’s geographical will is for them to spread out across the earth. God’s will is for them to establish individual and independent entities throughout the earth (marriage is an example of this, where the couple leave their mothers and fathers and establish themselves as a separate corporate unity). It is not God’s will for them to all remain in one geographical area. However, regardless of what God's plan is, they chose to remain there, centered around this great tower.

Despite the sparseness of this narrative, we can get a good idea as to the thinking of mankind.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

For additional reading on the Tower of Babel and ziggurats in general, let me suggest this webpage:

<http://www.christiananswers.net/q-abr/abr-a021.html>

So far, we have studied the first 4 verses of this chapter:

**Gen 11:1–4** And the whole earth was of one language and of one speech. And it happened, as they traveled from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar. And they lived there. And they said to one another, “Come, let us make brick and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar. And they said, “Come, let us build us a city and a tower, and its top [head] [will be] in the heavens. And let us make a name for ourselves, so that we are not scattered upon the face of the whole earth.”

We found that, even though this is narrative, we were able to determine what the problem was with this tower. It represented the glorification of man; it was to be a rallying point in order to keep the human race together; it was man’s distrust of God’s promise not to flood the earth again, and there was an undefined heathenistic religious quality to it.

Now God enters into the picture. Insofar as we know, over a period of 100–500 years, God has had direct contact with man on only one previous occasion after the flood—when Noah and his family exited the ark, God spoke to Noah. I mention this because there are a plethora of people who write about their frequent interactions directly with God (hopefully, you don’t know that these people even exist, because they are either delusional, liars or both).

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**And so comes down Y<sup>e</sup>howah to see the city and the tower which had built sons of the man.**      Genesis 11:5      **Then Y<sup>e</sup>howah came down to see the city and the tower that the sons of man had built.**

**Then Jehovah came down to see both the city and the tower that the men had built.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Targum of Onkelos	And the Lord was revealed to punish them for the work of the city and the tower which the sons of men builded.
Latin Vulgate	And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of Adam were building.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so comes down Y <sup>e</sup> howah to see the city and the tower which had built sons of the man.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which men were building.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the sons of men had built.

Significant differences:

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Common English Bible	Then the Lord came down to see the city and the tower that the humans built.
Contemporary English V.	But when the LORD came down to look at the city and the tower,...
Easy-to-Read Version	The Lord came down to see the city and the very tall building. The Lord saw the people building these things.
<i>The Message</i>	GOD came down to look over the city and the tower those people had built.
New Berkeley Version	Then the LORD came down to take a look at the city and the tower which the sons of men were building. While God was everywhere, as the sacred writer well knew, He paid at that time particular attention to this earthly attempt.
New Living Translation	But the Lord came down to look at the city and the tower the people were building.

#### **Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	Then the Lord came down to see this city and its tower, which the sons of men had built.
God's Word™	The LORD came down to see the city and the tower that the descendants of Adam were building.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Bible in Basic English	Yahweh descended to see the city and the tower which the sons of Adam built. And the Lord came down to see the town and the tower which the children of men were building.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	But a Chief came down to inspect the city and the tower which the sons of men had built;...
NET Bible®	But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower that the people [Heb "the sons of man." The phrase is intended in this polemic to portray the builders as mere mortals, not the lesser deities that the Babylonians claimed built the city.] had started [The Hebrew text simply has בָּנִי (banu), but since v. 8 says they left off building the city, an ingressive idea ("had started building") should be understood here.] building.
NIV – UK	But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower the people were building.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

International Standard V .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation .

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible .

Translation for Translators .

The Voice .

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And descending is Yahweh to see the city and the tower which the sons of humanity build.
Context Group Version	And YHWH came down to see the city and the tower, which the sons of man built.
The Geneva Bible	And the LORD [Meaning, that he declared by effect, that he knew their wicked enterprise; for Gods power is everywhere, and neither ascends nor descends. ] came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.
LTHB	And Jehovah came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of Adam had built.
Syndein/Thieme	And Jehovah/God came down {anthropomorphism - God is omnipresent - He did not have to 'go anywhere' - this is 'ascribing to God human characteristics in order to help man understand God'} to see the city and the tower, which the children of men built {banah}.

Webster's Bible Translation	And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men were building.
World English Bible	Yahweh came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men built.
Young's Updated LT	And Jehovah comes down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men have built.

**The gist of this verse:** God, as manifest as a man or as an angel, comes down in this form to see what mankind is doing.

Genesis 11:5a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yârad (יָרַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAHD</i> ]	<i>to descend, to go down</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3381 BDB #432
This is the first occurrence of this very common word in Scripture.			
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced <i>raw-AWH</i> ]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'îyr (יָרַע) [pronounced <i>geer</i> ]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746

**Translation:** Then Y<sup>e</sup>howah came down to see the city...

God is able to see all that mankind is doing from anywhere, as God is not actually localized. God is omniscient. However, God frequently took the form of an angel and went to specific places. Why? Because God would lead angels to this area to listen and to observe. This is not an anthropomorphism. God really does take on a form and He really does go down from heaven, where His form is also localized as the Revealed Member of the Trinity, and He goes to this city. We may assume that angels accompany Him—both fallen and elect.

Essentially, the earth is both the classroom and a movie theater, if you will, for angels. In order to understand Who God is, angels follow the Revealed Member to the earth and they hear what He says and they observe what He does and then they observe what the results are.

Rush Limbaugh said something which was quite profound: "When a person is born, that is when history begins for that person." Now, as we get older, we become more interested in what preceded us, but it is the nature of man and his indwelling sin to think that everything important began when he (or she) was born. Angels are no

different. There is no indication that angels were born, but angels are created beings. God created many billions of angels, and then told them what was going on. “I am God, I made you, and now, here are the mandates which you must follow.”

Now, newly created angels don't know what came before them. What God is telling them is what they accept, but they have no real proof. Then Satan rebelled against God, saying that he would be like the Most High and he took a third of the angels with him.

What human history is to angels is a teaching exercise; God's essence is applied to mankind, mankind has free will, and the result is human history. Angels view human history as we might watch a movie. However, they can move freely about between the various scenes and groups of people. Therefore, when God is going to show the angels something, He takes on the form of an angel (a form which Jesus Christ might have continued to operate within throughout the time prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> advent).

Genesis 11:5b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
mig <sup>e</sup> dâl (מִגְדָּל) [pronounced <i>midge-DAWL</i> ]	<i>tower; an elevated stage [pulpit, platform]; a raised garden bed; a city fortified with a tower</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4026 BDB #153

**Translation:** ...and the tower...

And they are going to take a look at the tower as well. The fact that this tower is said to have its head in the heavens suggest that it functions in opposition to God in some way—possibly as a tower to humanity.

Genesis 11:5c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
bânâh (בָּנָה) [pronounced <i>baw-NAWH</i> ]	<i>to build, to construct; to erect; to rebuild, to restore</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #1129 BDB #124
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
'âdâm (אָדָם) [pronounced <i>aw-DAWM</i> ]	<i>a man, a human being, mankind; transliterated Adam</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #120 & #121 BDB #9

The word *the Adam* can mean *man, mankind, humankind, men, human beings*.

**Translation:** ...that the sons of man had built.

All of this had been put together by mankind, who was possibly a hundred or two hundred years from the ark.

**Gen 11:5** And Jehovah came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of Adam [or, *the sons of man*] had built.

Genesis 11:5 Then Y<sup>e</sup>howah came down to see the city and the tower that the sons of man had built. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:5 Then Jehovah came down to see both the city and the tower that the men had built. (Kukis paraphrase)

You recall that I mentioned anthropopathisms, where a characteristic of man is applied to God. God is omnipresent, so that He does not have to go from point A to point B in order to observe something. However, such language (called language of accommodation) is used in order to explain what God is doing. It is stated in terms that we understand.

There is probably more to this first verb than a simple anthropathism. Throughout human history, God demonstrates His character and essence to angelic creation, to both fallen and elect angels. As we previously saw, in the **Doctrine of the Angelic Conflict** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)), Satan is not now in the Lake of Fire, even though he has been judged and sentenced, because the verdict of his trial is likely being appealed. The basic grounds for appeal is God character and essence. God's wisdom and foresight are at play here. So, what appears be occurring here is, God brings the angels to observe His next act. Therefore, they all come down to earth to this partially-built city and tower and what God will do. Recall, God told man to spread out throughout the earth, and man has said, "We like it right here, just fine; so we're going to stay right here."

**And so says Y<sup>e</sup>howah, "Behold, people [are] one and tongue, one to all of them. And this their beginning to do and now nothing is restrained from them [in] all which they purpose to do.**

Genesis  
11:6

**Y<sup>e</sup>howah also said, "Observe, the people [are] one with one language—all of them. And [all] this [that] they are beginning to do so that [or, *therefore*] nothing is restrained from them [in] all that they imagine to do.**

**Jehovah also said, "Further observe that these people are one with one language. Whatever they want to do, they can do; there is nothing that is restrained from them in their imagination.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos	And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and the language of all of them one: and this they have thought to do: and now they will not be restrained from doing whatever they imagine.
Latin Vulgate	And he said: Behold, it is one people, and all have one tongue: and they have begun to do this, neither will they leave off from their designs, till they accomplish them in deed.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so says Y <sup>e</sup> howah, "Behold, people [are] one and tongue, one to all of them. And this their beginning to do and now nothing is restrained from them [in] all which they purpose to do."
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the LORD said, Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language; and they have reasoned to do this thing; and now nothing will prevent them from doing that which they have imagined to do.

Septuagint (Greek) And the Lord said, Behold, there is one race, and one language of all, and they have begun to do this, and now nothing shall fail from them of all that they have undertaken to do.

Significant differences:

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V. ...he said: These people are working together because they all speak the same language. This is just the beginning. Soon they will be able to do anything they want.

Easy English The \*Lord said, `Look! They are all one group of people. They all have the same language. This is only the beginning of what the people will do. They will be able to do everything that they plan to do. Nothing is impossible.

Easy-to-Read Version The Lord said, "These people all speak the same language. And I see that they are joined together to do this work. This is only the beginning of what they can do. Soon they will be able to do anything they want.

Good News Bible (TEV) ...and he said, "Now then, these are all one people and they speak one language; this is just the beginning of what they are going to do. Soon they will be able to do anything they want!.

*The Message* GOD took one look and said, "One people, one language; why, this is only a first step. No telling what they'll come up with next--they'll stop at nothing!.

New Berkeley Version The LORD said: Look! One people and all with one language! The way they are starting to behave, nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them.

New Century Version The Lord said, "Now, these people are united, all speaking the same language. This is only the beginning of what they will do. They will be able to do anything they want.

New Life Bible And the Lord said, "See, they are one people, and they all have the same language. This is only the begin-ning of what they will do. Now all they plan to do will be possible for them.

New Living Translation "Look!" he said. "The people are united, and they all speak the same language. After this, nothing they set out to do will be impossible for them!

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible And Jehovah said, 'Look; they are all the same race and they share the same lips, and now they've started doing this. [Before long], they will be able to accomplish anything they set out to do.

Beck's American Translation "Look, one people!" the LORD said. "And they all talk one language. And this is only the beginning of what they'll do. Now nothing they plan to do will be too hard for them.

*God's Word™* The LORD said, "They are one people with one language. This is only the beginning of what they will do! Now nothing they plan to do will be too difficult for them.

New American Bible (R.E.) Then the LORD said: If now, while they are one people and all have the same language, they have started to do this, nothing they presume to do will be out of their reach.

NIRV The Lord said, "They are one people. And all of them speak the same language. That is why they can do this. Now they will be able to do anything they plan to.

New Jerusalem Bible 'So they are all a single people with a single language!' said Yahweh. 'This is only the start of their undertakings! Now nothing they plan to do will be beyond them.

New Simplified Bible Jehovah said: »If they become one people speaking the same language, nothing will be impossible for them. They have begun to do this.

Revised English Bible ...and he said, 'Here they are, one people with a single language, and now they have started to do this, from now on nothing they have a mind to do will be beyond their reach.

Today's 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.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear      Yahweh said, "Behold, one people, all with one lip, all began to do this! Now none are protected from their plotting which they do.

Bible in Basic English            And the Lord said, See, they are all one people and have all one language; and this is only the start of what they may do: and now it will not be possible to keep them from any purpose of theirs.

Complete Jewish Bible          ADONAI said, "Look, the people are united, they all have a single language, and see what they're starting to do! At this rate, nothing they set out to accomplish will be impossible for them!

The Expanded Bible              The Lord said, "Now, these people are united [<sup>L</sup>one], all speaking the same [<sup>L</sup>one] language. This is only the beginning of what they will do. They will be able to do anything they want [<sup>L</sup>Nothing they want to do will be impossible for them].

Ferar-Fenton Bible                ...and the Chief said, "You see all these people are united in the same purpose, and having begun to do this they will not be restrained from anything they determined upon.

New Advent Bible                 And he said: Behold, it is one people, and all have one tongue: and they have begun to do this, neither will they leave off from their designs, till they accomplish them in deed.

NET Bible®                         And the Lord said, "If as one people all sharing a common language [Heb "and one lip to all of them."] they have begun to do this, then [Heb "and now." The foundational clause beginning with הִנֵּן (hen) expresses the condition, and the second clause the result. It could be rendered "If this. then now."] **nothing they plan to do will be beyond them** [Heb "all that they purpose to do will not be withheld from them."].

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

International Standard V .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation .

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible .

Translation for Translators .

The Voice .

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version      And saying is Yahweh, "Behold! One people is it. And one lip is for them all. And this they started to do! And now nothing will be defended from them of all that they will plan to do.

Darby Translation	And Jehovah said, Behold, the people is one, and have all one language; and this have they begun to do. And now will they be hindered in nothing that they meditate doing.
English Standard Version	And the LORD said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them.
The Geneva Bible	And the LORD said [God speaks this in derision, because of their foolish persuasion and enterprise. ], 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.
Green's Literal Translation	And Jehovah said, Behold, the people is one, and the lip one to all of them, and this they are beginning to do, and now all which they have purposed to do will not be restrained from them.
LTHB	And Jehovah said, Behold, the people <i>is</i> one, and the lip one to all of them, and this they are beginning to do, and now all which they have purposed to do will not be restrained from them.
New King James Version	And the Lord said, "Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them.
New RSV	And the Lord said, `Look, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them.
Syndein/Thieme	And the Jehovah/God said {'amar}, "Behold, the people . . . one {internationalism}, and they have all one language. And this {building of the tower} they just begin to manufacture {'asah - out of negative volition} {only beginning of their revolt/internationalism in view}. And now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have 'evilly imagined' {zamam} to do {'asah} {see Romans 1:18 on the evil imaginations of man leads to their own degenerations}.
World English Bible	Yahweh said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is what they begin to do. Now nothing will be withheld from them, which they intend to do.
Young's Updated LT	And Jehovah says, "Lo, the people is one, and one pronunciation is to them all, and this it has dreamed of doing; and now, nothing is restrained from them of that which they have purposed to do.

**The gist of this verse:** God points out that the people have one language and that pretty much anything that they purpose to do, they will be able to do.

### Genesis 11:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced waw]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohw-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

## Genesis 11:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
hinnêh (הִנֵּה) [pronounced <i>hin-NAY</i> ]	<i>lo, behold, or more freely, observe, look here, look, listen, note, take note; pay attention, get this, check this out</i>	interjection, demonstrative particle	Strong's #2009 (and #518, 2006) BDB #243
Hinnêh can be used as a particle of incitement.			
'am (אָם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i> ]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
This is the first time this very common word occurs in the Hebrew Old Testament.			
'echâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced <i>eh-KHAWD</i> ]	<i>one, first, certain, only; each, every; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular; anyone</i>	numeral adjective	Strong's #259 BDB #25

**Translation:** Y<sup>e</sup>howah also said, "Observe, the people [are] one..."

It is certainly worthwhile, every time that we hear of someone speaking, to ask, *who are they speaking to and why?* Here, we are not told to whom God is speaking, so let me propose that He is speaking to a congregation of angels—there may be all 100 billion of them (or, whatever). This is a part of the Angelic Conflict.

There are a lot of things that we rarely appreciate. Angels have a beginning. One moment there were no angels and the next moment there are angels. God could tell them Who He is and how they got there, but they have no memory of what came before, because they did not exist before. So, during the era of human history, God, when He enters into human history, explains why He is doing so. Angels observe what is going on. They can choose to believe God or to disbelieve Him; and they can choose what their relationship should be to God.

Angels see, firsthand, by observation, what man is like and what God is like. They learn to understand and appreciate God's relationship to us.

God says, *behold*, because this is a point of doctrine or something upon which they need to concentrate. First of all, the people are acting in concert; they are acting as one. You might say that there is international cooperation among them (although they have not yet been broken up into separate nations).

## Genesis 11:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and; even; in particular, namely; when, since, seeing, though; so, then, therefore; or, but yet; who, which; or; that, in that; with; also, in addition to, at the same time</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Genesis 11:6b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
sâphâh (שָׂפָה) [pronounced saw-FAWH]	<i>lip, tongue; words, speech; dialect, language; edge, border [or, lip] [of something], shore</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8193 BDB #973
'echâd (אֶחָד) [pronounced eh-KHAWD]	<i>one, first, certain, only; but it can also mean a composite unity; possibly particular; anyone</i>	feminine singular, numeral adjective	Strong's #259 BDB #25
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]; also kol (כָּל) [pronounced kol]	<i>all, all things, the whole, totality, the entirety, everything</i>	masculine singular noun without the definite article with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3605 BDB #481

**Translation:** ...with one language—all of them.

All of the people speak the same language. There have been times—failed times—when there have been attempts to get nations to all speak the same language. No idea how serious Esperanto was, but it obviously never caught on. The closest that we have to a universal language is English, one of the most difficult languages in the world to learn.

In any case, God is speaking to the angels and He is saying that this is a problem. Everyone speaking the same language is a real problem for mankind. Men acting in concert is a real problem.

This is illustrated, in part, by their disobedience to God. They can certainly agree on one thing—God told them to spread out, so they agree that they ought to stay together.

Genesis 11:6c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
zeh (זֶה) [pronounced zeh]	<i>here, this, this one; thus; possibly another</i>	masculine singular demonstrative adjective	Strong's #2088, 2090 (& 2063) BDB #260
châlal (חָלַל) [pronounced khaw-LAHL]	<i>to begin</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #2490 BDB #320
There are 3 or 4 fundamental meanings for this word.			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

## Genesis 11:6c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʿâsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i> ]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

**Translation:** And [all] this [that] they are beginning to do...

One of the things which is quite interesting about Scripture is, the way that God speaks is often very difficult, and it almost appears as if someone speaking a foreign language is temporarily speaking Hebrew. I do not know Hebrew well enough to make this statement, so perhaps God speaks in a very formal Hebrew. In any case, it is always more difficult to translate that most of what we find in the Old Testament.

God refers to *this [that] they are beginning to do*; what they have begun to do is to build a city and a tower. This is all a result of them being able to work together. Human viewpoint tells us that, when men are working together, this is a good thing. God here, at least in this instance, does not see this as being a good thing.

## Genesis 11:6d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿattâh (אֵתָּה) [pronounced <i>gah-TAWH</i> ]	<i>now, at this time, already</i>	adverb of time	Strong's #6258 BDB #773

When followed by an imperative or an interrogative, w<sup>e</sup> + the adverb ʿattâh mean *and so, thus, things being so, therefore, now therefore*. Sometimes, the concept of time is lost when this combination is used to incite another.

lô' (לֹא or לוֹל) [pronounced <i>low</i> ]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
bâtsar (בָּצַר) [pronounced <i>baw-TZAR</i> ]	<i>to fortify, to rebuild; to render a defense inaccessible</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #1219 BDB #130
With the negative, <i>to not be restrained, to not be withheld</i> .			
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i> ]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

**Translation:** ...so that [or, therefore] nothing is restrained from them...

Whatever man imagines to do, he can do it (within, of course, the confines of the natural laws<sup>6</sup> which God has set up).

Men have in their minds the construction of this city and this tower as a rallying point for humanity. God has told them to spread out over the entire earth. We are to obey God.

<sup>6</sup> Natural laws are invented by God; such as the speed limit of our universe being the speed of light. This is because God designed this law himself; not that He is subject to this law.

Genesis 11:6e			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>the whole, all, the entirety, every</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i> ]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, kôl 'ăsher mean <i>all whom, all that [which]; whomever, whatever, all whose, all where, wherever.</i>			
zâmam (זָמַם) [pronounced <i>zaw-MAHM</i> ]	<i>to consider, to purpose, to devise [a plot]; to plot [evil]; to imagine; to lie in wait</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2161 BDB #273
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH</i> ]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #6213 BDB #793

**Translation:**...[in] all that they imagine to do.

Whatever man can imagine, within the limits of natural law, man can do. However, God is looking for this to be restrained and this will be restrained by changing the language in mankind. This will clearly be a miracle that God will cause.

Now, interestingly enough, God will be able to change the language of man, but there is no indication that this changes the ability of angels to understand man, and, when allowed to, to communicate with man, no matter what the language.

**Gen 11:6** And Jehovah said, "Listen, the people *are* one and they all have one language. And this [the building of the city and tower] they begin to do. And now nothing which they have imagined to do will be restrained from them.

Genesis 11:6 Y<sup>e</sup>howah also said, "Observe, the people [are] one with one language—all of them. And [all] this [that] they are beginning to do so that [or, *therefore*] nothing is restrained from them [in] all that they imagine to do. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Who is God talking to? God could be talking to God (God the Father I speaking to the other members of the Godhead), just as we find in Genesis 1:26 2:18 Psalm 2:7 110:1. I believe this is literal speech, and that the purpose here is to inform the angels, both fallen and elect, of what God is doing. So I believe that God is talking to angelic creation. The first word of this sentence tells us why this is God speaking to angels and not God speaking to God. In fact, many times that God speaks, it is for the benefit of angelic creation.

The first word used here is the demonstrative adverb/interjection hên (הִנֵּה) [pronounced *hayn*], which means *lo!, behold, observe, look, look here, get this, listen, listen up*. This is the kind of word that you use when speaking to another person or to a group, and you either want their attention, you want them to take a look at something, or you are making a salient point. I often watch a panel of commentators on FoxNews on Special Report, and they use this word all of the time. Several times, in the same segment, you will hear one or more of them say, "Look..." That is exactly what God is saying here (I would not be surprised if a young Charles Krauthammer did not read this passage and say to himself, "I like the sound of that word; it is concise and grabs the attention of others, so that I can make a salient point."). Strong's #2005 BDB #243. Because of the use of this word, let me suggest

that this tells us that God is speaking to someone else, outside of the Godhead, and He is drawing their attention to something and to make an important point. God the Father does not need to say to God the Son, "Listen up, [I am about to say something important]..." But God may need to do this when speaking to fallen angels.

**Gen 11:6** And Jehovah said, "Listen, the people *are* one and they all have one language. And this they begin to do. And now nothing which they have imagined to do will be restrained from them.

Genesis 11:6 Jehovah also said, "Further observe that these people are one with one language. Whatever they want to do, they can do; there is nothing that is restrained from them in their imagination. (Kukis paraphrase)

God says that the people *are one*. This indicates that they are able to form a consensus and to move in the same direction. They have one language, so that everyone is able to contribute. What they have begun to do is build this city and this tower.

The phrase *imagined to do* is 2 verbs separated by a lâmed preposition. The first verb is the Qal imperfect of *zâmam* (זָמַם) [pronounced *zaw-MAHM*], which means *to consider, to purpose, to devise [a plot]; to plot [evil]; to imagine*. Strong's #2161 BDB #273. The second verb is the Qal infinitive of a very common verb which means *to do, to work, to make, to produce*. In the situation which mankind finds itself, there are no restraints upon them. Almost anything that they can conceive of, they can do.

God is very cognizant of human knowledge and the ability of man to make huge leaps in technology in a very short amount of time. In the end times, Daniel records that, "**Many will travel everywhere, and knowledge will increase.**" (Daniel 8:4b). One of the characteristics of the end times is a dramatic increase in the ability to travel and the dramatic increase of knowledge.

If we can go from a crude steam engine to computers in 300 years, mankind at that point in time could have easily accomplished as much, and in a shorter period of time. God has a plan for mankind, and this plan has a timeline over which, the history of man will run its course. Man's age will gradually be reduced, from generation to generation, as will his mental capabilities. God will see to it that the intellects will be separated by language and geography, and, eventually, by specific racial characteristics.

The importance of having just the right men working together can be seen in our own development of atomic weapons, which was dependent upon Enrico Fermi, an Italian-born scientist and Albert Einstein, a German-born scientist. One may argue that, apart from these two men, born in 2 different countries, and collaborating in a 3<sup>rd</sup> country (the U.S.), atomic energy and atomic weapons may not have been developed. Both atomic energy and atomic weapons have dramatically changed human history. I could be wrong here, but I don't know if other countries came up with this technology on their own, or whether it was exported (legally or illegally) from the United States.

Equally important to man's abilities when working together is, man's united ability to work against God. We see that in international systems of communism and Islam, 2 systems which are fanatically anti-God (Islam worships Satan, although they do not realize it). Paul wrote **They profess to know God, but they deny Him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient [and stubborn], and disqualified from [doing] any good work** (Titus 1:16). And **[Satan's] ministers transform themselves as ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works** (2Corinthians 11:15b).

It is fundamental for the believer in Jesus Christ to recognize, God chose to separate mankind into nations. There could have been one nation in the world, and God specifically chose for that not to happen. That should tell you God's opinion of the U.N., of Islam, of communism and of internationalist movements in general.

**Gen 11:6** And Jehovah said, "Listen, the people *are* one and they all have one language. And this they begin to do. And now nothing which they have imagined to do will be restrained from them.

We have seen that, separating into nations, it has taken us several millennia to create some of the incredible technology that we have created. For a great deal of time, we spread ourselves throughout the earth and battled for our territory and worked for our sustenance, so that there was not as much time for technological advance or for self-exaltation. In the past several decades, we have seen incredible advances in scientific development and much of that has been dependant upon the cooperative interaction of various nations. This has not been God's plan for us until now.

Let me illustrate the power of this statement, by taking the explanation of a college professor of something very simple that few people know or appreciate.

*From a George Will column: Roberts, an economist at George Mason University and Stanford's Hoover Institution, sets his story in the Bay Area, where some Stanford students are indignant because a Big Box store doubled its prices after an earthquake. A student leader plans to protest Stanford's acceptance of a large gift from Big Box. The student's economics professor, Ruth, rather than attempting to dissuade him, begins leading him and his classmates to an understanding of prices, markets and the marvel of social cooperation. Holding up a Dixon Ticonderoga No. 2, she says: "No one can make a pencil."*

*Nonsense, her students think—someone made that one. Not really, says Ruth. Loggers felled the cedar trees, truckers hauled them, manufacturers built the machines that cut the wood into five-sided portions to hold graphite mined in Sri Lanka, Mexico, China and Brazil. Miners and smelters produced the aluminum that holds the rubber eraser, produced far away, as were the machines that stamp TICONDEROGA in green paint, made somewhere else, on the finished pencil.*

*Producing this simple, mundane device is, Ruth says, "an achievement on the order of a jazz quartet improvising a tune when the band members are in separate cities." An unimpressed student says, "So a lot of people work on a pencil. What's the big deal?" Ruth responds: Who commands the millions of people involved in making a pencil? Who is in charge? Where is the pencil czar?*

*Her point is that markets allow order to emerge without anyone imposing it. The "poetry of the possible" is that things are organized without an organizer. "The graphite miner in Sri Lanka doesn't realize he's cooperating with the cedar farmer in California to serve the pencil customer in Maine." The boss of the pencil factory does not boss very much: He does not decide the prices of the elements of his product—or of his product. No one decides. Everyone buying and selling things does so as prices steer resources hither and yon, harmonizing supplies and demands.*

*Goods and services, like languages, result from innumerable human actions—but not from any human design. "We," says Ruth, "create them with our actions, but not intentionally. They are tapestries we weave unknowingly." They are "emergent phenomena," the results of human action but not of human design.<sup>7</sup>*

The teacher used this example to explain how free markets work; Milton Friedman used this example to show the importance of free enterprise. However, I use this to make the simple observation, when man works together, when man free collaborates, there is almost nothing that man cannot do.

God makes this observation here before a massive congregation of fallen and elect angels.

The problem is, no matter what the technology is, man still has the resident sin nature. Our lives today in 2024 are so much different from what they were 50 years ago, which were so much different than what they were 50 years prior to that. But man's fallen nature remains exactly the same.

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<sup>7</sup> From <https://www.newsweek.com/george-will-pencils-and-politics-89355> accessed May 27, 2024. There are many iterations of this great truth, which may have started with Milton Friedman.

We know this today for a fact in client nation USA. The bulk of the politicians are doing everything possible to separate the hoi polloi from their money and from their free will decisions. In many nations today, this has been accomplished by communism and socialism. We saw in the 20<sup>th</sup> century killing in unprecedented numbers in Russia, in China, in North Korea, in Cambodia and Vietnam by communist forces. They are willing to kill millions of their own people, in order to have complete control over their people.

Therefore, God makes the very accurate observation:

Genesis 11:6 **Jehovah also said, "Further observe that these people are one with one language. Whatever they want to do, they can do; there is nothing that is restrained from them in their imagination. (Kukis paraphrase)**

This is particularly troubling when everything in man's imagination is evil continuously.

In order to show all angelic creation what is necessary, man needs to be slowed down, technologically speaking. Human history has to continue to play out over a much longer period of time.

As an aside, this is quite a marvelous observation, which is far more accurate than we realize today. Man, collaboratively, can do that which is beyond amazing. With some thinking and reasoning, we can begin to understand and appreciate that fact. God knew it from eternity past, as He made man.

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**Come, let us go down and let us confuse there their lip that they not listen a man to a lip of his neighbor."**

Genesis  
11:7

**Come, let us go down and confuse their languages there so that one man may not understand the language of his neighbor."**

**Come and let us go down there and confuse their languages so that no man can understand what his neighbor is saying."**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Targum of Onkelos	And the Lord said to the seventy angels which stand before Him, Come, we will descend and will there commingle their language, that a man shall not understand the speech of his neighbour.
Latin Vulgate	Come ye, therefore, let us go down, and there confound their tongue, that they may not understand one another's speech.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Come, let us go down and let us confuse there their lip that they not listen a man to a lip of his neighbor."
Peshitta (Syriac)	Come, let us go down, and there divide their language so that they may not understand one another's speech.
Septuagint (Greek)	Come, let Us go down and confound their language, that they may not understand each the voice of his neighbor.

Significant differences:

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Contemporary English V.	Come on! Let's go down and confuse them by making them speak different languages--then they won't be able to understand each other.
Easy-to-Read Version	So let's go down and confuse their language. Then they will not understand each other."
<i>The Message</i>	Come, we'll go down and garble their speech so they won't understand each other."

New Berkeley Version	Come, let us go down and so confuse their speech that they cannot make out each other's words.
New Life Bible	Come, let Us go down and mix up their language so they will not understand what each other says."
New Living Translation	Come, let's go down and confuse the people with different languages. Then they won't be able to understand each other."

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	So, let's go down there and change their language so none of them will be able to understand the voice of his neighbor.'
New American Bible (R.E.)	Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that no one will understand the speech of another.
NIRV	Come. Let us go down and mix up their language. Then they will not understand each other."

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Bible in Basic English	Descend and mingle their lips there. Grant that no man hears his neighbor." Come, let us go down and take away the sense of their language, so that they will not be able to make themselves clear to one another.
The Expanded Bible	Come, let us go down and confuse their language [there] so they will not be able to understand each other."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	I will go down and frustrate their designs, so that one will not listen to another's proposals."
Judaica Press Complete T.	Come, let us descend and confuse their language, so that one will not understand the language of his companion."
New Advent Bible	Come, therefore, let us go down, and there confound their tongue, that they may not understand one another's speech.
NET Bible®	Come, let's go down and confuse [The cohortatives mirror the cohortatives of the people. They build to ascend the heavens; God comes down to destroy their language. God speaks here to his angelic assembly. See the notes on the word "make" in 1:26 and "know" in 3:5, as well as Jub. 10:22-23, where an angel recounts this incident and says "And the Lord our God said to us.. And the Lord went down and we went down with him. And we saw the city and the tower which the sons of men built." On the chiasmic structure of the story, see G. J. Wenham, Genesis (WBC), 1:235.] their language so they won't be able to understand each other [Heb "they will not hear, a man the lip of his neighbor."]."
NIV – UK	Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other."

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

International Standard V .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation .

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

Kretzmann's Commentary	.
Lexham English Bible	.
Translation for Translators	.
The Voice	.

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Come, let Us go down and there confound (mix up, confuse) their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.
Concordant Literal Version	Prithee! Descend will We, and there disintegrate their lip, that they may not hear each man the lip of his associate.
The Geneva Bible	Go to, let us go down [He speaks as though he took counsel with his own wisdom and power: that is, with the Son and holy Spirit: signifying the greatness and certainty of the punishment. ], and there confound their language [By this great plague of the confusion of tongues appears Gods horrible judgment against mans pride and vain glory.], that they may not understand one anothers speech.
LTHB	Come, let's go down, and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech..
NASB	Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language [Lit lip], so that they will not understand one another's speech [Lit lip]."
New RSV	Come, let us go down, and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand one another's speech.'.
World English Bible	Come, let's go down, and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another's speech."
Young's Updated LT	Give help, let us go down, and mingle there their pronunciation, so that a man does not understand the pronunciation of his companion."

**The gist of this verse:** God calls to the angels to come with him to the earth to confuse the languages of the people so that they cannot understand one another.

**Genesis 11:7a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
yâhab (בָּהִי) [pronounced yaw-HAWB <sup>v</sup> ]	come! come on! come now, go to	Adverbial use of verb to give; an adverb of exhortation	Strong's #3051 BDB #396
The form of this verb is hâbâh (הִבָּה) [pronounced haw <sup>b</sup> -VAW], which, although this is said by Owen to be a 2 <sup>nd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperative of yâhab, it is not the standard form of an imperative (which is often a shortened verb). It is used here as a stand-alone adverb of exhortation.			
yârad (דָּרַי) [pronounced yaw-RAHD]	to descend, to go down	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect with the cohortative hê	Strong's #3381 BDB #432

The cohortative hê, when applied to the first person, the idea is an expression of will or compulsion, and in the singular, may be expressed with *I must, I could, I would, I will, I should, I may*. When applied to the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural, the verb is often preceded by *let us* (as in Genesis 1:26).

**Translation:** Come, let us go down...

In a way that is never really made clear to us, it appears that angels often took part in judgments against man, but we are never give the actual mechanics.

This is one of the fascinating aspects of Scripture. At this time, I doubt that anyone believed in a Triune God. Yet, when we read this and other passages, it is completely in synch with God as a Trinity. That is because the Divine Author is the Holy Spirit. Therefore, there are passages like these, written by people who have no concept of the Trinity, who write words which reveal the Trinity when we examine them in the light of the New Testament.

Genesis 11:7b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bâlal (בלל) [pronounced baw-LAHL]	<i>to pour over, to pour together; to mingle, mix, confuse, confound and it is from this that we determine that tevel means confusion</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect with the cohortative hê	Strong's #1101 BDB #117
The cohortative hê, when applied to the first person, the idea is an expression of will or compulsion, and in the singular, may be expressed with <i>I must, I could, I would, I will, I should, I may</i> . When applied to the 1 <sup>st</sup> person plural, the verb is often preceded by <i>let us</i> (as in Genesis 1:26).			
shâm (שם) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
sâphâh (שפה) [pronounced saw-FAWH]	<i>lip, tongue; words, speech; dialect, language; edge, border [or, lip] [of something], shore</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #8193 BDB #973

**Translation:** ...and confuse their languages there...

Somehow, the languages of mankind were changed. The family of Shem understood what other members of his family said, they understood what they said themselves, but they did not understand what the Hamites had to say.

In Genesis 10, we saw how the people of the world were broken up into various groups, and they principally appeared to separate on the basis of the patriarch of that family (Shem, Ham or Japheth). This suggests that there were three groups of languages. According to R. B. Thieme, Jr., there are 3 types of languages in this world. There were likely differences within the large tribe of Japheth or Ham. I would suspect that all of the various Hamites had a set of similar and related languages, but they could not understand one another.

When it comes to matters of ancient history, I defer to R. B. Thieme, Jr., who was a scholar in this field.

### R. B. Thieme, Jr. Notes on Genesis 10 and Languages (from Syndein)

{Note: See Chapter 9:25 and following for more on the overall characteristics of the descendants of these three. Basically, the line of Shem (Semitic People) holds spiritual superiority. The line of Japheth (Japhetic People) holds physical superiority (large conquering people). And the line of Ham (Hamitic People) will be the servant of the other brothers (at least the line through Canaan).}

{Note: RBT says there are three basic lines of languages (with many variations within each) in the world today (and there are exceptions and overflows - so general rule):

1. The Indo-European language is basically the language of the line of Japheth (Japhetic people).

## R. B. Thieme, Jr. Notes on Genesis 10 and Languages (from Syndein)

2. The Semitic language is basically the language of the line of Shem (Semitic people).
3. The Ural-Altaic (sp) or Altranian sp languages which are basically the languages of the line of Ham (Hamitic people).

Many exceptions: for example, the Finish people speak a Uralian language. So the Fins are a Hamitic peoples but have intermarried with Japhetic peoples and are a great race but very different from the peoples around them.}

From [http://syndein.com/Genesis\\_10.html](http://syndein.com/Genesis_10.html) accessed January 24, 2013.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### Genesis 11:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
lô' (לֹא or לוֹל) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
shâma' (שָׁמַע) [pronounced shaw-MAHĠ]	<i>to listen [intently], to hear, to listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], to hearken to, to be attentive to, to listen and be cognizant of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
sâphâh (שָׂפָה) [pronounced saw-FAWH]	<i>lip, tongue; words, speech; dialect, language; edge, border [or, lip] [of something], shore</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #8193 BDB #973
rêa' (רֵעַ) [pronounced RAY-ahġ]	<i>associate, neighbor, colleague, fellow, acquaintance; fellow citizen; another person; one, another [in a reciprocal phrase]</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #7453 BDB #945

**Translation:** ...so that one man may not understand the language of his neighbor.”

Certainly, you have been in various areas and you have heard other languages spoken, and, if you know nothing about languages, then you know nothing about what was being said (except through their emphasis or emotion).

There is a curious aspect to people who remain in a geographical location with one another. Their language appears to be become more mutually similar, while simultaneously becoming dissimilar to languages outside of that realm. Time also plays a part in this. For those of you who have heard one of the Bard's plays, and you are wondering, "What the hell was that?" That was English, your mother language, even though you only understood a few words of it. Perhaps God somehow artificially did this, took these groups as if they were isolated and advanced their language 1000 years (or whatever). However, that may not quite explain how languages extant today are fundamentally different (as per R. B. Thieme, Jr.).

Gen 11:7 Come, let Us go down and let Us confuse their language there, so that they cannot understand one another's speech.”

Genesis 11:7 Come, let us go down and confuse their languages there so that one man may not understand the language of his neighbor.” (Kukis mostly literal translation)

In vv. 3–4, men twice saying to one another, *come, let us do thus and so*. So now God becomes involved, and He uses the exact same verb/adverb as man used.

We will notice here that, the Trinity is suggested, as Jehovah God is speaking to someone, and He says, “Let Us go down there...” God, as a Trinity, will take action at this point in time. Again, this is spoken aloud for the benefit of angelic creation.

In v. 5, God is said to *come down*, which normally, we would understand as language of accommodation. Here, it is different. We have the same verb in both verses, but in v. 7, it is a 1<sup>st</sup> person plural with a cohortative hê at the end. That means that God is urging those with Him to come down to earth to observe what He is about to do. I would think that those *coming down* would be the Godhead and all angelic creation.

What the Godhead will do is, the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural, Qal imperfect with the cohortative hê of the verb bâlal (בלל) [pronounced *baw-LAL*] which means to *mingle, mix, confuse, confound*. Strong's #1101 BDB #117. Recall that the imperfect tense can refer to a future act or a process. Here, both concepts are probably at play. From the time that this was spoken, *confusing* the languages would be a future occurrence. However, there seemed to be the added component of languages which caused them to continue to become confounded. This is why we could gather young African Americans into a room with young Irish, and for them to have a very difficult time communicating, even though they all speak English.

We tend to view the Bible as a book which is filled with miracles, and there are undoubtedly miracles found in the Word of God. However, they are rare and more spread out in time than most people realize. At this point in time, after 2000 years of human history, I can think of 2 miracles (after the earth is created): God taking Enoch (Genesis 5:21–22) and here, the confusion of languages (as has been previously discussed, there is no reason to assume that the flood was a miraculous event).

What we might better understand is, the Bible records God's interaction with man, and these interactions will include instances which appear to be miraculous and other instances where an actual miracle occurs.

A lot of things seem quite miraculous to me: television, computers and airplanes. I have accepted by faith that planes work, and even though I have had the aerodynamics explained to me—the shape of the wings, and how this causes the air to lift it up—the whole concept of tons of steel and personage flying through the air still seems pretty dubious to me (and yet, I still fly). I apparently have great faith in this area.

Since creation, we have had the flood, which could have been miraculous; however, it could have been the result of a convergence of a variety of weather variables set into motion by God (we have already discussed some of these theories).

However, what we have in this chapter is undoubtedly a miracle. At one point in time, men were speaking with one language; and in the next point of time, they were not. I do not see any other reasonable options. Whether they woke up one day, all speaking different languages, or if this occurred instantaneously, in the midst of many conversations, we do not know.

Gen 11:7 Come, let Us go down and let Us confuse their language there, so that they cannot understand one another's speech.”

Genesis 11:7 Come and let us go down there and confuse their languages so that no man can understand what his neighbor is saying.” (Kukis paraphrase)

By comparing Genesis 10:25a (To Eber were born two sons: the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided) with the years given in Genesis 11:10–17, we find that this incident occurred 101 years<sup>8</sup> after the flood, three generations into each line (it appears as though a generation during that time was every thirty years). In either case, Noah would have died by this time.

Being a number's person, I find that it would be interesting to calculate the number of people alive at that time. We begin with eight people and it does not appear that Noah had any other children (Genesis 9:19) and, whereas 7 males born to a family does not seem unusual (Genesis 10:2), 13 males born to a family does (Genesis 10:26–29). Assuming an equal number of daughters and sons, the average family probably produced about 14 offspring, while the parents were between ages 25–50 (reasonable child bearing years). This gives us approximately 42 children in the first generation, all of whom are child-bearing age prior to the confusion of languages, which is 21 families all capable of producing another generation of adults prior to this incident. Which is close to 600 adults from that generation. By the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation, there would have been 12,600 children, and in the 4<sup>th</sup> generation,<sup>9</sup> a quarter of a million people. So there could have easily been a quarter of a million people alive during the confusion of languages (this is assuming that the chronology given in the latter portion of this chapter is correct as per the copyists).

Since the Exodus generation was at least two million and they traveled together, then it is likely that this group traveled together out of the mountains to find a river for water and then they all likely settled down together. The original three patriarchs (and wives) had all seen the flood and would have been alive during the confusion of the languages.

We know that God had spoken to Noah and his sons (Genesis 9:1), and given that there is no description given as to the manner in which God spoke to them, it is reasonable to suppose that God took on the form of a man and spoke to them.

The next few generations would have been told stories about the antediluvian world and the interaction between the fallen angels and mankind; such stories would have made wonderful bedtime stories, from a secular point of view. However, as a logical result of this, there are a great many adults on the earth who do not believe in the Revealed Lord, but who have an interest in the gods of the antediluvian era (the fallen angels and their children the daughters of men bare to them) and that this group of people became possibly very religious, but not believers. Furthermore, they were highly intelligent, as was early man (archeological discoveries aside; place a quarter million geniuses on an island with only natural materials and what they will develop will require great thought, but it might appear primitive.



<sup>8</sup> Or 137 years if Cainan is taken into consideration.

<sup>9</sup> This would be adding in Cainan as another generation.

**The Tower of Babel** (a graphic by R. Crumb); from [Pinterest](#); accessed August 29, 2018.

**And so scatters Y<sup>e</sup>howah them from there over faces of all the earth. And so they cease to build the city.**

Genesis  
11:8

**So, Y<sup>e</sup>howah caused them to be scattered over the face of all the earth. As a result [lit., *and so*], they ceased building the city.**

**So, Jehovah caused them to be scattered over the face of the entire earth. As a result, they stopped building this city.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Targum of Onkelos	And the Word of the Lord was revealed against the city, and with Him seventy angels, having reference to seventy nations, each having its own language, and thence the writing of its own hand: and He dispersed them from thence upon the face of all the earth into seventy languages. And one knew not what his neighbour would say: but one slew the other; and they ceased from building the city.
Latin Vulgate	And so the Lord scattered them from that place into all lands, and they ceased to build the city.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so scatters Y <sup>e</sup> howah them from there over faces of all the earth. And so they cease to build the city.
Peshitta (Syriac)	So the LORD scattered them abroad from there upon the face of all the earth; and they ceased from building the city.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the Lord scattered them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city and the tower.

Significant differences:

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Common English Bible	Then the Lord dispersed them from there over all of the earth, and they stopped building the city.
Contemporary English V.	So the people had to stop building the city, because the LORD confused their language and scattered them all over the earth. That's how the city of Babel got its name.
Easy-to-Read Version	So the Lord caused the people to spread all over the earth. So the people did not finish building the city.
<i>The Message</i>	Then GOD scattered them from there all over the world. And they had to quit building the city.
New Berkeley Version	Thus the LORD dispersed them from there over the whole face of the earth. They quite building the city, <sup>9</sup> which accordingly was called Babel [Balale—confusion], because there the LORD confused the whole world's language and from there the LORD scattered them over the whole face of the earth. V. 9 was included for context.

#### **Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	And Jehovah scattered them from there over the entire face of the earth, so they stopped building the city and its tower.
Beck's American Translation	So the LORD scattered them from there all over the earth, and they had to stop building the city.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Bible in Basic English	So the Lord God sent them away into every part of the earth: and they gave up building their town.
Complete Jewish Bible	So from there ADONAI scattered them all over the earth, and they stopped building the city.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	So the Chief scattered them over the surface of the whole country; and they abandoned building the city.
NET Bible®	So the Lord scattered them from there across the face of the entire earth, and they stopped building [The infinitive construct תִּבְנֶה (livnot, "building") here serves as the object of the verb "they ceased, stopped," answering the question of what they stopped doing.] the city.

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

International Standard V .

**Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):**

The Heritage Bible .

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Kaplan Translation .

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible .

Translation for Translators .

The Voice .

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version	And scattering them is Yahweh thence on the surface of the entire earth. And leaving off are they building the city and the tower.
English Standard Version	So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city.
LTHB	And Jehovah scattered them from there, over the face of all the earth. And they stopped building the city.
New King James Version	So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	So Yahweh scattered them abroad from there on the face of all the earth: and they left off building the city.
World English Bible	So Yahweh scattered them abroad from there on the surface of all the earth. They stopped building the city.
Young's Updated LT	And Jehovah scatters them from thence over the face of all the earth, and they cease to build the city.

**The gist of this verse:** God, by changing their languages, caused them to move away from one another and to spread out over the earth. They stopped building the city.

Genesis 11:8a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
pûwts (פּוּצַ) [pronounced poots]	<i>to scatter, to send abroad; to agitate [harass] [anyone]; to pour out [used metaphorically of anger]; to spread oneself abroad; to cause [things] to be scattered [dispersed]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #6327 BDB #806
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yhoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>them; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to, toward</i>	affixed to a 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
shâm (שָׁמַ) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
'al (עַל) [pronounced gah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
pânîym (פְּנֵי) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, 'âl and pânîym mean <i>upon the face of, facing, in front of, before (as in preference to), in addition to, overlooking.</i>			
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced koh]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

**Translation:** So, Y<sup>e</sup>howah caused them to be scattered over the face of all the earth.

The key word here is the 3<sup>rd</sup> masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect of pûwts (פּוּצַ) [pronounced poots], which means, *to scatter, to send abroad; to agitate [harass] [anyone]; to pour out [used metaphorically of anger]; to spread oneself abroad; to cause [things] to be scattered [dispersed]*. Strong's #6327 BDB #806. The Hiphil is the causative stem. God did not have to originate a wind to push this group of men this way, and that group of men a different way. He did not have to go down there and give directions. "Okay, I want group A gathered over here and you are all going to travel 600 miles southwest and that is where you will make you home." God has already

set things up by changing their languages, so that man will start with this and then go off in their separate directions because that is the logical thing for them to do. By changing the languages, God causes the people to go off in different directions to establish themselves in difference geographical locations.

All mankind had been quite cooperative up to this point. They agreed upon building the city and the tower. However, suddenly, those with whom they were working could not be understood. They started speaking gibberish, which was maddening to them. Therefore, they were caused to be scattered over the earth. God did not pick them up and move them; they chose to separate from one another.

God could have chosen to do whatever He wanted to do. He chose, rather than to scatter men through natural disasters, to do it by language. In the midst of building this tower (quite a feat for 1–5 centuries past the flood with practically no developed technology), those building the tower could no longer communicate to one another. If you have ever been in a foreign land and no one around you speaks your language, and you suddenly meet someone who speaks English, there is an immediate bond which is formed. God confined these languages to the various families, as we see in Genesis 10:5 & 20. It is very likely that almost every person named in Genesis 10 had a different language. They found that they could communicate with one another in their family, but not with any of a dozen or two dozen families which lived around them. Certainly there were misunderstandings, miscommunications, and everyone thought that they were speaking in a language that they were born with. Adam was created with a fully functioning vocabulary. God did the same with these and created different patterns of language.

Genesis 11:8b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châdal (חָדַל) [pronounced <i>khaw-DAHL</i> ]	<i>to cease and desist, to leave off, to cease, to leave, to forsake</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2308 BDB #292
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bânâh (בָּנָה) [pronounced <i>baw-NAWH</i> ]	<i>to build, to construct; to erect; to rebuild, to restore</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #1129 BDB #124
îyr (עִיר) [pronounced <i>geer</i> ]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746

**Translation:** *As a result [lit., and so], they ceased building the city.*

It appears that many of the Semites remained in this general area, so we might ask, why didn't they continue building the city? With the Japhethites and the Hamites, they had the skills and mechanical background to build this city. Perhaps members of the family of Ham had perfected the mixing of the mortar and they did not have the material. Perhaps there were specific tools that the Japhethites developed that the Semites were unable to build.

Let me offer up another possible reason: these various groups began to fight over the city. They fought first due to misunderstandings; and then they fought for the right to have and hold this peace of ground. When that occurs, some people will win and others will lose. We do not know how far they took it. I tend to believe that a mass slaughter did not occur, but there was a strong enough show of force that the Hamites and the Japhethites left the area.

According to the previous chapter, **Genesis 10** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)), they further subdivided themselves. Were their further language barriers? Did all the sons of Ham have a different dialect from the same language? We are not given that sort of detail. We simply know that the Hamites further spread themselves out. Whether it was about language at that point, or whether other factors came into play.

At least two-thirds of the people of the city moved out, and it is possible that even more than that did.

It is reasonable to ask, *if men were cooperating with one another, why did God need to step in as He did?* God made it clear what He wanted mankind to do. Mankind acted in concert against God.

Communism today is a good illustration of this. Dissent is crushed. For years, millions of people were killed in China and in Russia for thinking differently. Most were not outright killed, but they were relocated to reeducation camps. These exist today in North Korea. China appears not to be as ruthless anymore against her own people in the regards to thinking.

For some reason, men in large groups tend to veer off from God's will. Look at our public school system. Originally, the schools in American were designed so that men could learn to read the Bible and that many might become evangelists and Bible teachers. Now, there are continued legal fights over whether the Bible can even be brought into schools, whether or not it can be taught, and whether or not cheerleaders, for instance, can make up banners with Bible verses. Generally speaking, in the United States, when a city is large, they tend to defied the **Laws of Divine Establishment** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)). Such defiance is not without consequences. Many such cities are bankrupt or nearing bankruptcy, due to the legal stealing of their funds by politicians.

God, knowing all of this, wanted mankind to disperse throughout the world which He had given them.

**Gen 11:8** So Jehovah scattered them abroad from that place upon the face of all the earth. And they quit building the city.

Genesis 11:8 So, Y<sup>e</sup>howah caused them to be scattered over the face of all the earth. As a result [lit., and so], they ceased building the city. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:8 So, Jehovah caused them to be scattered over the face of the entire earth. As a result, they stopped building this city. (Kukis paraphrase)

I have mentioned the Hebrew stems. Here, *to scatter* is in the Hiphil stem, which is the causative stem. This means that God, through this action of confounding their languages, *caused* man to scatter from this place. The imperfect tense indicates that this was a process, and that it did not occur all at once. In other words, the men in this city did not, on day 1, have their languages confused, and, on day 2, go their separate ways. The changing of the languages was probably sudden, but the separation was more gradual.

Since groups of men could not communicate with one another, they could no longer share their knowledge. Therefore, they voluntarily separated from one another. Mechanically, what seems to be the case is, when Charley Brown spoke to Lucy, in his own mind, he was still speaking and thinking in the language that he had always used. Lucy could not understand a word that Charley said, and, in her mind, she believed her thinking and language to remain unchanged as well. For several days, the Hamites walked around this city, and they found that other Hamites spoke their language; but they had no idea what was up with the Semites or the Japhethites. As a result, cooperation was no longer possible, because the speakers of one language would have seen the others as stupid, babbling like idiots for no reason.

The ancient word *Babel* means *to confuse by mixing*. We have retained some of that meaning in our own word *babble*. People all over Babel were babbling, and this no doubt resulted in fistfights which escalated into feuds, which resulted in a separation of the peoples. Given what we have read in Genesis 10, the language barriers would have been along family lines. Whether God broke them into 3 fundamentally different languages, I could

not say; or perhaps He divided them further into clans, which eventually scattered, separating from one another, as per Genesis 10.

If you have ever been in a foreign country, and the people there did not speak English, when you come across someone who does, there is an immediate bond which develops. Furthermore, these groups had natural bonds based upon their familial relationships. So, just as Noah and company all traveled together as a group; smaller groups were formed, based upon their clan and language. These clans decided to spread out, because all around them was confusion and babbling.

The final sentence is, literally, **And so they are ceasing to build the city.** The verb *to cease, to stop, to leave off* is a Qal imperfect, indicating that building did not stop all at once. So, some people, who were speaking the same language, then moved to the southern section of town, but right next to them would be someone speaking a different language, which would lead to disputes which could not be easily settled. So, over a period of time, the building of this city ceased, as groups of men became frustrated and finally just left.

**Upon so is called her name Babel for there confounded Y<sup>e</sup>howah a lip of all the earth. And so scatters them Y<sup>e</sup>howah upon faces of all the earth.**

Genesis  
11:9

**Therefore its name is called Babel, for there, Y<sup>e</sup>howah confounded the languages of the entire earth. Then, Y<sup>e</sup>howah caused them to be scattered throughout [lit., upon the face of] the entire earth.**

**Therefore, the name of this city was called Babel, because it was here that Jehovah confounded the languages of all mankind. By this, Jehovah caused them to be scattered throughout all the earth.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Targum of Onkelos	Therefore He called the name of it Bavel, because there did the Lord commingle the speech of all the inhabitants of the earth, and from thence did the Lord disperse them upon the faces of all the earth.
Latin Vulgate	And therefore the name thereof was called Babel, because there the language of the whole earth was confounded: and from thence the Lord scattered them abroad upon the face of all countries.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Upon so is called her name Babel for there confounded Y <sup>e</sup> howah a lip of all the earth. And so scatters them Yehowah upon faces of all the earth.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Therefore they called the name of it Babel; because it was there that the LORD confounded the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them upon the face of all the earth.
Septuagint (Greek)	On this account its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confounded the languages of all the earth, and then the Lord scattered them upon the face of all the earth.

Significant differences:

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Common English Bible	Therefore, it is named Babel, because there the Lord mixed up [Heb balal, wordplay on Babel] the language of all the earth; and from there the Lord dispersed them over all the earth.
Good News Bible (TEV)	The city was called Babylon, because there the LORD mixed up the language of all the people, and from there he scattered them all over the earth.

<i>The Message</i>	That's how it came to be called Babel, because there GOD turned their language into "babble." From there GOD scattered them all over the world.
New Living Translation	That is why the city was called Babel [Or Babylon. Babel sounds like a Hebrew term that means "confusion."], because that is where the Lord confused the people with different languages. In this way he scattered them all over the world.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	That is why [the city] is named Confusion (Babylon), because, that's where Jehovah confused all the languages of the earth and scattered them from there over all the face of the earth.
<i>God's Word</i> <sup>TM</sup>	This is why it was named Babel, because there the LORD turned the language of the whole earth into babble. From that place the LORD scattered them all over the face of the earth.
New American Bible (R.E.)	That is why it was called Babel [the Hebrew form of the name "Babylon"; the Babylonians interpreted their name for the city, Bab-ili, as "gate of god." The Hebrew word balal, "he confused," has a similar sound.], because there the LORD confused the speech of all the world. From there the LORD scattered them over all the earth.
Revised English Bible	That is why it is called Babel, because there the LORD made a babble of the language of the whole world. It was from that place the LORD scattered people over the face of the earth.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	So the name over it was called Babylon, for Yahweh mingled the lips of all the land. From there Yahweh scattered them over the face of all the land.
Bible in Basic English	So it was named Babel, because there the Lord took away the sense of all languages and from there the Lord sent them away over all the face of the earth.
The Expanded Bible	The place is called Babel [ <sup>C</sup> sounds like the Hebrew word for "confused"] since that is where the Lord confused the language of the whole world. So the Lord caused them to spread out from there over the whole world.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	They therefore called its name Babel [confusion] because it was there the Chief confused the designs of all the country. Thus from there the LORD [The word Jehovah, commonly translated Lord, was originally used as a title of honour for nobles or governors as shown in Genesis 18;13; and elsewhere, as in Exodus 4:24, where the title is given to the chief of a tribe, who attempted to murder Moses; and was not reserved as a synonym for GOD until after the promulgation of the Law from Sinai. In this passage, it is evident that it did not mean the Supreme Being, and to translate it as if it did misleads the reader.—F.F.] scattered them over all the surface of the land.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	That is why it was called Babel [i.e., <i>Babylon</i> ], because there the LORD confounded [Hebrew balal "confounded," a play on "Babel."] the speech of the whole earth; and from there the LORD scattered them over the face of the whole earth.
NET Bible <sup>®</sup>	That is why its name was called [The verb has no expressed subject and so can be rendered as a passive in the translation.] Babel [Babel. Here is the climax of the account, a parody on the pride of Babylon. In the Babylonian literature the name bab-ili meant "the gate of God," but in Hebrew it sounds like the word for "confusion," and so retained that connotation. The name "Babel" (בָּבֶל, bavel) and the verb translated "confused" (בָּלַל, balal) form a paronomasia (sound play). For the many wordplays and other rhetorical devices in Genesis, see J. P. Fokkelman, Narrative Art in Genesis (SSN).] - because there the Lord confused the language of the entire world, and from there the Lord scattered them across the face of the entire earth.

NIV – UK                      [That is why it was called Babel \[That is, Babylon; Babel sounds like the Hebrew for confused.\] - because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.](#)

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

International Standard V .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation .

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible .

Translation for Translators .

The Voice .

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version    [Therefore its name is called Babel, for there Yahweh disintegrates the lip of the entire earth. And thence Yahweh Elohim scatters them over the surface of the entire earth.](#)

Context Group Version        [Therefore the name of it was called Babel; because there YHWH confounded the language of all the land { or earth }: and from there YHWH scattered them abroad on the face of all the land { or earth }.](#)

Green's Literal Translation    [On account of this its name is called Babel, because Jehovah confused the language of all the earth there. And Jehovah scattered them abroad from there on the face of all the earth.](#)

New RSV                            [Therefore it was called Babel, because there the Lord confused \[Heb balal, meaning to confuse\] the language of all the earth; and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth.](#)

World English Bible            [Therefore the name of it was called Babel, because Yahweh confused the language of all the earth, there. From there, Yahweh scattered them abroad on the surface of all the earth.](#)

Young's Updated LT            [Therefore has one called its name Babel, for there has Jehovah mingled the pronunciation of all the earth, and from there has Jehovah scattered them over the face of all the earth.](#)

**The gist of this verse:**        The city that they were building was then called Babel, because it was there that God confounded their languages. Therefore, mankind was scattered throughout the earth.

## Genesis 11:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>gahl</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced <i>kane</i> ]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
Together, ʿal kên (עַל כֵּן) mean <i>so, upon the ground of such conditions, therefore, on this account, on account, for this reason.</i>			
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i> ]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced <i>shame</i> ]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
Babel (בָּבֶל) [pronounced <i>baw-BEHL</i> ]	<i>confusion (by mixing), confusion of speech; stammering; gate of god; transliterated Babel, Babylon</i>	proper singular noun; location	Strong's #894 BDB #93

**Translation:** [Therefore its name is called Babel, for there,...](#)

Babel is the word Babel (בָּבֶל) [pronounced *baw-BEHL*], and it means, *confusion (by mixing), confusion of speech; stammering*. It is transliterated, *Babel, Babylon*. Strong's #894 BDB #93.

Who has not heard of Babylon? The city was called *Babel*, and we even retain that meaning today in English with the word *babble*. I am sure there are millions of Americans—even Christians—who doubt this historical incident, but even the name which comes down to us over the past 4000 or so years testifies to the Biblical narrative. The city was called *Babel*. The Hebrew word means *confusion (by mixing), confusion of speech; stammering*.

## Genesis 11:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced <i>kee</i> ]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced <i>shawm</i> ]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027
bâlal (בָּלַל) [pronounced <i>baw-LAHL</i> ]	<i>to pour over, to pour together; to mingle, mix, confuse, confound and it is from this that we determine that <i>tevel</i> means <i>confusion</i></i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1101 BDB #117

Genesis 11:9b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
sâphâh (שָׂפָה) [pronounced saw- <i>FAWH</i> ]	<i>lip, tongue; words, speech; dialect, language; edge, border [or, lip] [of something], shore</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #8193 BDB #973
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i> ]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i> ]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

**Translation:** ...Y<sup>e</sup>howah confounded the languages of the entire earth.

And the writer of this portion of Genesis makes it even more clear as to why the name *Babel*.

People try to say that miraculous things cannot happen, that everything must fall within the boundaries of science. Therefore, going with this assumption is, these stories are allegorical. So, what is this story trying to teach? Mankind is cooperating and making progress, so God throws a monkey wrench into all of it?

If we believe what the Bible says, this makes perfect sense. If we do not, then this makes little sense. Furthermore, you are then stuck with the task of determining what in the Bible is true and what is false. If you needed for the Bible to line up with contemporary norms and standards, then you would have to throw out about 90% of it. For me, after I became a Christian and began listening to the teaching of Bible doctrine, it became very clear that the Bible was not going to reinforce all of the values which I had in my soul. There were going to be a lot of places where I disagreed with the Bible, and I had to, over and over again, decide, who was right? The Bible or me?

Given the study just so far in the book of Genesis, from the standpoint of logic and science, I will have to believe the Bible over what I was originally brought up to believe.

Now, over these years, I have appreciated the Bible more and more with each passing year. And, at the same time, there were many "facts" and values which I have had to discard. Let me give you one simple "fact" which I had to discard. I was not a very good history student in high school. I had very little interest in it, and, with the exception of one teacher (who was a coach), my history teachers did not inspire me either. But, one of the few "facts" which I retained decades later was, *our founding fathers were deists*. There are not many things from history which I recall, but I certainly remember that. A deist believes that God started up the world, like a windup clock, and then walked away from it to, I guess, let things play out. However, there are an abundance of historical documents which show this notion to be false. If there were any deists among the founders, they would have been in the minority. Most of them believed in Jesus Christ and most of them believed that the Bible was the Word of God. Often, arguments were made from the Bible. They did not believe that God wound up the world and walked away because many founders believed that the constitution was inspired of God. They believed that their destiny was intermingled with the plan of God. Some today **believe** that our division of powers (along with other constitutional principles) came out of the Bible.

Genesis 11:9c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
pûwts (פוצ) [pronounced <i>poos</i> ]	<i>to scatter, to send abroad; to agitate [harass] [anyone]; to pour out [used metaphorically of anger]; to spread oneself abroad; to cause [things] to be scattered [dispersed]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #6327 BDB #806
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i> ]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y<sup>e</sup>howah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʿal (על) [pronounced <i>gah</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
pânîym (פנים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, ʿal and pânîym mean <i>upon the face of, facing, in front of, before (as in preference to), in addition to, overlooking</i> .			
kôl (לך) [pronounced <i>koh</i> ]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
ʿerets (ארץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i> ]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #776 BDB #75

**Translation:** Then, Y<sup>e</sup>howah caused them to be scattered throughout [lit., *upon the face of*] the entire earth.

God did not pick up large groups of people and place them hither and yon; God allowed them to separate of their own volition, based upon His confusion of their languages, to scatter throughout the earth. This explains the use of the Hiphil (causative) stem.

**Gen 11:9** Therefore the name of it is called Babel; because Jehovah confused the language of all the earth there. And from there Jehovah scattered them abroad on the face of all the earth.

Genesis 11:9 Therefore its name is called Babel, for there, Y<sup>e</sup>howah confounded the languages of the entire earth. Then, Y<sup>e</sup>howah caused them to be scattered throughout [lit., *upon the face of*] the entire earth. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

*Babel* means *confusion* and it is similar to the verb found in this verse. *Babel* (like most proper nouns) is transliterated from the Hebrew to English, which means that the spelling and pronunciation is very similar in the two languages. We get from this word *babble* (note the consonantal equivalence), which describes how the other languages would have sounded to the people there. *Babel* is an onomatopoeic word, describing what one language sounds like to a person who does not speak it: babble, babble, babble. The word *Barbarian* is built upon the same concept, where the language of the foreigner sounded like *bar, bar, bar* to other nationalities.

The name of the city, Babel, is based upon the verb in this verse, which is *bâlal* (לָלַב) [pronounced *baw-LAL*]; and it means to *minge, mix, confuse, confound*. Strong's #1101 BDB #117.

You may choose to doubt what is in the Bible. You may choose to believe that this is just some made-up story. God gave us free will, to think and believe as we choose to. However, why would *Babel*, the most ancient city in the world, at the center of the cradle of civilization, have that name? Its name and meaning are so lacking in dispute that our own language even today reflects its original meaning.

This confusion of the languages was a miracle, meaning that it occurred outside of the laws of science (which is, by the way, a misnomer, as science does not establish or enforce scientific laws; science merely observes and classifies the laws of God).

**Gen 11:9** Therefore the name of it is called Babel; because Jehovah confused the language of all the earth there. And from there Jehovah scattered them abroad on the face of all the earth.

Genesis 11:9 Therefore, the name of this city was called Babel, because it was here that Jehovah confounded the languages of all mankind. By this, Jehovah caused them to be scattered throughout all the earth. (Kukis paraphrase)

This final sentence, where Jehovah scatters them upon the face of the earth, *scatter* is a Qal perfect, indicating that the writer now looks at this as a completed event.

What follows was interesting to me. I do not know exactly how factual all of this is, not being an expert in philology, but it is fascinating if true.

### Philology from Bible Believers . Org

"Philology," which is the science of the structure and development of language, has discovered three parent groups of languages and peoples: Aryan, Semitic, and Turanian (who are Asiatic and neither Aryan nor Semitic)-Japheth, Shem, and Ham. Family traits are evident in the languages of the different groups as language determines or reflects the way men conceive of things.

The Japhetic or the Indo-Europeans have maintained the evident relationships in their particular family of languages. And the same observation applies to the Semitic languages. Even though they have spread so widely, they have continued to share a certain way of viewing things. Indo-Europeans philosophically with an emphasis on the abstract, and the Semites with their emphasis upon behavior from a more transcendental point of view.

From all over the world, wherever Ham and Canaan are found, the witness is to an entirely practical view of the world, rooted in the present, wise in a canny sort of way, specific, particular, uninterested in the abstract, always inventing new words or new terms for things, interested in particulars rather than categories, earthy, and very largely disinterested in unlikely possibilities.

The family of the Indo-European languages is readily identifiable as a family, as are the Semitic tongues. The Hamites, however, have been so inventive, they devise terms with equal facility and their languages are in such a state of flux that within a few generations, even tribes living just across the river will find themselves scarcely able to converse.

This strange tendency which has prevented the Egyptians, Hittites, Sumerians, Chinese and Central American Indians from developing an alphabetical script may have been Providence, guaranteeing the quick dispersal of Ham all over the world. Many cuneiform scholars have noted the similarities between Sumerian and Chinese. "Civilization has traveled with the sun, from the east, coming west. . . . The oldest civilization is China, . . . And sin has traveled with civilization" (We Have Seen His Star and Have Come to Worship Him, 28:188).

## Philology from Bible Believers . Org

What divided the Hamites in this way was not a difference in language structure, for the philosophy of their languages remained remarkably similar, so that the ways of thinking of the African native, the Chinese peasant, and the American Indian have remained for a very long time comparable: it was the vocabularies which changed.

According to Genesis 10:32, the families of the sons of Noah are divided or separated by languages into tribes and nations. These boundaries also knit them together in their generic group. This is a protective measure to ensure each people would be separate yet interdependent in order to realize the maximum capacity of man with his tremendous creative potential.

Any attempt to unify the world's language, to co-mingle the races or nations with the overt intention of making all men share equally in this potential will only serve to defeat its own purpose in the end. Thus Esperanto, "multiculturalism," gender equality, the UN, WCC and "the brotherhood of all mankind", are artificial, in direct opposition to God's purposes, and in a manner of speaking, a repetition of the hubris of Babel (Genesis 11:1-6 Matthew 24:37-38)

Taken from: <http://www.biblebelievers.org.au/bb000319.htm>

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### The Line of Shem—the Introduction

*Genesis 10:21–31 1Chronicles 1:17–27 Luke 3:34–36*

### Special Section: Archaeology, Primitive Man and Evolution

At this point, we are in the middle of Genesis 11. We have just covered the Tower of Babel, and the indirect scattering of man due to the confusion of the languages. In the chapter previous, we studied the families of man, and which people came from which person (or family). We are about ready to study a straight-line genealogy which fixes the time when man began on this earth. We will actually be able to place some fairly hard dates on the flood itself, although there will end up being a range of 875 years because of the differences between the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts. Therefore, it will be helpful for us to take a look at archaeology.

It is important that we have some kind of an idea as to what life was like during these times insofar as ancient history and archeology reveal to us. Due to preconceived ideas, most modern scholars see this period of time as being exceptionally primitive, which contradicts the Bible. We have a change in the languages for a majority of the population of the earth, as well as some physical and mental degeneration after the flood, which would require a new written language for them.

Two common archeological assumptions which contradict the Bible are: (1) early man was more primitive back then, than he is today; and (2) early man worshipped a pantheon of gods, and later *evolved* to worshipping one God.

Never underestimate the power of a philosophy and approach which is anti-God and, particularly, anti-Bible. You must recognize that there are those who will favor theory and philosophy above truth and actual scientific discovery.

Let me give you some examples where science has favored theory and philosophy over truth: man is said to have walked the earth 3 million years ago as homo habilis, then 2 million years ago as homo erectus, and then 1 million

years ago as homo sapiens (if my memory of such things can be depended upon). We would expect the fossil evidence to support this general classification of the evolution of man. However, it does not—all these various forms of man are found all over the time-map (placed there by paleontologists by their own dates), with no regards to this long-standing evolutionary classification. So, even though the actual evidence accepted by paleontologists contradicts this evolutionary progression of man, these groupings are taught virtually everywhere to have evolved one from the other.

Marvin Lubenow, who wrote the excellent book, *Bones of Contention*, tells about one of his classes at a Christian college, where he assigned each student 5 human or australopithecine (our supposed ancestors) fossils to research (for a total of 150 human and pre-human fossils). The students were to spend no less than 8 hours each on this research, they needed to study at least 5 separate sources on each fossil, and they needed to find an agreed upon date for each fossil. The students found out that there was very little agreement among evolutionists, so they were allowed to assign a date to a fossil if they could find two independent sources who agreed upon a date for that fossil. Then, part of the assignment included the students affixing their fossils to a timeline (obviously, not the actual fossil itself). What would have been expected is, australopithecine fossils could be found clustering around 4 to 5 million years ago, homo habilis 3 mya, homo erectus 2 mya, and homo sapiens 1 mya. No such clustering takes place. Using the numbers which *evolutionists* give to these various fossils, there was no such organization occurring on the human timeline.

Lubenow admits that he loaded the dice, to some degree, and included some of the more obscure human fossils—those about which, very little has been written, but have been discovered and classified by evolutionary scientists. There are some fossils which receive a lot of press, but the majority of human and pre-human fossils are unknown to the general public. This latter group of fossils are known within the archaeological community, their findings having been written up in various archaeological journals and studies, but they are not known to the outside world. We don't find them in textbooks or in Time Magazine articles about the latest discovery in evolution. In fact, there are a lot of these fossils which do not fit into evolutionary theory.

This resulting timeline always has quite an impact upon the students, who do their own independent research, where the results are always the same—there is no clustering of our ancestors as evolutionary science tells us.<sup>10</sup> They find out other things as well. An ancient fossil is discovered, classified as one kind of human; and dated; and then, if the date is not right, this fossil is often *reclassified*. Everything I have read in evolution books indicates that homo habilis, homo erectus and homo sapiens are distinct evolutionary families of man. Therefore, how do you take a fossil which is clearly determined to be a homo sapiens and then, suddenly determine that, it is a homo habilis fossil? This happens a lot in evolution, because theory is more important than truth.

I have previously mentioned that I have taught my students about the population growth curve and the associated exponential growth curve, and, armed with calculators and their notes, I then take them to the library and ask them to determine at what point in time were there 100 people on this earth, according to any population figures which they want to use (this assignment requires 2 sets of world population figures from any point in time in human history). I always remind them that, according to evolution, man is a million years old. Most of them believe in evolution. Consequently, they are quite surprised when their mathematical calculations lead them to answers of man being a few thousand years old, as opposed to their answers being in the hundreds of thousands or millions of years. Like Lubenow, I simply give the assignment. They use a human population growth formula found in virtually every Calculus and Pre-Calculus book in the world (and, at one time, found in nearly every Algebra II book) and they are free, in the library, to get their figures from any book they choose. What is even better, is when I get the precocious student, who checked with his older brother or sister, and knows that this assignment is coming up, and they figure out how to choose numbers which yield the oldest age for man. If memory serves, by their intentional loading of the dice in order to get the oldest age for man possible, a couple of my students came up with 20,000 or 25,000 years. As I found out, independent of Lubenow, when the child does the work himself, it is often more effective, and it stays with him longer.

Mathematically, there is no way to match up mathematical population models with human evolution. We have discussed this before. Mankind being less than 10,000 years old matches up nicely with mathematical population

<sup>10</sup> This is from Marvin Lubenow's *Bones of Contention*, Baker Books, ©2004, pp. 17–20

growth models; Homo sapiens being 1 million years old does not match up with any population growth model. Is this mentioned in any college or high school course or textbook? Hardly. That is because theory is more important than evidence, and contrary evidence is set aside.

Ask yourself that, in an age where you can find a summary of every television show along with the plotlines and cast for each episode on the internet, why don't we find the same thing for human fossils? Why can't we go to Evolution.com or Evolution.org and find a list of every single ancient human who has been unearthed, all of the pertinent information about this fossil (e.g., where is it, who has it, what does it consist of, photographs, when was this fossil alive, who discovered it, how its age and classification was determined, etc.), along with any pictures of same. And then, on some timeline, have these human fossils placed. The problem would be, according to the data of evolutionary scientists, there would not be this nice grouping of 3 kinds of man, but they would be scattered willy nilly on such a timeline. Homo sapiens would be too old, homo habilis would be too recent, and it would not conform to this model which evolutionary science has given us. This is why we do not even have a reference book on fossil man where all of the fossils are listed, with all of their pertinent information, which these individual fossil being dropped onto a timeline according to scientific consensus. Such a reference book seems like it would be fundamental to the study of evolution, and yet, this reference book does not exist. You will find a greater variety of human and pre-human fossils in Lubenow's book than you will in any reference book on the same subject (he lists around 300 human fossils with much of this information). Why would someone who disputes evolution fill up his book with scientific discoveries which are not found in reference book favoring evolution? It is because theory is more important than truth.

What few students or adults know is that, the disagreements of multi-degreed evolutionists is profound. They agree only on one thing: the concept of evolution, and on just about nothing else. This information is rarely presented to high school or college students studying these things (I was taught evolution in college in a math course and in a child development course, if memory serves; and, of course, in my high school or Junior High science classes). Furthermore, there are various pictures, graphs, brain-size comparisons, etc. which are found in textbooks and museums which have been debunked as absolutely false (by evolutionary scientists), for the most part, and yet continue to find their way into classrooms and museums.

Although there is a great opportunity here to teach debate, critical thinking, scientific evidence, etc., this is almost never seized upon by a science teacher. There is a multitude of information out there, both for and against evolution, for this or that theory of evolution, and what more engaging way to get a class stimulated than to put this up for debate, but, for most science teachers, this would be sacrilegious. The idea of even considering God specifically creating man as recently as 6500 years ago is just, in their minds, ridiculous. Furthermore, I can guarantee you that, if some upstart science teacher opened up this topic to debate in his classes, this would be tamped down so fast by his colleagues that his head would spin. He would be called in to meetings, berated in front of his peers, and incessantly attacked, simply for allowing his students to question and debate evolution.

Can you point to an accepted scientific textbook anywhere that opens up evolution to a fair and reasonable debate? Can you point to a textbook which reveals that differences between evolutionary scientists are not minor but profound? Of course not. However, if you disagree with some philosophical tenet of science, and you will be labeled as being *at war with science*.

Most of what I have just written, could also be said of the science of *global warming*, now called *climate change*; which *science* has also found its way into the classroom. This is a very young science, and there is profound disagreement in this area; and what greater motivating factor than to jazz up students by getting them to debate; but is this found in the public schools? Not to my knowledge. Global warming is, and Al Gore's film is; and the notion that, if you recycle, change the light bulbs in your house, and drive a tiny car when you grow up, that will really help the earth—that is taught.

Let me give you one more example of how philosophy supercedes the facts: I was in grammar school in the 50's and in high school in the 60's, and schools were not seen as so radicalized at that point. However, I came out of my education believing in my heart that most of our founding fathers were deists (that is, they believed that God started up the world and then wandered off to do something else, and left everything in our hands to deal with).

I did not know what Christianity was at that time in my life, but I was taught clearly that our founding fathers did not believe in it.

I was also brought up to believe that there ought to be a dramatic wall of separation between public education and anything related to the Bible, and I had the impression that was the intention of the Founding Fathers. Neither of these *facts* are true, and we have copious original documents to show that most of the founding fathers were Protestant Christians who believed in an active God who was clearly involved in the actual founding of our country (the common name for God at that time was Providence, always capitalized). Almost every educational institution, both private and public, was originally founded upon teaching reading and writing **so that one might study the Bible**. 187 of the first 200 colleges in America were Christian, they were Bible teaching institutions.

The idea of separating the Bible from education in our early years as a nation would have been seen as preposterous. We are the nation that we are today, because Bible-believing Christians tried to formulate a government which allowed great freedom and which did not allow one protestant group to persecute another protestant group. Throughout our early history, there has always been a co-mingling of prayers, the Bible and government, stopping short of proclaiming that Baptists, for instance, are the most accurate purveyors of truth.

But, what would happen today if a teacher read or posted a verse from the Bible or even just kept a Bible on his or her desk? In my former classroom, I posted all kinds of quotations about the room, but what would have happened if some of these came from the Bible? I could put up the words of Shakespear, Euclid, Frank Zappa and Cecil Adams, without a word being said, but if I added to these quotations something from the Bible, at some point in time, that would be questioned, and I might even be asked to remove it. Particularly, if that verse was, **Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved** (Acts 16:31a). The Supreme Court in 1980 actually ruled that the Ten Commandments could not be displayed on a classroom wall, despite the fact that they are accepted by Christians, Jews and Muslims!

This year (2010), in Florida public schools, they celebrate religious freedom day. So, nonprofit groups wanted to distribute Bibles (with disclaimers on the inside covers of the Bibles). Nope, there would be no distribution of Bibles on religious freedom day; Bibles were banned!

A school in Fort Wayne, Indiana has allowed the teaching of Bible classes as a part of its curriculum since 1944. The ACLU this year filed suit against this school district and got them to stop this evil practice.

In Knoxville, TN, students at a grammar school apparently gathered for a Bible study during recess, and this is now being litigated.

This is how powerful the forces are which work against God and against truth and against the Bible. A significant portion of all lawsuits against schools and school districts over the past several decades are related to the Bible, Christian clubs, Christmas carols, etc. The NEA (the National Education Association) promotes and recommends a book actually dedicated to Satan,<sup>11</sup> but they would never ever suggest that one read the Bible.

The Supreme Court has not always ruled that the Bible has no place in the classroom. In 1799 *Runkel v. Winemiller*, Justice Samuel Chase concluded: "By our form of government, the Christian religion is the established religion, and all sects and denominations of Christians are placed on the same equal footing."

In 1844 *Vidal v. Girard*, the ruling included these words: "Why may not the Bible, and especially the New Testament be read and taught as a divine revelation in the schools --Its general precepts expounded and its glorious principles of morality inculcated? Where can the purest principles of morality be learned so clearly or so perfectly as from the New Testament?"

My point in all of this is, there are powerful forces which want you to believe a certain way, and history and science are both manipulated, edited and falsified in order to get you to think that way. Therefore, most of us believe that

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<sup>11</sup> See <http://www.nea.org/tools/17231.htm> (Saul Alinsky dedicates his book to the first radical, Satan).

ancient man was not very smart, had little or no technology, beyond pottery plates, bowls and beverage containers, and that man evolved mentally, spiritually and technologically. That is the philosophy, and all the information that you will find in the average textbook, will support that view. Two lessons from now, you will see a chart of ancient technology which is going to greatly surprise you.

Coming from the hand of God—and let me stress that this is a personal theory—early man’s comprehension and memory was phenomenal, so that everything, or very nearly everything, that early man heard, he retained. We do not know when a written language was developed. My guess is, there was no written language until after the confusion of the languages, and here is why: the mind of Adam (and his early descendants) was so powerful that, they had no reason to write anything down. They heard something once and they remembered it. There would be no reason to record contracts, land agreements, trade and purchase agreements, because this could be discussed, an agreement could be reached, and everyone heard, understood and could remember this agreement. Furthermore, these men stood by their agreements, for the most part (I deal with contracts all of the time, today, and for most people, the contracts that they sign is just some piece of paper which stands between them and what they want).

At this point in our technologically advanced age, we do not fully understand why we remember some things and forget others; why our brain prints and retains some information, and yet, other information seems to be printed and becomes almost immediately inaccessible (lack of short-term memory). Ideally speaking, our own minds seem as though they ought to keep all of our memories somewhere, which is why hypnotism, rightly or wrongly, is used to dredge up old memories. And for all of us, who meet a person and then, 2 seconds later, have forgotten that person’s name, know that sometimes information just does not seem to print at all.

As man degenerated physically, he also degenerated mentally, and a written language became a necessity. Since man needed a written language, he developed one. My guess is, this occurred after the flood and after the confusion of languages.

### Special Section: Traditional Archaeological Views

Some assumptions of archeology have remained unchanged since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was at that time that archeologists separated the earth into several layers representing various time periods and we have held to that model until this day even though it was made prior to carbon dating methods at a time when very little fossil evidence had been uncovered. It was at that time that ancient history was separated into three ages: the Stone Age (10,000–3200 B.C.), the Bronze Age (3200-1200 B.C.) and the Iron Age (1200–330 B.C.). For this reason, a lot of archeological finds are grouped into these preordained time periods. Only organic matter may be dated using C-14 dating methods and there is a dearth of organic matter to be found in Palestinian excavations. Therefore, a lot of dating is done by strata (that is, if it is found in a certain layer, then it is dated according to that layer). This is primarily true of dating layers of earth which is determined to be pre-man.

In terms of a Biblical timeline, there has been some corruption of Biblical texts in regards to the years given. The years given in the Masoretic text are slightly different from those in the Greek text (the very early translation from Hebrew into Greek of the Old Testament; and this translated used very old Hebrew manuscripts which are not available to us today). Also, there is one name left out of Shem’s line in the Massoretic text, which is found in the Greek text. It is, in part, for these reasons that it is difficult to correlate Biblical and archeological dates. Somewhere in the Middle Bronze Age (after 2300 B.C.) is when we begin to see greater correlation between archeological dating and Biblical dates. The dates given for the Old Stone Age (also known as the Paleolithic Age) is based as much upon evolution and geological **theories** as it is upon sound archeological evidence. There is no existing archeological evidence which requires us to go back further in man’s history than 10,000 B.C.<sup>12</sup>

It is assumed by archeology, but not taught by the Bible, that earliest man primarily hunted and gathered food from nature. Their earliest implements were made of flint and chipped stone. This is what is known as the Paleolithic period. It is very likely that some groups from Genesis 11 functioned that way, but farming predates the flood and

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<sup>12</sup> *The Bible Almanac*, p. 94

Noah was a farmer immediately after the flood, so there did exist some agrarian societies before and after the flood (recall that Cain was also a farmer).

The second period of the Stone Age, the Mesolithic period, was when, according to archeological assumptions, we first saw food-producing societies and real settlements. There certainly existed advances in the arts of civilization during this time. The Bible would group these two periods of time together.

As Charles Clough points out, the original inhabitants of the ark emerged to a cruel world. Even though the antediluvian people were forbidden to enter into the garden of God, they still seemed to have a very moist, and comfortable climate with a great deal of vegetation. However, those in the ark first emerged to a flood-ruined land with some, but very little vegetation. In fact, it was possibly due to the lack of vegetation that they were given permission to eat animals, as they had additional clean beasts on the ark.

The third part of the stone age is called the Neolithic period, which began about 5000 B.C., and it is at this point where the **interpretations** of archeological finds and the Bible begin to fall into some agreement. With all the clay available to the post-diluvian societies, and the lack of large trees, they made mud-brick shelters, which, after a few heavy rains, disintegrated to nothing. Charles Clough points out where archeology assumes that each stage of building these mud huts represents a century, the first few stages more than likely represent a decade or less for each layer of mud huts. Man certainly experimented and his first mud huts were worthless. Afterward, he learned to fire his clay bricks and to affix them with a mortar for a more permanent dwelling.

When Noah and his family came down from the mountains from the east and moved into the Euphrates valley, there would have been far more water on the ground and far more rain, and much more temperate weather as a result. In Genesis 11:1–4, man built a city with a great tower. There is no reason to think that, immediately upon leaving the mountains that they built successful buildings, but, given their age and intellect, within 100–200 years (or less), they were probably building a city which could withstand heavy rains.

In archeological sites in Jericho (Jericho is in Israel; not in the Euphrates valley), we have four Neolithic periods; two which were pre-pottery and two which had pottery. This would correlate with eventually discovering how to fire bricks to make shelters which would withstand rain. With the first group in Jericho, we have found massive defensive walls which have been built. After this wall was destroyed (perhaps by invaders and likely by heavy rains), the second period of time still lacks the ability to make pottery, but they did make realistic portraits of human heads or skulls using clay for molding and shell inset for eyes. The next group in Jericho could make pottery. We do not know if these were new groups which supplanted to original peoples, or whether these ages represented technological advances.

It may occur to you, how can man successfully figure out how to build a city in Shinar (in the Euphrates Valley), and then, hundreds of years later, experiment once again with building? Technology is built upon technology. There is not a person alive in the world today who could build, from raw materials, an airplane, a car or a computer (or even a stainless steel fork). When man dispersed, some families had some knowledge of *this*; and others had some knowledge of *that*. When man began to spread out, he faced different environments with different building materials. Whatever shelters were built to begin with, would have reflected expediency, a loss of some technology and a new set of raw building materials. Expediency may have been the biggest factor. This occurs today. On a plot of ground, a person may first set up a trailer; then he may build a frame home, and then he may build a brick home. It is not that this person has never heard of bricks before and discovers them right before building his brick home; he started out simply lacking in resources, and did what he could. This could explain mud huts which were later replaced by better mud huts, which were later replaced with brick huts, all occurring not over a century or two, but over a few decades (as Clough suggests). Given the rains, which were probably much heavier in the Middle east at this time, it would not take much time for a few heavy rains to take out the first mud huts in Babel, and later in Jericho.

Prior to the Neolithic Age (the "New Stone Age"), people appeared to live in small migrating groups which had no permanent settlements but they did seem to return to the same areas sometimes for generations. They were concerned with hunting and agriculture and some had hunting camps which were separate from these settlements.

Neolithic peoples domesticated wild animals and were familiar with irrigation and storage insofar as agriculture was concerned. Certainly, most communities would do both, and some would specialize, depending upon the personal preferences of the group. Neolithic villages have been discovered in the mountains of northern Iraq, indicating that these small, roving bands had begun to settle down in one place, but away from Shinar.

It is important to recognize that man is not a monolithic being. People did not spread out from the Tower of Babel and all do exactly the same thing at the same time. Some probably settled into areas, some possibly roamed about, and others kept moving until they came upon a plot of ground that they liked and could defend. Some carried various aspects of technology with them and others carried other aspects of technology with them.

Recall that these groups of peoples had heard about the antediluvian civilization as well as about the true God and it is quite possible, if not likely, that to the unbelievers, information from the past, given to them orally, became mixed up. After all, most people today who are unsaved and liberal in their religious background see Buddha and Confucius and Jesus Christ as very similar types of people, if not essentially the same. In their eyes, these men represent man's search for God. Christians with any amount of doctrine understand that Buddha and Confucius represent not a search for the truth but a rejection of the truth.

Because of the oral history which they had received, we would expect early, post-deluvian (after the flood) man to be polytheistic, which he is (in some cases). Each had their own gods and goddesses, which would be slightly different because (1) information was passed down orally for several centuries and (2) each group had its own language. We find evidence that there would be a power shifting to the local cult and the officiators of that cult. The result as often what we call a temple-town, when many of the citizens worked for the local temple in one way or another. Some built religious towers (ziggurats). We would expect this because even though the fallen angels who cohabited with man in the antediluvian era have been put into chains of darkness, there still remains perhaps millions of fallen angels who desire to interact with man. They are able to do this through pagan religions. We would further expect to see a power struggle and to see power shift into the hands of these cults, and that is what history seems to bear out.

As these racial groups separated and moved away from Babel, they also began to record their language in writing and to keep economic records. Most (probably all) developed arithmetic and they recorded their myths, legends, ethics, history, laws, songs and literature. So, by Abram's time, many of these villages and temple-towns had put their language into writing. There were certainly struggles between groups for land and buildings and some groups conquered other groups, causing an amalgamation of language, religion and customs. Although it seems that Neolithic man was pretty consistent in their polytheism, or worship of many gods, we also have evidence of ancient monotheism as well. In fact, what we would expect is monotheism predating polytheism, and for polytheism to be based, in part, upon Genesis 6 (the intermingling of man and angelic beings).

You may wonder, how can ancient man, just a few generations after the flood; and not that far removed even from creation, be polytheistic? It is simple: negative volition. **Because, knowing God, they did not glorify Him as God, neither were thankful. But they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man, and birds, and four-footed animals, and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves. For they changed the truth of God into a lie, and they worshiped and served the created thing more than the Creator, who is blessed forever (Romans 1:21–25).**<sup>13</sup>

As Rush Limbaugh often says, "When a person is born, that is when history begins for that person." So, a few hundred years after the flood and the earth is populated by thousands of people who never witnessed the flood; they have not seen the ark; and these concepts are just words to them. They undoubtedly heard about creation and they undoubtedly heard about the angelic infiltration and the resulting half-human/half-angelic race. But, again, these are just words to them. Every man chooses in his own soul what to believe.

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<sup>13</sup> Even though the Romans passage is a different context, the principle is the same.

Not too long ago, I spoke to a college professor who told me that everything she believed was based upon *peer-reviewed studies*. First of all, there are not peer-reviewed studies on every aspect of life; and secondly, some of these peer-reviewed studies have been shown to be false. This same woman, a brilliant college professor, also believed that prepared food (as in fast foods) were cheaper than buying unprepared foods (which viewpoint lacks any sort of real logic). My point here is, people believe what they choose to believe.

If you are reading this, you probably believe in Jesus Christ. Now, you have never seen Him; you did not have an apparition of some sort; probably, no one took you through long, complex arguments as to His existence. Someone told you the gospel, that Jesus died for your sins, and you believed. **Though you do not now see Him, you believe in Him** (1Peter 1:8b). For all intents and purposes, you made the free will choice to believe in Him.

At the end of the Stone Age and the beginning of the Bronze age, we have since inserted the Chalcolithic period, which is the copper-stone period. This is around 4000 B.C. or so when copper was used extensively.

Interestingly enough, I came across at least 2 different secular sources which, prior to 10,000 B.C. there was an Ice Age which was later followed by higher ocean levels (which would be inline with the Biblical narrative).

Traditional View of the Ages				
10,000 B.C.	8000 B.C.	6000 B.C.	4000 B.C.	2000 B.C.
Stone Age			Bronze Age	
Mesolithic Period			Neolithic Era	

The Iron Age begins circa 700 B.C.

I would assume, based upon the information of the Bible, that various groups of people went through these ages at different times.

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During the early part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium B.C., these various groups became city-states. In fact, for all intents and purposes, these were the first empires. As their groups became larger, they became more efficient at providing the daily necessities and it became more important to provide some sort of defense against those from without. We see in history a simultaneous population explosion, better organized religions, and better defined boundaries. We find these early empires scattered throughout the Near East, in Egypt, Elam and the cities of the Mesopotamian area, Syria and Israel. We have found huge palace complexes and temples and evidence of large-scale commerce, including trade-agreements, cooperation and competition. Much of civilization seemed to be centered about what is known as the fertile crescent; the area in and about the Tigris and Euphrates rivers (which, according to Genesis 11:2, was where civilization began).<sup>14</sup> With the almost impenetrable Arabian desert in the south (which likely became more and more inhospitable with time), trade between empires often involved routes going through Palestine.

It is during this time which we have also discovered sea-faring nations out on the Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea. It is not inconceivable that there were even a few imitation arks where groups of people built their own ark and launched themselves out into the seas. Satan has always been a great counterfeiter of the truth.

Throughout the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium B.C., Egypt had developed into an empire, having gone through dynasties 1-6 prior to Abraham's visit to Egypt. One of the first, great historical records is a plaque of slate, called the **Palatte of Narmer** which dates back to 3000 B.C., depicting the conquest of Lower Egypt by King Narmer of Upper Egypt (he was unable to subjugate it but his successor, Menes was). There is still much confusion surrounding this and some believe that these two are one and the same person. When Mennes united the two sections of Egypt, he

<sup>14</sup> A proposition which archaeologists would not necessarily agree with.

proclaimed Horus, the sky god, the national god, and then claimed that he was the incarnation of Horus. Most of the pharaohs of the next several dynasties did likewise.

There is one more lesson on archeology coming up, then we will then return to the exegesis. In this next lesson, you will be exposed to a chart about the technology of ancient man, which you are going to find to be quite surprising.

## Special Section: Archaeological Assumptions, C-14 Dating and Ancient Technology

We are spending a few lessons on archaeology for several reasons. First, when we come to the end of Genesis 11, we will actually put a date range upon the flood, and therefore, upon the restoration of the earth. We ought to have some idea why archaeology and evolution disagree with these numbers. We also should have some idea about why the Bible teaches somewhat of an inverted evolution and whether or not that can be at all squared with archaeological findings. At the end of this lesson, I will reproduce a chart of what we know about ancient technology, and I think you are going to be quite surprised.

Theologians from centuries ago were not troubled by modern science and modern assumptions, but present-day theologians do not want to appear as though they are *alfalfa-chewing barbarians*<sup>15</sup> when faced with the assumptions and conclusions of what is called *modern science*. In the past century, modern science has become quite technologically advanced to the point where people view science as some sort of a god and science sees itself that way as well (have you ever heard of the surgeon with a *god-complex*?).

Science has, as a result, become more authoritative, more political and more philosophy driven—particularly in some branches of science. In the realm of evolution, many scientists now equate the evolution theory with the theory of gravity. That is, they are both theories, but who could really doubt them? In the realm of medical advance, there are some scientists who see nothing wrong with abortion—and certainly, nothing wrong with aborting a baby with some clear disease or condition—and, therefore, they see nothing wrong with doing scientific experiments on embryonic stem cells. In this realm, many scientists have taken the position that, *if we can conceive of doing something, then we can do it; after all, we are scientists*. This takes us into the areas of cloning, embryonic stem cell research and abortion. And then, more recently, we have the theory of man-made global warming, which, only 4 decades ago, was the theory of global cooling. Not all doctors and scientists subscribe to these philosophies, approaches or medical procedures. Although doctors have a variety of views on abortion, there are only a few doctors who actually perform them and a few nurses who participate in such a procedure. I knew one such nurse, and it sickened her and plagued her conscience. Even though there is a modern-day push to redistribute wealth as a means of correcting global warming, there are very few scientists actually involved in that movement. In fact, some of the organizations who claim to be involved in global warming research are not even scientists, but people who have cherry-picked scientific research.

So, in many of these areas, science has not just taken on an authoritative position, but a self righteous one as well. Quite obviously, this has bled into politics. I have heard some politicians being fiercely questioned about whether or not they believe in evolution as if this were one of the most important questions to be answered. I recall in the previous election, on many occasions, George W. Bush as being at war with science. For the most part, the Democratic party has aligned itself with embryonic stem cell research, with abortion on demand (often funded in part by taxpayers), and with the idea that, if we charge enough for energy usage, that will save our planet. These are not positions taken by most Democrats; but they are positions taken by their party, and it is done in the name of science.

In the realm of archaeology, there is the problem of theologians latching onto the **Sumerian king list**. This list gives us a list of kings which reigned before and after the flood. There are parallels between this list and the Biblical account of the flood which are similar. Before the flood, kings ruled for an incredibly long time (18,000 years and longer); and after the flood, their reigns were much shorter. They live in the same area as the Bible speaks of, after the flood. We also appear to be dealing with a Semitic people, which is also in agreement with

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<sup>15</sup> I lifted this vocative from Cecil Adams, author of *The Straight Dope* books and columns.

the Bible. Finally, this list seems to begin to reasonably parallel the Bible around 2300 B.C., where the length of reigns is reasonable and archaeology is comfortable assigning some real dates to these rulers lives. Unfortunately, some theologians have been so anxious to grasp at some extra-Biblical corroboration for the Genesis flood that they have assumed that this list is it, and it isn't.

The main cause of concern for some believers is archaeology and paleontology. Archaeology is the study of ancient man through his relics, monuments, pottery and artifacts. Paleontology is the study of past geological ages based upon the study of fossils. These sciences make several assumptions:

### The Assumptions of Archaeology and Paleontology

- The age of man on this earth is very ancient;
- Man evolved from a primate-type being which was not human;
- Man either is, was or has always been in a state of evolution; that is, a progression from more primitive to less primitive to civilized to modern.

The data which these scientist collect are dropped conveniently into these slots of general agreement.

Not all archaeologists and paleontologists make these assumptions. These assumptions are essentially moot with regards to archaeology covering the time of around 2300 B.C. and forward.

It is interesting that, the Bible, the Sumerian King List and archaeology all come together around 2300 B.C.

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The dating of man is accomplished by radioactive dating methods and by the strata in which fossils have been found. There are two types of commonly used radioactive dating, carbon-14 and potassium argon dating. C-14 dating is done as follows. All living and previously living things have a certain amount of carbon in them. We constantly ingest and egest carbon and carbon carries within it a minute amount of radioactive carbon, known as C-14. When that which is living dies, it no longer ingests carbon; however, it has a certain amount of carbon within it which has a tiny amount of C-14 within it. The C-14 begins to disintegrate, thus changing the ratio of C-14 to carbon within this once living organism. The half-life of C-14 is approximately 5700 years so that once a living organism dies, the C-14 within it is reduced by weight by half every 5700 years. To get an idea as to the kind of ratio that we are dealing with, there is approximately one atom of radiocarbon for every trillion molecules of carbon dioxide in the air.<sup>16</sup> It is important to realize that we are dealing with a very minute amount of carbon and an even smaller amount of C-14 (less than one trillionth of the carbon examined) and that this method of dating assumes that the ratio of C-14 to carbon in the atmosphere has always been constant throughout all human history. Since the antediluvian world was probably surrounded by an atmosphere with more water vapor in it than the present world, this may have had an affect upon this ratio. What happened in the flood was cataclysmic, and what set the flood off is unknown. Is it possible that a higher concentration of radioactive carbon was introduced into the earth's atmosphere during these cataclysmic events? I have previously suggested that the earth was struck by meteors or asteroids, which both set off the 40 days of rain and tilted the earth. Although I came up with these thoughts independently, others have hypothesized similar events which set off the great flood of Noah. Such a series of events could have changed the C-14 concentration in the earth's atmosphere, throwing off all calculations which extend beyond 5000 (or so) years ago.

Furthermore, due to the very small amount of carbon that we examine, there is significant time limitation to using this method. Although some have touted C-14 dating as being accurate for 50,000 years, it may not be accurate for even 10,000 years, even assuming atmospheric constancy. Also, the interpretation of the results can be distorted. As Charlie Clough points out, when a piece of wood found in a tomb is tested using carbon dating methods, the age given is not the age of the tomb nor is it the age of the tree when it was put into the tomb but, rather, it is the age of the tree when it was cut down originally. Furthermore, there have been instances where C-14 dating produced clearly inaccurate results.

<sup>16</sup> *World Book Encyclopedia*, Vol. 16 ©1982

## C-14 Accuracy

In the Proceedings of the Symposium on Radiocarbon Variations and Absolute Chronology held at Uppsala in 1969, T. Säve-Söderbergh and I. U. Olsson introduce their report with these words:

"C-14 dating was being discussed at a symposium on the prehistory of the Nile Valley. A famous American colleague, Professor Brew, briefly summarized a common attitude among archaeologists towards it, as follows: If a C-14 date supports our theories, we put it in the main text. If it does not entirely contradict them, we put it in a footnote. And if it is completely out of date we just drop it. Few archaeologists who have concerned themselves with absolute chronology are innocent of having sometimes applied this method. . ."

Although I came upon at least one critic who followed the *evolution* of this statement, he did not seem to dispute the original statement which is quoted above. His problem with the statement is, there were more and more details being left out (i.e., this was a reference to a very specific arena of study—Egyptian archaeology). With what I know about *human evolution evidence*, this same principle seems to be true in this field of study as well.

The critic: <http://www.ntanet.net/quote.html>

We have several documented instances where living animals or recently dead animals were determined to be thousands of years old. Some living penguins were determined to be 8000 years old; shells of living mollusks have been dated as 23,000 years old, a freshly killed seal was dated as having died 1300 years ago.

My point is, people with agendas, including creationists, will cling to data which they like and dismiss that which they do not. Many of us begin with assumptions in this area (for instance, I believe in man's age being recent, but hesitate to assign any sort of a date to the earth itself).

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Potassium-argon dating depends upon the decay of potassium 40 into argon 40. This decay rate is much slower than that of C-14, and is used to date items which might be a million or more years old. Certain rock formations are dated this way. The assumption here is that when some rock formations of Africa show to be 1.5 million years old, then the tools and the bones of primitive man found in that vicinity are also 1.5 million years old. I hope that it is obvious that this does not indicate the true age of the artifacts or the bones found with the rock but, at best, dates only the rock itself.

I have mentioned these methods of dating for several reasons:

- To indicate that the methods of dating are not infallible
- To show you that they are the product of a certain number of assumptions which may or may not be erroneous

Archeologists have, on a number of occasions, come to faulty conclusions. In the Bible, the Elamites are Semitic (descended from Shem). However, 19<sup>th</sup> century archeology determined that they were Hamitic. This caused a number of people to turn away from the Scriptures as being the Word of God, and liberal protestant theology in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century was the result of this (in part). If you cannot trust the basic history of the Bible, then what in the Bible can be trusted? Later, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it was discovered that, in this area named after Elam, where decidedly Hamitic ancestors were discovered, there were lower layers of people, who were of a distinctly different racial stock. It was determined that the original settlers of Elam were Semitic.<sup>17</sup> Interestingly enough, liberal protestant theology continued unabated, as it is based more on negative volition toward the Word of God than on specific scientific facts.

The JEPD theory, which believes that Moses did not write the Pentateuch, was based upon faulty assumptions that man had not developed writing by the time of Moses. Even though this assumption has since been proven false, the JEPD theory not only persists, but it is one of the dominant theories taught in seminaries throughout the world. In other words, you can go to a seminary, designed to build up pastors and evangelists for the ministry,

<sup>17</sup> From: <http://phrasearch.com/Trans/DBM/setup/Genesis/Gen057.htm>

which teaches that which is fundamentally false based upon theories and assumptions which have been proven false. This may help to explain why it is hard to find a decent church in your city. So many ministers have been trained to doubt some of the most fundamental facts of Scripture (e.g., the Mosaic authorship of Exodus through Deuteronomy), that Christianity becomes a watered-down morality.

Stratigraphy is the study of various strata of sites where man has lived. Due to man's predisposition toward evolution, it is thought that the stone age came first (which can be separated into different eras), then the Chalcolithic (copper/stone) period, the bronze age, etc. A period of man's history is assigned to these strata which are postulated to be in one of these categories and everything found in that strata are then dated by the strata in which they are found. When man is dated based upon the strata within which he is found, then we are at the mercy of the precepts upon which stratigraphy is founded. That is, a particular human fossil may be determined to be a million years old because the strata in which he is found is assumed to be a million years old. You see, carbon dating destroys portions of the items which are found in archaeological digs, so using this method conserves the organic matter which is found (which is very little in the Palestinian area).

The problem here is that anyone can go out today and find people who are living in one of these ages. There are people who are living in the stone age; people who function as hunters and gatherers who join in tribes. It has been a fact throughout all human history that these various kinds of people have lived almost side-by-side since the dawn of man. It is true that many societies go through a period of growth and prosperity in which their culture becomes richer and more diversified during which we see a technological boom. In fact, in many countries today we see a tremendous boom in technology. However, it takes but a superficial examination of human history to see that the world has moved through ages of advance and decline, advance and decline. Man in Rome in the first four centuries A.D. was light years ahead of man in the dark ages, which occurred centuries later.

The second problem with strata identification is, these nice neat strata variations as we would find in any textbook so not agree with what is out there in the real world. A geology textbook has these layers of earth neatly piled upon one another, but, in the real world, they are random 95% of the time (I have forgotten from where I got that figure). There are all kinds of theories as to why older layers end up on top of more recent strata, but, as I pointed out before, you cannot back up one theory with another theory. That is not logical.

Despite my spending 3 lessons on this material, many people will continue to believe that ancient man with his pottery was undeveloped and barbaric, and modern man is tremendously evolved since then. However, we know a lot about ancient man, and you rarely find this information in any book on archaeology, because it flies in the face archaeological assumptions.

Now, I do not wish to disparage the work of archaeologists or paleontologists. The Bible has been continually vindicated in several areas of archaeology and historical accuracy due to their discoveries. They have also been force-fed certain assumptions throughout their entire school life; and when you are told something long enough at an early enough age by people that you trust and admire, it is only natural to accept those premises. As either Lenin or Hitler said, "A lie told often enough becomes truth."

Will Durant, one of the greatest ancient historians of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, wrote: *The discoveries here summarized have restored considerable credit to those chapters of Genesis that record the early traditions of the Jews. In its outline, and barring supernatural incidents, the story of the Jews as unfolded in the Old Testament has stood the test of criticism and archeology; every year adds corroboration from documents, monuments, or excavations...we must accept the Biblical account provisionally until it is disproved.*<sup>18</sup> If Will Durant, a man who knows far more about ancient history than you or I, and a man who doubts Old Testament miracles, can accept that which is not miraculous in the Old Testament as accurate history; how much more ought we, as believers in Jesus Christ, be able to accept the Word of God as it stands written?<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> *The Story of Civilization; 1. Our Oriental Heritage*, by Will Durant; MJF Books, ©1963; p. 300 (footnote).

<sup>19</sup> This is the second time I have inserted this quote; it seemed apropos here.

Charles Clough, in his book *Dawn of the Kingdom, section III*, gives a list of the technological advances made by early post-diluvian man (he took these from Arthur Custance, *Doorway Papers*). I've reproduced Custance's list below:

### Scientific Achievements of Ancient Hamitic Peoples

Mechanical Principles and Applications: Gears, pulleys, lathes, fire pistons, gimbal suspension, suspension bridges, domes and arches, lock gates and lifts, steam engine principle, clockwork mechanism, etc.

Materials: Copper, bronze, iron, cast iron, steel, cement, dyes and inks, rubber, lenses of several types, glass (including possibly a malleable glass), china and porcelain, glues, preservatives, shellacs, varnishes, enamels, gold and silver work (including sheet, wire, and plating of metals), etc.

Building Techniques, Tools and Materials: Nails, saws, hammers, brace and bit, sandpaper, Carborundum, plans and maps, surveying instruments, central heating systems, window materials, including glass, protective coatings, street drainage systems, sewage drainage on a wide scale, running water in piped systems, piped gas for heating, drills (including diamond drills), buildings of all types (including genuine skyscrapers and earthquake-proof construction), etc.

Fabrics and Weaving: Cotton, silk, wool, linen, felt, lace, needles, gauze, mechanical looms, mending, tapestry, batik, thimbles, parchment, tailored clothing, feather and fur garments, knitted and crocheted materials, all types of thread, ropes up to 12 inches in diameter, paper of all kinds (including coated stocks), etc.

Foods: Aloes, Chickie gum, Tomato, Pears, Cascara, Sweet potato, Kidney beans, Pineapple, Prickly pear, Cereals, Chili pepper, Squash, Cocoa, Cashew and peanut, Corn, Coffee, Manioc, Beans, Tea, Artichoke, Strawberries, Tobacco, Potato, Arrowroot.

Foodgathering Methods: Fish poisons and animal intoxicants, Elephants for labor and land clearance, Traps and nets of all kinds, The use of tamed animals to catch "game": cats for hunting, birds of prey such as eagles, falcons, etc., dogs and cormorants for fishing.

Writing, Painting, etc: Inks, chalks, pencils, crayons, block printing, literary forms, movable type, textbooks, encyclopedias, envelopes and postal stamps, libraries and catalogues, etc.

Medical & Surgical Practices & Instruments: Anaesthetics, Cocaine, Adhesive tapes, Bandages, Poultices, Troches, Decoctions Infusions, Pills, Suppositories Snuffs, Splints Plasters Tourniquet, Enemas, Gargles Lotions Soaps Ointments, Inhalators, Vaccine for smallpox, Cascara and other emetics, Tranquillizing drugs, Caesarian operations, Trephination, Insecticides, Fumigators, Quinine, Surgical stitching, Truth serums, Curare, Animal-stupefying drugs, Surgical instruments: knives, forceps, tweezers, etc., Identification of, and treatment of, hundreds of common diseases and injuries, , including brain and eye operations and surgery in general.

Animals Domesticated: Pigs, Dogs, Llama and Alpaca, Horses, Cats, Sheep, Fowl, Camels, Cows, In agriculture, use of: multiculture and fertilizers mechanical seeders, and such.

Travel Conveyances, etc.: Compass, Canals and locks, Road rollers, Skis, Snowshoes, Toboggans, Sternpost rudder, Wheelbarrows, Cement paving, Surfaced roads, All types of water craft, Stirrups, harness for domestic animals, Wheels: solid, spoked, rimmed and tired, Wheeled vehicles, travois, Boats with water-tight compartments, Bridges (suspension, cantilever, arch, etc.), Use of birds for navigation.

"Aircraft": Balloons, Gliders and helicopters, Kites and Parachutes, Jet Propulsion, Weather-signaling and forecasting.

Cosmetics, etc.: Mirrors, Nail polishes, Toothbrushes, Wigs, Scissors, Shaving equipment, Combs, Powders and ointments, Jewelry of all kinds.

Mathematics: Geometry, A kind of logarithms, Trigonometry, Concept of zero, Algebra, Use of place system.

## Scientific Achievements of Ancient Hamitic Peoples

Trade and Commerce: Paper money and coinage, Systems of inspection, Banking houses, Accounting systems, Trade regulations and price-fixing, Wage regulation and compensation, Loans with interest systems, Weights and measures, Postal systems, Formal contracts.

Household Furnishing: Hammocks, Gas cookers, Fans, Folding beds, Oil stoves, Space heaters, A form of "telephone", Rocking stools, Whistling pots and kettles, Go-carts for children, and other toys, Lamps, Clocks, Rotary querns, Running water.

Games: Revolving stages for theaters, Rubber ball games, Board games (chess, checkers, etc.), Wrestling, Lacrosse.

Warfare: Bows and crossbows, Bolas, All types of piercing and striking weapons, Repeating bow, a form of machine gun, Rifled weapons, Guided missiles, Body armour, Aerial bombardment, Flame throwers, Poison gases and toxic agents, Gun powder, Heavy artillery (catapults of several kinds).

Musical Instruments: Tuning forks of various kinds, Wind instruments (organ, pipes, horns, flutes, etc.), String instruments (various modifications of the harp), , Percussion instruments (tubes, bars, stones, bells, and diaphragms).

Miscellaneous: Umbrellas, Safety pins, Straws for drinking, Spectacles, Calendars, Telescopes (?), Snow goggles, Cigar holders, finger printing for identification.

Does this sound like the ancient man you have been taught about in school?

*Custance explains: For many readers this list will be entirely unsatisfactory. However, a word of further explanation about it may help to clarify things. Many of the items, in fact the majority of them, could be called Hamitic "firsts". Some of them bear no relationship historically to their western counterparts as far as we can ascertain from a study of the transmission of culture traits. Still, they had the idea before we did. The ingenuity of many of these devices and techniques is truly extraordinary, particularly in view of the paucity of natural resources. It is no exaggeration to state that primitive people have done marvels with their natural resources as they found them. The difficulty for us is that we are deceived by their very simplicity. Whether highly civilized or of primitive culture, the Hamitic people have shown an amazing ability to exploit the immediate resources of their environment to the limit.*

*It is only recently that we in our culture have become aware of our indebtedness to non-Indo-European people for practically all the basic elements, simple and complex, of our own technological civilization. The only purpose of this list here is to draw attention to the fact that in each of these elements of culture Hamitic peoples got there first and independently, and in most cases were our instructors. As we have already said this aspect of the subject is elaborated with documentation in Part IV of this volume.*

*We may sum up what has been said thus far by setting forth the following propositions. First, the Table of Nations in Genesis 10 is a historic document indicating how the present population of the world has been derived from Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Secondly, this threefold division is more than merely a genetic variation of certain "racial" types: there is evidence that it is intended to indicate that the three branches of the race were divinely apportioned a characteristic capacity which has been reflected in the unique contribution each branch has rendered in the service of mankind as a whole. And thirdly, the contribution of Shem has been a spiritual one, of Ham a technological one, and of Japheth an intellectual one: in the process of history, these contributions were made effective in this order.*

Certainly, ancient man lacked *i-phone* and *WordPerfect*, but this partial list should indicate that these men were not the grunting, semi-civilized, "let's go throw a rock at the head of an animal and see what happens" types, as they are all too-often portrayed. One of the main reasons that the authorship of Moses is questioned by higher critics is that they do not like the idea of such civilized literary content coming from bronze age man. However, it is clear now that writing and language occurred as much as a millennium before Moses.

I reproduced this list to indicate that man has, even in ancient history, been extremely intelligent, very inventive, and that identifying the age of man by stratification, under the assumption that man has progressed over a long period of time from very primitive to highly civilized (I guess we are the ones who view ourselves as being highly civilized), is fraught with inaccurate presuppositions.

This list was taken from:

[http://www.custance.org/Library/Volume1/Part\\_I/Chapter3.html](http://www.custance.org/Library/Volume1/Part_I/Chapter3.html)

Arthur Custance's background and credentials are listed here:

<http://custance.org/insight.html>

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Having spend such a short time in archeology, we will return to the exegesis of Genesis 11 in the next lesson.

### Types of Genealogies Found in the Bible

This information is repeated from **Genesis 10** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)):

Because this is a chapter dealing with genealogical lines, we should note a fascinating peculiarity in the Bible. Somewhere between 5 to 10 authors follow out a specific genealogy, which genealogy could be strung together and take us all the way from Adam to Jesus (which Luke presents). No other lines are followed out in this way. Typically, we have one patriarch and his sons and possibly some of his grandsons (or more) are named. But, no author in the Bible just follows, say, a particular line of Ham out for 5 or 6 or 7 generations and then stops. Maybe 2, 3 or 4 generations are listed.

There are two types of genealogies found in the Bible. There is the **cluster, family or group genealogy**, where the father is mentioned, some of his sons are named, some of their sons are named and, on occasion, some of their sons are named (e.g., Genesis 10:2–5 21–31). This is pretty much how the entire line of Japheth is presented in the previous chapter. Only 1–4 generations are typically listed.

However, there is also the **linear or straight-line genealogy** when the father is named, then a son of his, then his son, then his son. Only on rare occasions do we find two brothers named in such a line; and these lines typically go on for 7–10 generations (see Genesis 10:24–26a 11:10–24).

Here is the interesting question: how did 5 or more Biblical authors (who did not personally know one another or even live in the same time period) know to list only the linear genealogies that take us from Adam to Noah to Abraham to David to Jesus? If a family typically had 5 to 10 male children, how did they know which line to choose? Why don't we find the occasional odd splintered linear genealogical line from Adam to Noah to Jeffrey to Virgil? Human viewpoint cannot give us a satisfactory answer. However, our understanding of the Bible, that this is the Word of God, written by God the Holy Spirit utilizing the hand of man, explains it. God the Holy Spirit knows the line of Jesus. He knew it in eternity past. Therefore, God the Holy Spirit knows which linear line to follow; and which lines to relegate to a cluster genealogies.

At this point, we will begin the study of a straight-line genealogy.

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## The Line of Shem—the Exegesis

Genesis 10:21–31 1Chronicles 1:17–27 Luke 3:34–36

**These [are] the generations [or, *genealogies, history, families*] of Shem: Shem [is] a son of a hundred a year and so he sires Arphaxad two years after the flood.**

Genesis  
11:10

**These [are] the generations [genealogies, families, history] of Shem: Shem [was] 100 years old when he fathered Arphaxad two years after the flood.**

**What follows is the genealogical line of Shem. Shem was 100 years old when he fathered Arphaxas two years after the flood.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos	These are the generations of Shem. Shem was a son of a hundred years, and he begat Arphakshad, two years after the deluge.
Latin Vulgate	These are the generations of Sem: Sem was a hundred years old when he begot Arphaxad, two years after the flood.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	These [are] the generations [or, <i>genealogies, history, families</i> ] of Shem: Shem [is] a son of a hundred a year and so he sires Arphaxad two years after the flood.
Peshitta (Syriac)	These are the descendants of Shem: Shem was a hundred years old, and begot Arphakhashar, two years after the flood.
Septuagint (Greek)	And these are the generations of Shem: and Shem was one hundred years old when he begot Arphaxad, the second year after the flood.

Significant differences:

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Two years after the flood, when Shem was one hundred, he had a son named Arpachshad. He had more children and died at the age of six hundred. This is a list of his descendants:...
Easy English	This is the history of Shem's family. When Shem was 100 years old, he became Arpachshad's father. That was two years after the flood.
New Century Version	<b>The Story of Shem's Family</b> This is the family history of Shem. Two years after the flood, when Shem was 100 years old, his son Arphaxad was born.
New Living Translation	<b>The Line of Descent from Shem to Abram</b> This is the account of Shem's family. Two years after the great flood, when Shem was 100 years old, he became the father of [Or the ancestor of; also in 11:12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24.] Arphaxad.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	<b>These are the generations of Shem:</b> Shem was a hundred years old when he became father to Arphaxad in the second year after the Downpour.
Christian Community Bible	<i>These are Shem's descendants:</i> <i>When Shem was a hundred years old he became the father of Arpachshad, two years after the flood.</i>
New American Bible (R.E.)	<i>Descendants from Shem to Abraham.</i>

These are the descendants of Shem. When Shem was one hundred years old, he begot Arpachshad, two years after the flood. [11:10-26] The second Priestly genealogy goes from Shem to Terah and his three sons Abram, Nahor, and Haran, just as the genealogy in 5:3-32 went from Adam to Noah and his three sons Shem, Ham, and Japheth. This genealogy marks the important transition in Genesis between the story of the nations in 1:1-11:26 and the story of Israel in the person of its ancestors (11:27-50:26). As chaps. 1-11 showed the increase and spread of the nations, so chaps. 12-50 will show the increase and spread of Israel. The contrast between Israel and the nations is a persistent biblical theme. The ages given here are from the Hebrew text; the Samaritan and Greek texts have divergent sets of numbers in most cases. In comparable accounts of the pre-flood period, enormous life spans are attributed to human beings. It may be an attempt to show that the pre-flood generations were extraordinary and more vital than post-flood human beings. Compare 1Chr 1:24-27; Lk 3:34-36.

NIRV

### **The Family Line of Shem**

Here is the story of Shem.

It was two years after the flood. When Shem was 100 years old, he became the father of Arphaxad.

New Simplified Bible

This is the genealogy of Shem. Two years after the flood, when Shem was one hundred years old, he became the father of Arpachshad.

Today's NIV

### **From Shem to Abram**

This is the account of Shem's family line.

Two years after the flood, when Shem was 100 years old, he became the father [Father may mean ancestor; also in verses 11-25.] of Arphaxad.

### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Ancient Roots Translinear

These *are* the progeny of Shem: Shem, a son of a hundred years, begat Arphaxad two years after the flood.

Bible in Basic English

These are the generations of Shem. Shem was a hundred years old when he became the father of Arpachshad, two years after the great flow of waters;...

Complete Jewish Bible

Here is the genealogy of Shem. Shem was 100 years old when he fathered Arpachshad two years after the flood.

The Expanded Bible

### **The Story of Shem's Family**

This is the family history [L?book of the generations; 2:4] of Shem [9:18; 10:21-31]. Two years after the flood, when Shem was 100 years old, his son Arphaxad [10:22] was born.

Ferar-Fenton Bible

The History of Shem's Descendants.

These are the genealogies of Shem; Shem was one hundred years old when Arphaxad was born to him two years after the deluge,...

HCSB

These are the family records of Shem. Shem lived 100 years and fathered Arpachshad two years after the deluge.

New Advent Bible

These are the generations of Sem: Sem was a hundred years old when he begot Arphaxad, two years after the flood.

NET Bible®

### *The Genealogy of Shem*

This is the account of Shem.

Shem was 100 old when he became the father of Arphaxad, two years after the flood.

NIV – UK

### **From Shem to Abram**

This is the account of Shem's family line.

Two years after the flood, when Shem was 100 years old, he became the father[d] of Arphaxad.

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

International Standard V .

**Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):**

The Heritage Bible .

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Kaplan Translation .

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible .

Translation for Translators .

The Voice .

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:***The Amplified Bible*

This is the history of the generations of Shem. Shem was 100 years old when he became the father of Arpachshad, two years after the flood.

Concordant Literal Version

And these are the genealogical annals of Shem: Shem is a hundred years of age, and begetting is he Arphaxad two years after the deluge.

English Standard V. – UK

**Shem's Descendants**

These are the generations of Shem. When Shem was 100 years old, he fathered Arpachshad two years after the flood.

The Geneva Bible

These [are] the generations of Shem: Shem [was] an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad two years after the flood. He returns to the genealogy of Shem, to come to the history of Abram, in which the Church of God is described, which is Moses principle purpose.

NASB

**Descendants of Shem**

These are the records of the generations of Shem. Shem was one hundred years old, and became [Lit begot, and so throughout the ch] the father of Arpachshad two years after the flood;...

New King James Version

**Shem's Descendants**

This is the genealogy of Shem: Shem was one hundred years old, and begot Arphaxad two years after the flood.

Syndein/Thieme

These . . . {are} the generations of Shem. Shem was an hundred years old, and sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} Arphaxad two years after the flood.

World English Bible

This is the history of the generations of Shem. Shem was one hundred years old, and became the father of Arpachshad two years after the flood.

Young's Updated LT

These *are* births of Shem: Shem is a son of an hundred years, and begets Arphaxad two years after the deluge.

**The gist of this verse:**

At age 100, 2 years after the flood, Shem fathered Arphaxad.

Genesis 11:10a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'êlleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced ALE-leh]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural	Strong's #428 BDB #41
tôwlôdôth (תּוֹלְדוֹת) [pronounced tohl <sup>o</sup> -DOTH]	<i>generations, results, proceedings, genealogies, history, course of history; origin; families; races</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #8435 BDB #410
Shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; and is transliterated Shem</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #8035 BDB #1028

**Translation:** [These \[are\] the generations](#) [genealogies, families, history] [of Shem](#):...

For all intents and purposes, this phrase is the title of this second of Genesis 11. It tells us that we are going to study the genealogical line of Shem.

Now, it would be easy for you to skip over this genealogy and not give is a second thought. The less you know about the Bible, the more likely you are to do this.

I posted this doctrine back in Genesis 4, but feel the need to lay it out again.

Over a period of perhaps 3000 years, somewhere between nine and twelve different men recorded the genealogy of Jesus Christ. It is very likely that most of them did not appreciate what they were recording. They recorded His legal line (from David through Solomon down to Joseph) and His actual line (from David through Nathan to Mary). The line from Adam to Abraham to David (and then to Jesus) is also recorded in the Bible. These various authors did this under the influence of God the Holy Spirit (2Timothy 3:16 2Peter 1:21).

The Genealogy of Jesus Christ	
Human Author*	Passage/Commentary/Notable People
Adam or Seth	Genesis 4:25–26 Adam to Seth
Noah or Shem	Genesis 5:1–32 Adam to Seth to Noah to Shem
Abram	Genesis 11:10–27 Shem to Abram
Isaac	Genesis 25:19–26 Abraham (Abram) to Isaac to Jacob
Joseph	Genesis 37:2 46:8–25 Jacob to Judah (along with the rest of the tribes of Israel).
Nathan, Gad, Unknown?	1Chronicles 2:3–15 Judah to Perez to Jesse to David.
Ruth	Ruth 4:13–22 From Boaz and Ruth to Jesse to David.

Both the book of Kings and the book of Chronicles follow out the kingly line of David through Solomon down to Josiah and the deportation of the people of Judah; however, this is a history rather than a genealogy, per se (which parallels the genealogy in Matthew 1:7–13). What is followed out in this history is the legal and kingly line of Jesus (which line takes us to Joseph).

This history is continued in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, to Zerubbabel, a descendant of David and the governor of Judah when the people are returned to the land.

## The Genealogy of Jesus Christ

Human Author*	Passage/Commentary/Notable People
Ezra	Ezra 3:8 Ezra takes up the slack and lists a short line leading to Zerubbabel from Israel's captivity.
Nathan, Gad, Unknown?	2Samuel 5:13–14 1Chronicles 3:1–5 14:3–4 David to Nathan (who is in Mary's line but not Joseph's) and Solomon, who is in Joseph's line, but not Mary's.
Matthew	Matthew 1:1–16 Abraham to Judah to David to Solomon to Joseph. This is the legal and kingly line of Jesus to His step-father, Joseph.
Luke	Luke 3:23–38 Adam to Noah to Abraham to Isaac to Jacob to Judah to David to Nathan to Mary (the genealogy actually takes us to Joseph, the <i>supposed</i> father of Jesus) to Jesus. This is the line of our Lord's humanity, a direct line from Adam to Mary and then to Jesus—the only complete genealogy recorded in human history.

This is one of the great proofs of Scripture being the Word of God, one which few appreciate. The believer, years and even centuries after the 1<sup>st</sup> advent, needs to know with certainty the line of Christ, and all of the twists and turns that it took. That person can go to the Bible and find the name of every person who was a part of this line. No master theologian (of the human variety) figured out that this needed to be there. But God the Holy Spirit knew it needed to be, so generation after generation, when it was necessary, God the Holy Spirit inspired various men (and possibly one or two women) to record this lineage.

\* I am giving the name of the human author I believe to be responsible for recording this information.

I have not included all of the names in each genealogy, but only the names of those you may already have heard of.

I realize that most of you yawn at the thought of a genealogy; however, nowhere else in the history of man do we have a 4000 year long genealogy given for anyone. We have nothing which comes anywhere near to this (at best, history records a line of kings or rulers over a particular country over a period of several hundred years).

A more complete study of the genealogy of Jesus Christ is found here in the **Doctrine of Genealogies**: ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

### Genesis 11:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character</i> ; and is transliterated <i>Shem</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #8035 BDB #1028
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
mê'âh (מֵאָה) [pronounced may-AW]	<i>one hundred, a hundred, hundred</i>	feminine singular numeral; construct form	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040

**Translation:** ...Shem [was] 100 years old...

You may recall that Noah, at age 500, had 3 sons, all of them born about 100 years before the flood. Also recall that God gave a 120 year heads up about the flood. So, on his own, Noah began making preparations for the flood and for 20 years, on his own, he began building this ark and collecting animals. For one man, this must have seemed like an impossible task. And then, about 100 years before the flood, he begins to father children. At Flood-minus-97-years, Noah fathered Shem. When Shem exited the ark, he was 98 years old. When he began to father his own children, he was 100 years old.

Genesis 11:10c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i> ]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'Ar <sup>e</sup> pak <sup>e</sup> shad (אַרְפַּכְשָׁד) [pronounced <i>ahr-pahk-SHAHD</i> ]	<i>stronghold of the Chaldees; I shall fail as the breast: he cursed the breast-bottle; transliterated Arpakshad, Arphaxad</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #775 BDB #75
sh <sup>e</sup> nâthayim (שְׁנַיִם) [pronounced <i>sh<sup>e</sup>h-naw-thah-yihm</i> ]	<i>two years</i>	feminine dual noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
'achar (אַחַר) [pronounced <i>ah-KHAHR</i> ]	<i>after, following, behind; afterwards, after that</i>	preposition/adverb	Strong's #310 BDB #29
mabbûwl (מַבּוּל) [pronounced <i>mahb-BOOL</i> ]	<i>flood, a deluge, an inundation of water</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3999 BDB #550

**Translation:** ...when he fathered Arphaxad two years after the flood.

Arpashchad means *boundary*; its stem means to *define or limit*.

There are a very different set of meanings given to Arphaxad's name. The first given above comes from Smith and Fausset; the second two come from BDB.

One has to be careful of these commentaries. For instance, one person I read (I forgot who) called him the 3<sup>rd</sup> son of Shem because he is named third in the lists of Shem's sons (Genesis 10:22 1Chronicles 1:17). However, we do not know that to necessarily be the case. It is physically possible. Shem could have impregnated his wife when first being on the ark, and then she could have had 2 more children in quick succession after exiting the ark. However, it is more reasonable that these sons are listed in accordance with their prominence at that point in time, when this information was first recorded.

Genesis 11:10 These [are] the generations [genealogies, families, history] of Shem: Shem [was] 100 years old when he fathered Arphaxad two years after the flood. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:10 What follows is the genealogical line of Shem. Shem was 100 years old when he fathered Arphaxas two years after the flood. (Kukis paraphrase)

We will continue with this straight-line genealogy, and eventually we will combine the verses together, as there will be a pattern established in the Hebrew.

**And so lives Shem after his siring of Arphaxad five hundreds a year; and so he sires sons and daughters.**

Genesis  
11:11

**After fathering Arphaxad, Shem lives [another] 500 years. He also fathered [other] sons and daughters.**

**After fathering Arphaxad, Shem lived another 500 years. He also fathered other sons and daughters.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Targum of Onkelos	And Shem lived after he had begotten Arphakshad five hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.
Latin Vulgate	And Sem lived after he begot Arphaxad, five hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so lives Shem after his siring of Arphaxad five hundreds a year; and so he sires sons and daughters.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Shem lived after he begot Arphakhashar five hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Shem lived five hundred years after he had begotten Arphaxad, and begot sons and daughters, and died.

Significant differences:

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Common English Bible	After Arpachshad was born, Shem lived 500 years; he had other sons and daughters.
Easy English	After Arpachshad was born, Shem lived for 500 more years. Shem had other sons and daughters.
<i>The Message</i>	After he had Arphaxad, he lived 600 more years and had other sons and daughters.
New Berkeley Version	Shem lived 500 years, getting sons and daughters.
New Century Version	After that, Shem lived 500 years and had other sons and daughters.
New Living Translation	After the birth of [Or the ancestor of; also in 11:12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24.] Arphaxad, Shem lived another 500 years and had other sons and daughters.

#### **Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	And after Shem became father to Arphaxad, he lived three hundred and thirty five more years (fathering other sons and daughters), and then he died.
Christian Community Bible	Shem lived five hundred years and he had more sons and daughters..
NIRV	After Arphaxad was born, Shem lived 500 years. And he had other sons and daughters.

Revised English Bible	After the birth of Arphaxad he lived five hundred years, and had other sons and daughters.
Today's NIV	And after he became the father of Arphaxad, Shem lived 500 years and had other sons and daughters.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	And after the birth of Arpachshad, Shem went on living for five hundred years, and had sons and daughters.
The Expanded Bible	After that, Shem lived 500 years and had other sons and daughters.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	...Shem then lived after the birth of Arphaxad, five hundred years, and had sons and daughters born to him.
NET Bible®	And after becoming the father of Arphaxad, Shem lived 500 years and had other [The word "other" is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied for stylistic reasons.] sons and daughters.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

International Standard V .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation .

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

Kretzmann's Commentary .  
 Lexham English Bible .  
 Translation for Translators .  
 The Voice .

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And living is Shem after his begetting Arphaxad five hundred years. And begetting is he sons and daughters. And he die.
LTHB	And after he fathered Arpachshad, Shem lived five hundred years. And he fathered sons and daughters.
NASB	...and Shem lived five hundred years after he became the father of Arpachshad, and he had other sons and daughters.
Syndein/Thieme	And Shem lived after he sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} Arphaxad five hundred years {Shem lived to be 700 years old}, and sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} sons and daughters.
World English Bible	Shem lived after he became the father of Arpachshad five hundred years, and became the father of sons and daughters.
Young's Updated LT	And Shem lives after his begetting Arphaxad five hundred years, and fathers sons and daughters.

**The gist of this verse:** Shem lived another 500 yeas after fathering Arphaxad and fathered other sons and daughters as well.

Genesis 11:11a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced <i>khaw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
Shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced <i>shame</i> ]	<i>name, reputation, character; and is transliterated Shem</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #8035 BDB #1028
'achârêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced <i>ah-kuh-RAY</i> ]	<i>behind, after; following; after that, afterwards; hinder parts</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong's #310 BDB #29
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i> ]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'Ar <sup>e</sup> pak <sup>e</sup> shad (אַרְפַּכְשָׁד) [pronounced <i>ahr-pahk-SHAHD</i> ]	<i>stronghold of the Chaldees; I shall fail as the breast: he cursed the breast-bottle; transliterated Arpakshad, Arphaxad</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #775 BDB #75
châmêsh (חָמֵשׁ) [pronounced <i>khaw-MAYSH</i> ]	<i>five</i>	masculine singular numeral	Strong's #2568 BDB #331
mê'ôwth (מֵאוֹת) [pronounced <i>may-OHTH</i> ]	<i>hundreds</i>	feminine plural absolute; numeral	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i> ]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040

**Translation:** [After fathering Arphaxad, Shem lives \[another\] 500 years.](#)

You may recall that Noah lived 950 years. Shem, his son, will live 600 years, and his son will live even fewer years. So there will be a degeneration of the people over time. They will live fewer and fewer years with each successive generation.

This means that Shem lived for 502 years after the flood up until Abram. In fact, he outlived all of his ancestors, with the exception of Eber, including Abram, down until Isaac. This is according to the numbers in the Masoretic text (the Hebrew); the Greek text adds nearly 900 years to the extent of this line. .

Genesis 11:11b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
bânîym (בָּנִים) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bath (בָּת) [pronounced bahth]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #1323 BDB #123

**Translation:** He also fathered [other] sons and daughters.

There is no indication that Arphaxad was Shem's first son (or third son). However, Shem also had other sons and daughters.

Genesis 11:11 After fathering Arphaxad, Shem lives [another] 500 years. He also fathered [other] sons and daughters. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:11 After fathering Arphaxad, Shem lived another 500 years. He also fathered other sons and daughters. (Kukis paraphrase)

This tells us that Shem had at least 5 children one of them is Arpachshad, but then he also has sons and daughters, which means at least two of each gender beside Arpachshad. My guess would be, lots more than just two of each.

Recall that Noah had 3 surviving sons who went with him onto the ark: Shem, Ham and Japheth; and that we followed out these generations of Noah in Genesis 10 and saw how the children of each man could be followed out to which area he settled in.

However, now we come back and look at the generations (tôwl<sup>e</sup>dôth or תְּדִלּוֹת) of Shem. We did not look at the toledoth of Ham or Japheth, per se. That is, we did not find this word used in conjunction with them. However, we find this word used with Shem, which, in the Hebrew, should jump out at you. God the Holy Spirit is saying, "This is the line to watch." This is not always the case when we follow a line, but the repetition of Shem's line, at this point, stands out, along with the use of the word *toledoth*.

There are two kinds of genealogies generally found in the Bible: there is the *cluster* genealogy which concentrates on the sons, grandsons, and sometimes great grandsons of one man; and then there is the *straight-line* or the *linear* genealogy which is much like a relay race, where the baton is handed off from one generation to the next, and 5–10 generations are listed. Shem had several sons—Elam, and Asshur, and Arpachshad, and Lud, and Aram—but we only look at one of those sons: Arpachshad. He takes the baton from Shem and hands it off to Salah. Salah hands off the baton to Eber, and so it goes. So this is not a repeat of Genesis 10:22–31. Genesis 10 presented 3 cluster genealogies; and this portion of Genesis 11 presents a particular straight-line genealogy.

The purpose of a straight-line genealogy is to eventually take us from Adam to Jesus (the last Adam—1Corinthians 15:45). Somehow, every author of Scripture who listed a genealogy seemed to know that there was one particular straight-line genealogy to follow, even though most of them contributed only 7–10 pieces of the entire puzzle.

It is my personal opinion that this genealogy in this form was composed around 2100 B.C. Liberal theologians claim, without any real proof, that someone wrote this down a 1000 or so years later. There are a large number of details in the Bible, some cultural and some historical, which archaeologists continually discover to tell us that the Bible got it right. I gave you a quotation from Will Durant, one of the greatest of the ancient historians, who does not believe in anything supernatural, but says that, historically, you cannot fault the Bible. Now, if an historian says that the history of the Bible, insofar as he knows (and he knows a lot more than you and I) is accurate, then does it make more sense for these words to be composed near to the time these events took place, or for someone to write this a millennium later?

When I say *composed*, I am saying that I do not know if this was committed to writing, but it was committed to memory, at the very least. I personally believe that man's memory had a greater capacity at this time, and that writing and a written language probably existed before Abraham (who will be the focus of the next several chapters).

No matter who you believe when it comes to the date these things were composed, somehow, 2 millennia before the birth of Jesus Christ, someone knew which line to watch. Furthermore, this would have been counter-intuitive. At this time, there is a great civilization in Egypt, but we have no straight-line genealogy for any of the sons of Ham. Japheth is settling in lands all over western Asian and Europe, spreading out further than the other 2 sons of Noah, but no one in his line is followed out. But Abraham's genealogy is followed out. In my opinion, this genealogy was recorded long, long before there was an Israel. God the Holy Spirit knew this was the line to watch and that this line would lead to the genetic and legal lines of Jesus Christ (which lines are distinguished *after* King David).

This is a genealogy, which I won't cover in any detail, except for the fact that, this gives us a precise timeline going from the flood to Abraham (which timeline will be made clear in a chart to follow). You will recall that the timeline before the flood was also very precise in this same way. When we put this information together, we can actually determine how long it has been since the flood and how long man lived prior to the flood.

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<b>And so Arxphaxad lived five and thirty a year and so he sires Shela.</b>	Genesis 11:12	<b>Arphaxad lived 35 years and fathered Cainan. Arphaxad lived 400 years after he fathered Cainan and fathered other sons and daughters [as well].</b>
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**After living 35 years, Arphaxad fathered Cainan. Arphaxad fathered other sons and daughters, living another 400 years after he fathered Cainan.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Targum of Onkelos	And Arphakshad lived thirty and five years, and begat Shelach.
Latin Vulgate	And Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, and begot Sale.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so Arxphaxad lived five and thirty a year and so he sires Shela.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Arphakhashar lived thirty-five years, and begot Shalah.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Arphaxad lived one hundred and thirty-five years, and <u>begot Cainan. And Arphaxad lived four hundred years after he had begotten Cainan, and begot sons</u>

and daughters, and died. And Cainan lived one hundred and thirty years and begot Salah. A portion of v. 13 was added to get us to Shelah.

Significant differences: The Greek inserts another generation here, along with the phrase *and then he died*.

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	When Arpachshad was thirty-five, he had a son named Shelah.
Easy English	When Arpachshad had lived for 35 years, he became Shelah's father.
Easy-to-Read Version	When Arphaxad was 35 years old, his son Shelah was born.
<i>The Message</i>	When Arphaxad was thirty-five years old, he had Shelah.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Arphaxad was a hundred and thirty-five years old when became father to Kainan.
Beck's American Translation	Arpachshad at 35 got Shelah...
New American Bible (R.E.)	When Arpachshad was thirty-five years old, he begot Shelah. The Greek text adds Kenan (cf. 5:9-10) between Arpachshad and Shelah. The Greek listing is followed in Lk 3:36.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Complete Jewish Bible	Arpakhshad lived thirty-five years and fathered Shelach.
The Expanded Bible	When Arphaxad was 35 years old, his son Shelah [10:24] was born.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	And Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, then had Shelah born to him;...
New Advent Bible	And Arphaxad lived thirty-five years, and begot Sale.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

International Standard V .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation .

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

Kretzmann's Commentary	.
Lexham English Bible	.
Translation for Translators	.
The Voice	.

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	When Arpachshad had lived 35 years, he became the father of Shelah.
Concordant Literal Version	And Arphaxad lives a hundred and thirty-five years, and he is begetting Cainan.
Context Group Version	And Arpachshad lived five and thirty years, and fathered Shelah.
English Standard Version	When Arpachshad had lived 35 years, he fathered Shelah.

Syndein/Thieme

And Arphaxad lived five and thirty years, and sired/'caused the birth of {yalad} Salah.

Young's Updated LT

And Arphaxad has lived five and thirty years, and he sires Salah.

**The gist of this verse:**

Arphaxad fathered Shelah (or possibly Cainan) at age 35.

**Genesis 11:12**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'Ar <sup>e</sup> pak <sup>e</sup> shad (אַרְפַּכְשָׁד) [pronounced <i>ahr-pahk-SHAHD</i> ]	<i>stronghold of the Chaldees; I shall fail as the breast: he cursed the breast-bottle; transliterated Arpakshad, Arphaxad</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #775 BDB #75
châyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced <i>khaw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
châmêsh (חָמֵשׁ) [pronounced <i>khaw-MAYSH</i> ]	<i>five</i>	masculine singular numeral	Strong's #2568 BDB #331
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sh <sup>e</sup> lôwshîym (שְׁלוֹשִׁים) [pronounced <i>sh<sup>e</sup>low-SHEEM</i> ]	<i>thirty</i>	plural numeral	Strong's #7970 BDB #1026
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i> ]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i> ]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Shelach (שֶׁלַח) [pronounced <i>SHEH-lahk</i> ]	<i>petition; sprout; and is transliterated Shelah, Shelach, Salah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #7974 BDB #1019

**Genesis 11:12**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
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The Greek has another generation inserted here: **And Arphaxad lived one hundred and thirty-five years, and begot Cainan. And Arphaxad lived four hundred years after he had begotten Cainan, and begot sons and daughters, and died. And Cainan lived one hundred and thirty years and begot Salah;**... (Genesis 11:12–13a; The Complete Apostles Bible). The book of Luke is in agreement with this: **...Eber, the son of Shelah, the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah,**... (Luke 3:36b–37a; The Complete Apostles Bible).

Normally, I would go to the trouble of including the Greek text, but I don't think that there is any nuance here that is necessary to capture. However, let me include the name of Cainan here as it is found in the Greek:

Kainan (Καϊνάβ) [pronounced <i>kah-ee-NAHN</i> ]	<i>their smith</i> ; transliterated <i>Cainan</i>	proper noun	Strong's #2536
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**Translation:** Arphaxad lived 35 years and fathered Cainan. Arphaxad lived 400 years after he fathered Cainan and fathered other sons and daughters [as well]. Cainan lived 130 years and fathered Shelah.

In the Greek, this is vv. 12–13a. Unlike Noah, who lived 500 years before having children,<sup>20</sup> Arphaxas was a little more normal, having a son at age 35. There is no reason to assume that this was his first son. I am not aware of any questions with the Lukian passage, which has Cainan as one of the links in the chain. The *130 years* found twice<sup>21</sup> could explain how an early Hebrew copyist skip a sentence and a half, leaving out one entire generation. These two things make it very likely that there is an additional generation which belongs here.

I don't want to give you the impression that this was a clean, easy mistake. Although it appears to be clear what has happened which yielded up the first mistake, Arphaxad is associated again with Shelah in the next verse, so someone along the way had to make another change to make all of this come out okay.

We are going to view a couple of charts at the end of this chapter, and this additional generation is only going to add in about 130 years that is not found in the Hebrew.

Shelah means *missile, weapon, or sprout*. Certainly it was used in the latter sense when it came to naming Shelah. Certainly a playful use of the language, considering that many in this line were farmers.

Genesis 11:12 **Arphaxad lived 35 years and fathered Cainan. Arphaxad lived 400 years after he fathered Cainan and fathered other sons and daughters [as well].** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:12 **After living 35 years, Arphaxad fathered Cainan. Arphaxad fathered other sons and daughters, living another 400 years after he fathered Cainan.** (Kukis paraphrase)

<b>And so lives Arphaxad after his siring Shelah three years and four hundreds a year; and so he sires sons and daughters.</b>	Genesis 11:13	<b>Cainan lived 130 years and fathered Shelah. After the birth of Shelah, Cainan lived another 330 years and had other sons and daughters .</b>
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<sup>20</sup> There is the possibility that Noah had other children earlier who rejected his teaching.

<sup>21</sup> This is a peculiarity in the Hebrew. The years between 1–9 are named first, then the ten's place, and then the hundreds place, so that the 135 years in the first phrase ends with exactly the same words as 130 years in a later phrase, so that the copyist could easily go from one to the other in what is often a common mistake of copying manuscripts.

**Cainan lived 130 years and fathered Shelah. Cainan then lived 330 years after fathering Shelah; fathering other sons and daughters as well.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Targum of Onkelos	And Arphakshad lived after he had begotten Shelach four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters.
Latin Vulgate	And Arphaxad lived after he begot Sale, three hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so lives Arphaxad after his siring Shelah three years and four hundreds a year; and so he sires sons and daughters.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Arphakhashar lived after he begot Shalah four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Arphaxad lived four hundred years after he had begotten Cainan, and begot sons and daughters, and died. And Cainan lived one hundred and thirty years and begot Salah; and Canaan lived three hundred and thirty years after he had begotten Salah, and begot sons and daughters, and died.

Significant differences:

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Contemporary English V. <i>The Message</i>	Arpachshad had more children and died at the age of four hundred thirty-eight. After Arphaxad had Shelah, he lived 403 more years and had other sons and daughters.
New Living Translation	After the birth of Shelah, Arphaxad lived another 403 years and had other sons and daughters. Greek version reads <sup>12</sup> When Arphaxad was 135 years old, he became the father of Cainan. <sup>13</sup> After the birth of Cainan, Arphaxad lived another 430 years and had other sons and daughters, and then he died. When Cainan was 130 years old, he became the father of Shelah. After the birth of Shelah, Cainan lived another 330 years and had other sons and daughters, and then he died. Compare Luke 3:35-36.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	And after Arphaxad became the father to Kainan, he lived three hundred and thirty years more (as he fathered other sons and daughters), and then he died. Kainan was a hundred and thirty years old when he became father to Sala. And after he became father to Sala, he lived three hundred and thirty years (as he fathered other sons and daughters), and then he died.
Beck's American Translation	...and lived 403 years after Shelah's birth [Luke 3:36 mentions Cainan as Shelah's father and Arphaxad's son, from Genesis 11:14 in the Greek translation (the Septuagint) which adds, "and Cainan lived 130 years and begat Shelay"—a number of years omitted in Usher's chronology. Cainan (or <i>his House</i> ) lived 460 years altogether], getting sons and daughters.
Christian Community Bible	<i>After the birth of Shelah, Arpachshad lived four hundred and three years and he had more sons and daughters.</i>
God's Word™	After he became the father of Shelah, Arpachshad lived 403 years and had other sons and daughters.
Today's NIV	And after he became the father of Shelah, Arphaxad lived 403 years and had other sons and daughters. Hebrew; Septuagint (see also Luke 3:35, 36 and note at Gen. 10:24) 35 years, he became the father of Cainan. <sup>13</sup> And after he became the father

of Cainan, Arphaxad lived 430 years and had other sons and daughters, and then he died. When Cainan had lived 130 years, he became the father of Shelah. And after he became the father of Shelah, Cainan lived 330 years and had other sons and daughters.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	And after the birth of Shelah, Arpachshad went on living for four hundred and three years, and had sons and daughters:...
Complete Jewish Bible	After Shelach was born, Arpakhshad lived another 403 years and had sons and daughters.
New Advent Bible	And Arphaxad lived after he begot Sale, three hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters.
NET Bible®	And after he became the father of Shelah, Arphaxad lived 403 years and had other [The word "other" is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied for stylistic reasons.] sons and daughters. The reading of the MT is followed in vv. 11-12; the LXX reads, "And [= when] Arphaxad had lived thirty-five years, [and] he fathered [= became the father of] Cainan. And after he fathered [= became the father of] Cainan, Arphaxad lived four hundred and thirty years and fathered [= had] [other] sons and daughters, and [then] he died. And [= when] Cainan had lived one hundred and thirty years, [and] he fathered [= became the father of] Sala [= Shelah]. And after he fathered [= became the father of] Sala [= Shelah], Cainan lived three hundred and thirty years and fathered [= had] [other] sons and daughters, and [then] he died." See also the note on "Shelah" in Gen 10:24; the LXX reading also appears to lie behind Luke 3:35-36

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

International Standard V .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation .

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible .

Translation for Translators .

The Voice .

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And living is Arphaxad after his begetting Cainan four hundred and three years. And begetting is he sons and daughters. And he died. And living is Cainan a hundred and thirty years, and begetting is he Shelach. And living is Cainan after his begetting Shelach three hundred and thirty years, and begetting is he sons and daughters. And he died.
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English Standard Version	And Arpachshad lived after he fathered Shelah 403 years and had other sons and daughters.
New RSV	...and Arpachshad lived after the birth of Shelah for four hundred and three years, and had other sons and daughters.
Syndein/Thieme	And Arphaxad lived after he sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} Salah four hundred and three years, and sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} sons and daughters.
World English Bible	Arpachshad lived after he became the father of Shelah four hundred three years, and became the father of sons and daughter.
Young's Updated LT	And Arphaxad lives after his begetting Salah four hundred and three years, and sires sons and daughters.

**The gist of this verse:** Arphaxad fathered Cainan who fathered Shelah (in the Greek text).

Genesis 11:13a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced khaw-YAW]	<i>to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
'Arpāk'shad (אַרְפַּכְשָׁד) [pronounced ahr-pahk-SHAHD]	<i>stronghold of the Chaldees; I shall fail as the breast: he cursed the breast-bottle; transliterated Arpakshad, Arphaxad</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #775 BDB #75
'achârêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced ah-kuh-RAY]	<i>behind, after; following; after that, afterwards; hinder parts</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong's #310 BDB #29
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to become the founder of</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Shelach (שֶׁלַח) [pronounced SHEH-lahk]	<i>petition; sprout; and is transliterated Shelah, Shelach, Salah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #7974 BDB #1019
shâlôsh (שָׁלוֹשׁ) [pronounced shaw-LOHSH]	<i>a three, a trio, a triad, a threesome</i>	numeral; masculine singular noun	Strong's #7969 BDB #1025
shânîym (שָׁנַיִם) [pronounced shaw-NEEM]	<i>years</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, וַ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## Genesis 11:13a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʿarbaʿ (עָרְבָּא) [pronounced <i>ahr<sup>e</sup>-BAHG</i> ]	<i>four</i>	masculine singular noun; numeral	Strong's #702 BDB #916
mê'ôwth (תּוֹאֲמָ) [pronounced <i>may-OHTH</i> ]	<i>hundreds</i>	feminine plural absolute; numeral	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i> ]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040

**Translation:** Arphaxad lived 403 years after fathering Shelah;...

There are two places where Arphaxad's name is associated with Shelah's, so, although it is likely that this began as a copyist error, at some point, someone got into the mix (another copyist) and "fixed" the error. Two sets of text had to be changed to end up with the text as found in the LXX.

## Genesis 11:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i> ]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
bânîym (בָּנִים) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bath (בָּת) [pronounced <i>bathh</i> ]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #1323 BDB #123

**Translation:** ...and he fathered [other] sons and daughters [as well].

Rather than break this down word-by-word as the Greek reads, we will simply look at the complete Greek translation of vv. 12–13. The big difference is, there is another generation inserted in between Arphaxad and Shelah.

This is the only serious problem with the text in this chapter (vv. 12–13). How this should read is: <sup>12</sup> *When Arphaxad was 135 years old, he became the father of Cainan.* <sup>13</sup> *After the birth of Cainan, Arphaxad lived another 430 years and had other sons and daughters, and then he died. When Cainan was 130 years old, he became the father of Shelah. After the birth of Shelah, Cainan lived another 330 years and had other sons and daughters, and then he died.* (NLT) There is the additional problem that, in the Greek, after each individual, he is said to die. This phrase is also found in Genesis 5:5, 8, 11 etc. 9:29. The difference in the texts suggests that someone worked

over the Hebrew text to make it all nice and neat, which is actually a rarity. There is a place where an error probably occurred, but there had to be more that occurred than that for the Hebrew text to be as different as it is from the Greek.

If you follow **Ussher's chronology**, this adds an additional 130 years to it.

Apart from these textual problems, the rest of the verses will follow the pattern of vv. 12–13, so that we will take them 2 verses at a time from hereon in.

Genesis 11:13 Cainan lived 130 years and fathered Shelah. After the birth of Shelah, Cainan lived another 330 years and had other sons and daughters . (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:13 Cainan lived 130 years and fathered Shelah. Cainan then lived 330 years after fathering Shelah; fathering other sons and daughters as well. (Kukis paraphrase)

**And Shelah lives thirty a year and so he sires Eber. And so live Shelah after his siring Eber three years and four hundreds a year and so he sires sons and daughters.**

Genesis  
11:14–15

**Shelah lived 30 years and fathered Eber. Shelah lived 403 years after siring Eber and he [also] had [more] sons and daughters.**

**Shelah fathered Eber when he was 30. He lived an additional 403 years after fathering Eber and had more sons and daughters besides.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Targum of Onkelos	And Shelach lived thirty years, and begat Eber. And Shelach lived after he had begotten Eber four hundred and three years, and begat sons and daughters.
Latin Vulgate	Salé also lived thirty years, and begot Heber. And Salé lived after he begot Heber, four hundred and three years: and begot sons and daughters.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And Shelah lives thirty a year and so he sires Eber. And so live Shelah after his siring Eber three years and four hundreds a year and so he sires sons and daughters.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Shalah lived thirty years, and begot Eber; And Shalah lived after he begot Eber four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Salah lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot Heber. And Salah lived three hundred and thirty years after he had begotten Eber, and begot sons and daughters, and died.

Significant differences:

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Contemporary English V.	When Shelah was thirty, he had a son named Eber. Shelah had more children and died at the age of four hundred thirty-three.
Easy English	When Shelah had lived for 30 years, he became Eber's father. After Eber was born, Shelah lived for 430 more years. Shelah had other sons and daughters.
Easy-to-Read Version	After Shelah was 30 years old, his son Eber was born. After Eber was born, Shelah lived 403 years. During that time he had other sons and daughters.
New Century Version	When Shelah was 30 years old, his son Eber was born. After that, Shelah lived 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	Sala was a hundred and thirty years old when he became father to Heber. And after he became father to Heber, he lived three hundred and thirty years more (as he fathered other sons and daughters), and then he died.
Beck's American Translation	When Shelah was 30, he became the father of Eber. After Eber was born, Shelah lived 403 years and had sons and daughters.
Christian Community Bible	When Shelah was thirty years old he became the father of Eber. After the birth of Eber, Shelah lived four hundred and three years and he had more sons and daughters.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

The Expanded Bible	When Shelah was 30 years old, his son Eber [10:21, 24] was born. After that, Shelah lived 403 years and had other sons and daughters.
New Advent Bible	Sala also lived thirty years, and begot Heber. And Sala lived after he begot Heber, four hundred and three years: and begot sons and daughters.
NIV, ©2011	When Shelah had lived 30 years, he became the father of Eber. And after he became the father of Eber, Shelah lived 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

International Standard V .

**Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):**

The Heritage Bible .

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Kaplan Translation .

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

Kretzmann's Commentary .  
 Lexham English Bible .  
 Translation for Translators .  
 The Voice .

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

New RSV	When Shelah had lived for thirty years, he became the father of Eber; and Shelah lived after the birth of Eber for four hundred and three years, and had other sons and daughters.
Third Millennium Bible	<sup>14</sup> And Salah lived thirty years and begot Eber; <sup>15</sup> and Salah lived after he begot Eber four hundred and three years, and begot sons and daughters.
Young's Updated LT	And Salah has lived thirty years, and sires Eber. And Salah lives after his siring Eber four hundred and three years, and sires sons and daughters.

**The gist of this verse:** Shelah fathers Eber at age 30 and then lives an additional 403 years, fathering other sons and daughters.

Genesis 11:14			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, וַ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Shelach (שֶׁלַח) [pronounced <i>SHEH-lahk</i> ]	<i>petition; sprout; and is transliterated Shelah, Shelach, Salah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #7974 BDB #1019
châyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced <i>khaw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
sh <sup>e</sup> lôwshîym (שְׁלוֹשִׁים) [pronounced <i>sh<sup>e</sup>low-SHEEM</i> ]	<i>thirty</i>	plural numeral	Strong's #7970 BDB #1026
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i> ]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i> ]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to become the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'Êber (עֵבֶר) [pronounced <i>GAY<sup>B</sup>-ver</i> ]	<i>one from beyond, the other side, across, region on the other side; and is transliterated Eber, Heber, Hebrew, Eberite</i>	masculine singular, adjective gentis:	Strong's #5677 BDB #720

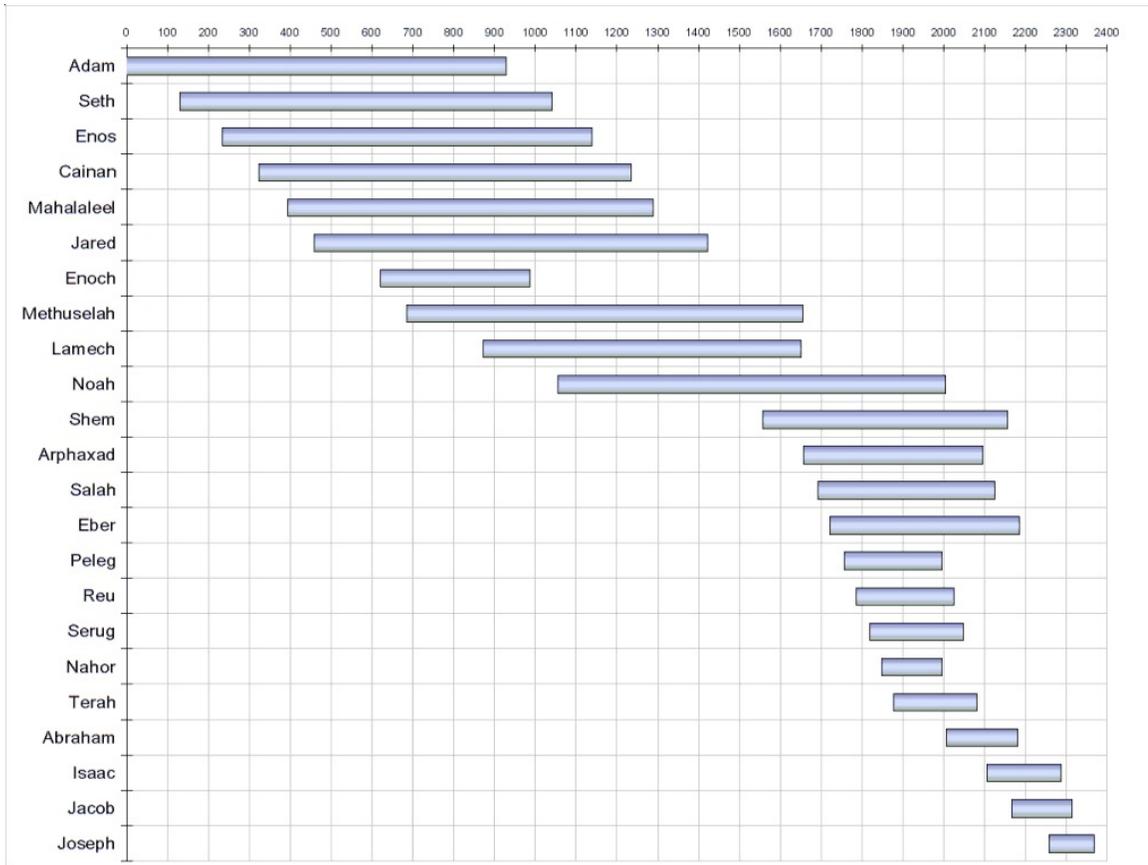
**Translation:** [Shelah lived 30 years and fathered Eber.](#)

Eber is an interesting son, as the name *Hebrew* is thought to come from him. For whatever reason—and we are not given one that I am aware of—this man's name became associated with Abraham's children (Abraham will be at the tail-end of this list). We can certainly speculate, as Abraham moved from the River Euphrates into the land of Canaan, a land occupied by the children of Ham. No doubt Abraham was asked for his bloodline (and I am guessing that most people knew not only their line at that time, but many of their actual ancestors), and mentioned Eber seemed to stick, given Abraham's move. Abraham moved from a region on the other side and he had a great, great, great, great grandfather whose name meant, *region on the other side*. Shem, Arphaxad, Shelah and Eber would have all been alive during Abraham's lifetime (even with the extra 130 years thrown in there by Cainan). If Abraham were asked, "Who is your oldest living father?" he would have answered, "Eber." at some point in time.

First, we will take a look at this chart, and then discuss this speculation further, to a point where this will appear to be more than just speculation.

Genesis 11:14 **Shelah lived 30 years and fathered Eber.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

### Ages of the Patriarchs Chart<sup>22</sup>



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[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

You will note that this chart does not include Cainan, which would throw the overlap by 130 years. Given that, Abraham would have been in the land of Canaan at a time when Peleg, Reu, Serug and Nahor had died. His father, Terah, and his great, great, great, great grandfather Eber would still be alive. So, it is logical for Abraham to be associated with Eber, as his oldest living patriarch during the time he had come from another region into Canaan.

Bear in mind that this is speculation, but it is logical speculation.

#### Why Abraham is called a Hebrew

1. One's ancestors were a big deal in that day and time. The collection of genealogical charts are proof of this.
2. For a long time, a man would have been alive at the same time as his parents, grandparents, great

<sup>22</sup> From <http://churchages.com/images/ages-of-the-patriachs.gif> accessed February 3, 2013.

### Why Abraham is called a Hebrew

- grandparents, great-great grandparents, etc. Therefore, the eldest person, who would have known history unlike anyone else in their family, as he lived it, would be seen as a great and wise man.
3. When God told Abraham to go into the land of Canaan, he did. He moved from one region to another region; he came into the land of Canaan from the region beyond.
  4. When Abraham made this move, it is likely that his oldest living patriarch was Eber.
  5. It is not unreasonable for people to have asked Abraham's pedigree from time to time, and he could certainly cite his ancestors going back to Shem.
  6. At this time, Eber would have been the oldest ancestor alive, and it is very likely that most people knew of him by name and reputation (much like we know our founding fathers).
  7. Eber's name means *from a region beyond*; and Abraham came from a region beyond. Therefore, Abraham would have been doubly associated with Eber.
  8. Therefore, it is logical that Abraham would have been known as a Hebrew, which is taken from the proper name *Eber*.
  9. Abraham is called a *Hebrew* as early as Genesis 14:13. At that point, he rescued Lot and beat the greatest army of the ancient world with 318 men. Abraham would have been celebrated, thought of as a great hero, and certainly his lineage would have been asked about.
  10. Eber is the noun 'Ēber (עִבֵּר) [pronounced ĠAY<sup>B</sup>-ver], which means *one from beyond, the other side, across, region on the other side*; and is transliterated *Eber, Heber, Hebrew, Eberite*. Strong's #5677 BDB #720. Built out of this name is *Hebrew*, which is 'Ib<sup>er</sup>y (יִבְרֵעַ) [pronounced ġi<sup>be</sup>-VREE], which means, *one from beyond*; transliterated *Hebrew, Eberite*. Strong's #5680 BDB #720. So, you see in the Hebrew language, these are words which are most closer than we would understand from the English transliteration.
  11. Therefore, with Eber as Abraham's oldest living patriarch, a man who is probably well-known even in Canaan, Abraham would have naturally been called an Eber-ite, which we transliterate as *Hebrew*. The meaning of Eber's name along with Abraham's actions make it easy to associate Abraham with Eber.

So, even though the Bible nowhere says, "Abraham is called a Hebrew because he is descended from Eber, and Eber was Abraham's oldest living patriarch;" we may rest assured that is the reason why Abraham was called a Hebrew from the very beginning.

As an aside, the designation *Hebrew* was well-known, but it was not used very often in the Bible in association with Abraham or his son and grandson. Genesis 14:13 39:14, 17 41:12 Exodus 1:15–16, 19 2:7, 11 21:2 Deut. 15:12 Jer. 34:9, 14 Jonah 1:9.

#### Chapter Outline

#### Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### Genesis 11:15

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (וַ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced khaw-YAW]	<i>to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
Shelach (שְׁלַח) [pronounced SHEH-lahk]	<i>petition; sprout; and is transliterated Shelah, Shelach, Salah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #7974 BDB #1019

## Genesis 11:15

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʾachărêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced ah-kuh- RAY]	<i>behind, after; following; after that, afterwards; hinder parts</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong's #310 BDB #29
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
ʾêth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
ʿĒber (עֵבֶר) [pronounced GAY <sup>B</sup> -ver]	<i>one from beyond, the other side, across, region on the other side; and is transliterated Eber, Heber, Hebrew, Eberite</i>	masculine singular, adjective gentis:	Strong's #5677 BDB #720
shâlôsh (שָׁלוֹשׁ) [pronounced shaw- LOHSH]	<i>a three, a trio, a triad, a threesome</i>	numeral; masculine singular noun	Strong's #7969 BDB #1025
shânîym (שָׁנַיִם) [pronounced shaw- NEEM]	<i>years</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾar <sup>e</sup> baʿ (עֶבְרָא) [pronounced ahr <sup>e</sup> -BAHQ]	<i>four</i>	masculine singular noun; numeral	Strong's #702 BDB #916
mêʾôwth (מֵאוֹת) [pronounced may- OHTH]	<i>hundreds</i>	feminine plural absolute; numeral	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
bânîym (בָּנַיִם) [pronounced baw- NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

## Genesis 11:15

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
bath (בַּת) [pronounced <i>bahth</i> ]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #1323 BDB #123

**Translation:** Shelah lived 403 years after siring Eber and he [also] had [more] sons and daughters.

You will note that the ages of these men is becoming shorter and shorter. We will address that at the end of this chapter.

Genesis 11:15 Shelah lived 403 years after siring Eber and he [also] had [more] sons and daughters. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:14–15 Shelah lived 30 years and fathered Eber. Shelah lived 403 years after siring Eber and he [also] had [more] sons and daughters. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:14–15 Shelah fathered Eber when he was 30. He lived an additional 403 years after fathering Eber and had more sons and daughters besides. (Kukis paraphrase)

<p><b>And so lives Eber four and thirty a year and so he sires Peleg. And so lives Eber after his siring Peleg thirty a year and four hundreds a year, and so he sires sons and daughters.</b></p>	<p>Genesis 11:16–17</p>	<p><b>Eber lived to be 34 years old when he fathered Peleg. After Eber fathered Peleg, he lived [another] 430 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.</b></p>
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**Eber was 34 years old when he fathered Peleg. After fathering Peleg, Eber lived an additional 430 years. He fathered other sons and daughters besides.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

### Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos	And Eber lived thirty-four years, and begat Peleg. And Eber lived after he had begotten Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begat sons and daughters.
Latin Vulgate	And Heber lived thirty-four years, and begot Phaleg. And Heber lived after he begot Phaleg, four hundred and thirty years: and begot sons and daughters.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so lives Eber four and thirty a year and so he sires Peleg. And so lives Eber after his siring Peleg thirty a year and four hundreds a year, and so he sires sons and daughters.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Eber lived thirty-four years, and begot Peleg: And Eber lived after he begot Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and begot sons and daughters.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Eber lived one hundred and thirty-four years, and begot Peleg. And Eber lived two hundred and seventy years after he had begotten Peleg, and begot sons and daughters, and died.

Significant differences:

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	When Eber was thirty-four, he had a son named Peleg. Eber had more children and died at the age of four hundred sixty-four.
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Easy English	When Eber had lived for 34 years, he became Peleg's father. Then Eber lived for 430 more years and he had other sons and daughters.
Easy-to-Read Version	After Eber was 34 years old, his son Peleg was born. After Peleg was born, Eber lived 430 years more. During that time he had other sons and daughters.
Good News Bible (TEV)	When Eber was 34 years old, he had a son, Peleg; after that, he lived another 430 years and had other children.
<i>The Message</i>	When Eber was thirty-four years old, he had Peleg. After Eber had Peleg, he lived 403 more years and had other sons and daughters.
New Berkeley Version	Eber, at 34 got Peleg, and lived 430 years after Peleg's birth, getting sons and daughters.
New Century Version	When Eber was 34 years old, his son Peleg was born. After that, Eber lived 430 years and had other sons and daughters.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	Heber was a hundred and thirty-four years old when he became father to Phaleg. And after he became father to Phaleg, he lived two hundred and seventy years (as he fathered other sons and daughters), and then he died.
NIRV	When Eber had lived 34 years, he became the father of Peleg. After Peleg was born, Eber lived 430 years. And he had other sons and daughters.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Complete Jewish Bible	'Ever lived thirty-four years and fathered Peleg. After Peleg was born, 'Ever lived another 430 years and had sons and daughters.
The Expanded Bible	When Eber was 34 years old, his son Peleg [10:25] was born. After that, Eber lived 430 years and had other sons and daughters.
NIV, ©2011	When Eber had lived 34 years, he became the father of Peleg. And after he became the father of Peleg, Eber lived 430 years and had other sons and daughters.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Ėb?er lived thirty-four years, and brought forth Peleḡ. And after he brought forth Peleḡ, Ėb?er lived four hundred and thirty years, and brought forth sons and daughters.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

International Standard V .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation .

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

Kretzmann's Commentary .  
 Lexham English Bible .  
 Translation for Translators .  
 The Voice .

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version	And living is Eber a hundred and thirty-four years and begetting is he Peleg. And living is Eber after his begetting Peleg two hundred and seventy years.
English Standard V. – UK	When Eber had lived for 34 years, he fathered Peleg. And Eber lived after he fathered Peleg for 430 years and had other sons and daughters.
New King James Version	When Eber had lived for thirty-four years, he became the father of Peleg; and Eber lived after the birth of Peleg for four hundred and thirty years, and had other sons and daughters.
Syndein/Thieme	And Eber lived four and thirty years, and sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} Peleg. And Eber lived after he caused the birth of {yalad} Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} sons and daughters.
Young's Updated LT	And Eber lives four and thirty years, and sires Peleg. And Eber lives after his siring Peleg four hundred and thirty years, and he sires sons and daughters.

**The gist of this verse:** At age 34, Eber fathers Peleg and then lives another 430 years, fathering other sons and daughters along the way.

**Genesis 11:16**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced <i>khaw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
‘Ēber (עֵבֶר) [pronounced <i>GAY<sup>B</sup>-ver</i> ]	<i>one from beyond, the other side, across, region on the other side; and is transliterated Eber, Heber, Hebrew, Eberite</i>	masculine singular, adjective gentis:	Strong's #5677 BDB #720
‘ar <sup>e</sup> ba‘ (עֶבְרָא) [pronounced <i>ahr<sup>e</sup>-BAHG</i> ]	<i>four</i>	masculine singular noun; numeral	Strong's #702 BDB #916
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sh <sup>e</sup> lôwshîym (שְׁלוֹשִׁים) [pronounced <i>sh<sup>e</sup>low-SHEEM</i> ]	<i>thirty</i>	plural numeral	Strong's #7970 BDB #1026
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i> ]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i> ]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408

## Genesis 11:16

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Peleg (פֶּלֶג) [pronounced PEH-lehg]	<i>a [manmade] channel, a canal; a river, a stream; a cleft, a division; transliterated Peleg</i>	proper masculine singular noun	Strong's #6388 BDB #811

**Translation:** Eber lived to be 34 years old when he fathered Peleg.

The ages at which these men are fathering children is not out of line with the ages that fathers sire children today. They were just able to carry on longer and live much longer.

You will recall from the previous chapter that Peleg was related to a division, and most believe that this division is that of languages. It was during his time (or perhaps his birth) that this occurred. It would make sense that this occurred during his birth, as that would make sense for him to be named this, but not his brother. **And two sons were born to Eber; the name of the one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided; and his brother's name was Joktan** (Genesis 10:25; LTHB).

Genesis 11:16 **Eber lived to be 34 years old when he fathered Peleg.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

## Genesis 11:17

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced khaw-YAW]	<i>to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
'Êber (עֵבֶר) [pronounced GAY <sup>B</sup> -ver]	<i>one from beyond, the other side, across, region on the other side; and is transliterated Eber, Heber, Hebrew, Eberite</i>	masculine singular, adjective gentis:	Strong's #5677 BDB #720
'achârêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced ah-kuh-RAY]	<i>behind, after; following; after that, afterwards; hinder parts</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong's #310 BDB #29
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Genesis 11:17			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Peleg (פֶּלֶג) [pronounced PEH-lehg]	a [manmade] channel, a canal; a river, a stream; a cleft, a division; transliterated Peleg	proper masculine singular noun	Strong's #6388 BDB #811
sh <sup>o</sup> lôwshîym (שִׁשְׁלֹשִׁים) [pronounced sh <sup>e</sup> low-SHEEM]	thirty	plural numeral	Strong's #7970 BDB #1026
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	year	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'arba' (עֲבָרָא) [pronounced ahr <sup>e</sup> -BAHG]	four	masculine singular noun; numeral	Strong's #702 BDB #916
mê'ôwth (מֵאוֹת) [pronounced may-OHTH]	hundreds	feminine plural absolute; numeral	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	year	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
bânîym (בָּנִים) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men	masculine plural noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bath (בָּת) [pronounced bahth]	daughter; village	feminine plural noun	Strong's #1323 BDB #123

**Translation:** After Eber fathered Peleg, he lived [another] 430 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.

Again, you will note the age of Peleg decreasing to being lower than the age of his father Eber. In fact, as we will see in a [chart](#) later, Eber will actually outlive Peleg.

Genesis 11:17 After Eber fathered Peleg, he lived [another] 430 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Although I like the sound of this verse, it does give the impression that Peleg is Eber's first son (which is the impression which may be gotten in the next several sets of verses). This is not necessarily the case. There is no reason to assume this we are looking at the firstborn throughout this line. We are following the line of Adam eventually to Jesus; and we therefore follow whichever father leads us in that direction.

Genesis 11:16–17 Eber lived to be 34 years old when he fathered Peleg. After Eber fathered Peleg, he lived [another] 430 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:16–17 Eber was 34 years old when he fathered Peleg. After fathering Peleg, Eber lived an additional 430 years. He fathered other sons and daughters besides. (Kukis paraphrase)

<p><b>And so lives Peleg thirty a year and so he sires Reu. And so lives Peleg after siring Reu nine years and two hundred a year; and so he sires sons and daughters.</b></p>	<p>Genesis 11:18–19</p>	<p><b>Peleg lived to be 30 years old when he fathered Reu. After Peleg fathered Reu, he lived [another] 209 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.</b></p>
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**Peleg was 30 years old when he fathered Reu. After fathering Reu, Peleg lived an additional 209 years. He fathered other sons and daughters besides.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos	And Peleg lived thirty years, and begat Reu. And Peleg lived after he had begotten Reu two hundred and nine years, and begat sons and daughters.
Latin Vulgate	And Phaleg lived after he begot Reu, two hundred and nine years, and begot sons and daughters. And Phaleg lived after he begot Reu, two hundred and nine years, and begot sons and daughters.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so lives Peleg thirty a year and so he sires Reu. And so lives Peleg after siring Reu nine years and two hundred a year; and so he sires sons and daughters.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Peleg lived thirty years, and begot Rau; And Peleg lived after he begot Rau two hundred and nine years, and begot sons and daughters.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Peleg lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot Reu. And Peleg lived two hundred and nine years after he had begotten Reu, and begot sons and daughters, and died.

Significant differences:

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	When Peleg was thirty, he had a son named Reu. Peleg had more children and died at the age of two hundred thirty-nine.
Easy English	When Peleg had lived for 30 years, he became Reu's father. Then Peleg lived for 209 more years and he had other sons and daughters.
Easy-to-Read Version	After Peleg was 30 years old, his son Reu was born. After Reu was born, Peleg lived 209 years more. During that time he had other sons and daughters.
Good News Bible (TEV)	When Peleg was 30 years old, he had a son, Reu; after that, he lived another 209 years and had other children.
<i>The Message</i>	When Peleg was thirty years old, he had Reu. After he had Reu, he lived 209 more years and had other sons and daughters.
New Century Version	When Peleg was 30 years old, his son Reu was born. After that, Peleg lived 209 years and had other sons and daughters.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	Phaleg was a hundred and thirty years old when he became father to Ragau. After he became father to Ragau, he lived two hundred and nine years (as he fathered other sons and daughters), and then he died.
Beck's American Translation	When Peleg was 30, he became the father of Reu. After Reu was born, Peleg lived 209 years and had sons and daughters.
NIRV	When Peleg had lived 30 years, he became the father of Reu. After Reu was born, Peleg lived 209 years. And he had other sons and daughters.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Complete Jewish Bible	Peleg lived thirty years and fathered Re'u. After Re'u was born, Peleg lived another 209 years and had sons and daughters.
The Expanded Bible	When Peleg was 30 years old, his son Reu was born. After that, Peleg lived 209 years and had other sons and daughters.
New Advent Bible	Phaleg also lived thirty years, and begot Reu. And Phaleg lived after he begot Reu, two hundred and nine years, and begot sons and daughters.
NIV, ©2011	When Peleg had lived 30 years, he became the father of Reu. And after he became the father of Reu, Peleg lived 209 years and had other sons and daughters.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Peleg <sup>̄</sup> lived thirty years, and brought forth Re <sup>̄</sup> u. And after he brought forth Re <sup>̄</sup> u, Peleg <sup>̄</sup> lived two hundred and nine years, and brought forth sons and daughters.

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

International Standard V .

**Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):**

The Heritage Bible .

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Kaplan Translation .

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible .

Translation for Translators .

The Voice .

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version	And living is Peleg a hundred and thirty years and begetting is he Reu. And living is Peleg after his begetting Reu two hundred and nine years, and begetting is he sons and daughters. And he died.
English Standard V. – UK	When Peleg had lived for 30 years, he fathered Reu. And Peleg lived after he fathered Reu for 209 years and had other sons and daughters.
New RSV	When Peleg had lived for thirty years, he became the father of Reu; and Peleg lived after the birth of Reu for two hundred and nine years, and had other sons and daughters.

Syndein/Thieme

And Peleg lived thirty years, and sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} Reu. And Peleg lived after he caused the birth of {yalad} Reu two hundred and nine years, and sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} sons and daughters.

Young's Updated LT

And Peleg lives thirty years, and sires Reu. And Peleg lives after his siring Reu two hundred and nine years, and sires sons and daughters.

**The gist of this verse:**

At age 30, Peleg fathers Reu, and then lives another 209 years, during which time he fathers more sons and daughters.

Genesis 11:18			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced khaw-YAW]	to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
Peleg (פֶּלֶג) [pronounced PEH-lehg]	a [manmade] channel, a canal; a river, a stream; a cleft, a division; transliterated Peleg	proper masculine singular noun	Strong's #6388 BDB #811
sh <sup>e</sup> lôwshîym (שְׁלוֹשִׁים) [pronounced sh <sup>e</sup> low-SHEEM]	thirty	plural numeral	Strong's #7970 BDB #1026
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	year	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
R <sup>e</sup> ûw (רֵעוּ) [pronounced reh-GOO]	(his) friend; his shepherd; transliterated Reu	proper singular masculine noun	Strong's #7466 BDB #946

**Translation:** Peleg lived to be 30 years old when he fathered Reu.

As has been reasonably suggested, Peleg was born when the languages were confused. This suggests that the people at this time figured out what was going on, but they also realized that they could not remain together as a people. Personally, as I stated earlier, there was probably some fighting which occurred, but, I don't believe that there was a massacre of the losing side. I believe based upon being beaten pretty badly by the Semitic family (the progenitors of both Jews and Arabs), the other tribes just left the area. They knew how to migrate; that was not that big of a deal; there was the wide-open sky before, then, so they just walked off. The sons of Japheth moved in a more northerly direction and the sons of Ham moved more toward the south.

Genesis 11:18 Peleg lived to be 30 years old when he fathered Reu. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

## Genesis 11:19

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced khaw-YAW]	<i>to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
Peleg (פֶּלֶג) [pronounced PEH-lehg]	<i>a [manmade] channel, a canal; a river, a stream; a cleft, a division; transliterated Peleg</i>	proper masculine singular noun	Strong's #6388 BDB #811
'achârêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced ah-kuh-RAY]	<i>behind, after; following; after that, afterwards; hinder parts</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong's #310 BDB #29
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
R <sup>e</sup> ûw (רֵעוּ) [pronounced reh-ĠOO]	<i>(his) friend; his shepherd; transliterated Reu</i>	proper singular masculine noun	Strong's #7466 BDB #946
têsha' (עֶשֶׂת) [pronounced TAY-shahg]	<i>nine, ninth</i>	masculine singular noun; ordinal or cardinal numeral	Strong's #8672 BDB #1077
shânîym (שָׁנַיִם) [pronounced shaw-NEEM]	<i>years</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mâ'thayim (מֵאֵתַיִם) [pronounced maw-thah-YIM]	<i>two hundred</i>	feminine dual numeral (not certain about the spelling)	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408

## Genesis 11:19

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
bânîym (בְּנֵי) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men	masculine plural noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bath (בָּת) [pronounced bahth]	daughter; village	feminine plural noun	Strong's #1323 BDB #123

**Translation:** After Peleg fathered Reu, he lived [another] 209 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.

Compared to men who had lived before him, Peleg lived a relative short life of 209 years. Noah lived 4x as long and Shem lived 3x as long.

Genesis 11:19 After Peleg fathered Reu, he lived [another] 209 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:18–19 Peleg lived to be 30 years old when he fathered Reu. After Peleg fathered Reu, he lived [another] 209 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:18–19 Peleg was 30 years old when he fathered Reu. After fathering Reu, Peleg lived an additional 209 years. He fathered other sons and daughters besides. (Kukis paraphrase)

And so lives Reu two and thirty a year and so he sires Serug. And so lives Reu after his siring of Serug seven years and two hundreds a year. And so he sires sons and daughters.

Genesis 11:20–21

Rue lived to be 32 years old when he fathered Serug. After Rue fathered Serug, he lived [another] 207 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.

Rue was 32 years old when he fathered Serug. After fathering Serug, Rue lived an additional 207 years. He fathered other sons and daughters besides.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

## Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos

And Reu lived thirty-two years, and begat Serug. And Reu lived after he had begotten Serug two hundred and seven years, and begat sons and daughters.

Latin Vulgate

And Reu lived thirty-two years, and begot Sarug. And Reu lived after he begot Sarug, two hundred and seven years, and begot sons and daughters.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so lives Reu two and thirty a year and so he sires Serug. And so lives Reu after his siring of Serug seven years and two hundreds a year. And so he sires sons and daughters.

Peshitta (Syriac)

.And Rau lived thirty-two years, and begot Serug; And Rau lived after he begot Serug two hundred and seven years, and begot sons and daughters

Septuagint (Greek)

And Reu lived one hundred and thirty-two years, and begot Serug. And Reu lived two hundred and seven years after he had begotten Serug, and begot sons and daughters, and died.

Significant differences:

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Contemporary English V.	When Reu was thirty-two he had a son named Serug. Reu had more children and died at the age of two hundred thirty-nine.
Easy English	When Reu had lived for 32 years, he became Serug's father. Then Reu lived for 207 more years and he had other sons and daughters.
Easy-to-Read Version	After Reu was 32 years old, his son Serug was born. After Serug was born, Reu lived 207 years more. During that time he had other sons and daughters.
Good News Bible (TEV)	When Reu was 32 years old, he had a son, Serug; after that, he lived another 207 years and had other children.
New Berkeley Version	At 32 Reu got Serug and after Serug's birth Reu lived 207 years, getting sons and daughters.
New Century Version	When Reu was 32 years old, his son Serug was born. After that, Reu lived 207 years and had other sons and daughters.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	Ragau was a hundred and thirty-two years old when he became father to Seruch. After he became father to Seruch, he lived two hundred and seven years (as he fathered other sons and daughters), and then he died.
NIRV	When Reu had lived 32 years, he became the father of Serug. After Serug was born, Reu lived 207 years. And he had other sons and daughters.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Complete Jewish Bible	Re'u lived thirty-two years and fathered S'rug. After S'rug was born, Re'u lived another 207 years and had sons and daughters.
The Expanded Bible	When Reu was 32 years old, his son Serug was born. After that, Reu lived 207 years and had other sons and daughters.
New Advent Bible	And Reu lived thirty-two years, and begot Sarug. And Reu lived after he begot Sarug, two hundred and seven years, and begot sons and daughters.
NIV – UK	When Reu had lived 32 years, he became the father of Serug. And after he became the father of Serug, Reu lived 207 years and had other sons and daughters.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Re'û lived thirty-two years, and brought forth Serug <sup>̄</sup> . And after he brought forth Serug <sup>̄</sup> , Re'û lived two hundred and seven years, and brought forth sons and

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

International Standard V .

**Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):**

The Heritage Bible .

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Kaplan Translation .

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible .  
 Translation for Translators .  
 The Voice .

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And living is Reu a hundred and thirty-two years, and begetting is he Serug. And living is Reu after his begetting Serug two hundred and seven years, and begetting is he sons and daughters. And he died.
English Standard V. – UK	When Reu had lived for 32 years, he fathered Serug. And Reu lived after he fathered Serug for 207 years and had other sons and daughters.
New RSV	When Reu had lived for thirty-two years, he became the father of Serug; and Reu lived after the birth of Serug for two hundred and seven years, and had other sons and daughters.
Syndein/Thieme	And Reu lived two and thirty years, and sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} Serug. And Reu lived after he caused the birth of {yalad} Serug two hundred and seven years, and sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} sons and daughters.
Young's Updated LT	And Reu lives two and thirty years, and sires Serug. And Reu lives after his siring Serug two hundred and seven years, and sires sons and daughters.

**The gist of this verse:** Rue was 32 years old when he fathered Serug. After fathering Serug, Rue lived an additional 207 years, fathering other sons and daughters besides.

### Genesis 11:20

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced khaw-YAW]	<i>to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
R <sup>e</sup> ûw (וּעֹר) [pronounced reh-GOO]	<i>(his) friend; his shepherd; transliterated Reu</i>	proper singular masculine noun	Strong's #7466 BDB #946
sh <sup>e</sup> nâthayim (שְׁנַיִם) [pronounced sh <sup>e</sup> h-naw-thah-yihm]	<i>two years</i>	feminine dual noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
sh <sup>e</sup> lôwshîym (שְׁלוֹשִׁים) [pronounced sh <sup>e</sup> low-SHEEM]	<i>thirty</i>	plural numeral	Strong's #7970 BDB #1026
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

## Genesis 11:20

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
S <sup>e</sup> rûwg (שֵׁרֻג) [pronounced sehr-OOG]	<i>branch, descendant; transliterated Serug</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #8277 BDB #974

**Translation:** Rue lived to be 32 years old when he fathered Serug.

Again, becoming a father in his 30's is not the least abnormal.

Serug is very similar to the word from *tendril* or *twig*. It means *descendant* or *younger branch*. This indicates that Serug was probably not Reu's first-born.

Genesis 11:20 Rue lived to be 32 years old when he fathered Serug. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

## Genesis 11:21

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châyâh (חָיָה) [pronounced khaw-YAW]	<i>to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
R <sup>e</sup> ûw (רֵעוּ) [pronounced reh-ŴOO]	<i>(his) friend; his shepherd; transliterated Reu</i>	proper singular masculine noun	Strong's #7466 BDB #946
'achârêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced ah-kuh-RAY]	<i>behind, after; following; after that, afterwards; hinder parts</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong's #310 BDB #29
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
S <sup>e</sup> rûwg (שֵׁרֻג) [pronounced sehr-OOG]	<i>branch, descendant; transliterated Serug</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #8277 BDB #974

Genesis 11:21			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
sheba <sup>c</sup> (שֶׁבַע) [pronounced <i>she<sup>b</sup>-VAHG</i> ] <sup>1</sup>	<i>seven</i>	numeral masculine noun	Strong's #7651 BDB #987
shânîym (שָׁנַיִם) [pronounced <i>shaw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>years</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mâ'thayim (מֵאֵתַיִם) [pronounced <i>maw-thah-YIM</i> ]	<i>two hundred</i>	feminine dual numeral (not certain about the spelling)	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i> ]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i> ]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
bânîym (בָּנַיִם) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bath (בָּת) [pronounced <i>bath</i> ]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #1323 BDB #123

**Translation:** After Rue fathered Serug, he lived [another] 207 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.

Again, Rue has an age that is much reduced compared to the age of his ancestors. He and his father will both die before the patriarchs which preceded them.

Genesis 11:21 After Rue fathered Serug, he lived [another] 207 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:20–21 Rue lived to be 32 years old when he fathered Serug. After Rue fathered Serug, he lived [another] 207 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:20–21 Rue was 32 years old when he fathered Serug. After fathering Serug, Rue lived an additional 207 years. He fathered other sons and daughters besides. (Kukis paraphrase)

<p><b>And so lives Serug thirty a year and so he sires Nahor. And so lives Serug after his siring of Nahor two hundred a year. And so he sires sons and daughters.</b></p>	<p>Genesis 11:22–23</p>	<p><b>Serug lived to be 30 years old when he fathered Nahor. After Serug fathered Nahor, he lived [another] 200 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.</b></p>
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**Serug was 30 years old when he fathered Nahor. After fathering Nahor, Serug lived an additional 200 years. He fathered other sons and daughters besides.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Targum of Onkelos	And Serug lived thirty years, and begat Nahor. And Serug lived after he had begotten Nahor two hundred years, and begat sons and daughters.
Latin Vulgate	And Sarug lived thirty years, and begot Nachor. And Sarug lived after he begot Nachor, two hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so lives Serug thirty a year and so he sires Nahor. And so lives Serug after his siring of Nahor two hundred a year. And so he sires sons and daughters.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Serug lived thirty years, and begot Nahor; And Serug lived after he begot Nahor two hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Serug lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot Nahor. And Serug lived two hundred years after he had begotten Nahor, and begot sons and daughters, and died.

Significant differences:

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Contemporary English V.	When Serug was thirty, he had a son named Nahor. Serug had more children and died at the age of two hundred thirty.
Easy English	When Serug had lived for 30 years, he became Nahor's father. Then Serug lived for 200 more years and he had other sons and daughters.
Easy-to-Read Version	After Serug was 30 years old, his son Nahor was born. After Nahor was born, Serug lived 200 years more. During that time he had other sons and daughters.
Good News Bible (TEV)	When Serug was 30 years old, he had a son, Nahor; after that, he lived another 200 years and had other children.
<i>The Message</i>	When Serug was thirty years old, he had Nahor. After Serug had Nahor, he lived 200 more years and had other sons and daughters.
New Century Version	When Serug was 30 years old, his son Nahor was born. 23 After that, Serug lived 200 years and had other sons and daughters.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

Beck's American Translation	When Serug was 30, he became the father of Nahor. After Nahor was born, Serug lived 200 years and had sons and daughters.
NIRV	When Serug had lived 30 years, he became the father of Nahor. 23 After Nahor was born, Serug lived 200 years. And he had other sons and daughters.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Ancient Roots Translinear	Seruch was a hundred and thirty years old when he became father to NaHor. And after he became father to NaHor, he lived two hundred years (as he fathered other sons and daughters), and then he died.
Complete Jewish Bible	S'rug lived thirty years and fathered Nachor. After Nachor was born, S'rug lived another 200 years and had sons and daughters.
The Expanded Bible	When Serug was 30 years old, his son Nahor was born. After that, Serug lived 200 years and had other sons and daughters.
New Advent Bible	And Sarug lived thirty years, and begot Nachor. And Sarug lived after he begot Nachor, two hundred years, and begot sons and daughters.
NIV – UK	When Serug had lived 30 years, he became the father of Nahor. 23 And after he became the father of Nahor, Serug lived 200 years and had other sons and daughters.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Serug <sup>ֿ</sup> lived thirty years, and brought forth Naḥor. And after he brought forth Naḥor, Serug <sup>ֿ</sup> lived two hundred years, and brought forth sons and daughters.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

International Standard V .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation .

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible .

Translation for Translators .

The Voice .

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And living is Serug a hundred and thirty years, and begetting is he Nahor. And living is Serug after his begetting Nahor two hundred years, and begetting is he sons and daughters. And he died.
English Standard V. – UK	When Serug had lived for 30 years, he fathered Nahor. And Serug lived after he fathered Nahor for 200 years and had other sons and daughters.
New RSV	When Serug had lived for thirty years, he became the father of Nahor; and Serug lived after the birth of Nahor for two hundred years, and had other sons and daughters.
Syndein/Thieme	And Serug lived thirty years, and sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} Nahor. And Serug lived after he caused the birth of {yalad} Nahor two hundred years, and sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} sons and daughters.
Young's Updated LT	And Serug lives thirty years, and sires Nahor. And Serug lives after his siring Nahor two hundred years, and sires sons and daughters.

**The gist of this verse:** Serug was 30 years old when he fathered Nahor. After fathering Nahor, Serug lived an additional 200 years, fathering other sons and daughters besides.

Genesis 11:22			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced <i>khaw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
S <sup>e</sup> rûwg (שֵׂרוּג) [pronounced <i>sehr-OOG</i> ]	<i>branch, descendant; transliterated Serug</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #8277 BDB #974
sh <sup>e</sup> lôwshîym (שְׁלוֹשִׁים) [pronounced <i>sh<sup>e</sup>low-SHEEM</i> ]	<i>thirty</i>	plural numeral	Strong's #7970 BDB #1026
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i> ]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i> ]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Nâchôwr (נָחֹר) [pronounced <i>naw-KHOHR</i> ]	<i>snorting [of a horse]; hoarse, dry hot; transliterated Nahor</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #5152 BDB #637

**Translation:** Serug lived to be 30 years old when he fathered Nahor.

Nahor is an interesting guy. Did God go to Nahor and say, "You need to go to the land of Canaan"? Or did God say that to Terah, Nahor's son? It appears that God did not appear only to Abram, something which we will discover later.

Genesis 11:22 Serug lived to be 30 years old when he fathered Nahor. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:23			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253

Genesis 11:23			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
châyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced <i>khaw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
Sêrûwg (שֵׁרֻוג) [pronounced <i>sehr-OOG</i> ]	<i>branch, descendant; transliterated Serug</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #8277 BDB #974
'achârêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced <i>ah-kuh-RAY</i> ]	<i>behind, after; following; after that, afterwards; hinder parts</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong's #310 BDB #29
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i> ]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Nâchôwr (נָחֹר) [pronounced <i>naw-KHOHR</i> ]	<i>snorting [of a horse]; hoarse, dry hot; transliterated Nahor</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #5152 BDB #637
mâ'thayim (מֵאֵתַיִם) [pronounced <i>maw-thah-YIM</i> ]	<i>two hundred</i>	feminine dual numeral (not certain about the spelling)	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i> ]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i> ]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
bânîym (בָּנִים) [pronounced <i>baw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bath (בָּת) [pronounced <i>bahth</i> ]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #1323 BDB #123

**Translation:** After Serug fathered Nahor, he lived [another] 200 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.

Serug, like those who went before him, lived a reduced life, but he also fathered sons and daughters, suggesting that he had at least 5 children. This would have been a great population explosion, beginning with Shem, Ham and Japheth, its increase tapering off about the time the Serge and Nahor die.

Ashas been mentioned earlier, there is a decline in the ages of these patriarchs after the flood.

Genesis 11:23 *After Serug fathered Nahor, he lived [another] 200 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:22–23 *Serug lived to be 30 years old when he fathered Nahor. After Serug fathered Nahor, he lived [another] 200 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.* (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:22–23 *Serug was 30 years old when he fathered Nahor. After fathering Nahor, Serug lived an additional 200 years. He fathered other sons and daughters besides.* (Kukis paraphrase)

The age decline is actually quite simple to explain.

### Explaining the Age Decline

1. Adam through Noah lived approximately a millennium. There was intermarriage, as everyone had to be descended from Adam, but the human line was exceptionally strong.
2. After the flood, the line had been narrowed to just Noah's line, with some outside genes provided by the wives of his sons (and they could have been sisters). Nevertheless, the limiting of the genetic pool and the post flood environment cut their life expectancy in half.
3. Right before Peleg was born, the languages were separated, which limited the gene pool even further for each family. Each family had a limited group from which to sire children. This reduced the gene pool into the hundreds immediately.
4. From one group of ancestors, we have the dog family and we have dogs which had been so interbred, that the difference between breeds is phenomenal. However, this breeding has isolated certain characteristics and qualities and most mutts will be healthier, stronger and more intelligent than the stocks from which they came. From these several families of Genesis 10, we have groups of people who look completely different; they all have common ancestors, but the language division caused a sharp division of physical and intellectual traits.
5. The combination of further inbreeding and continued degeneration of the earth, with the proliferation of bacteria and disease, the age of man decreased into the hundreds and finally to approximately 70.

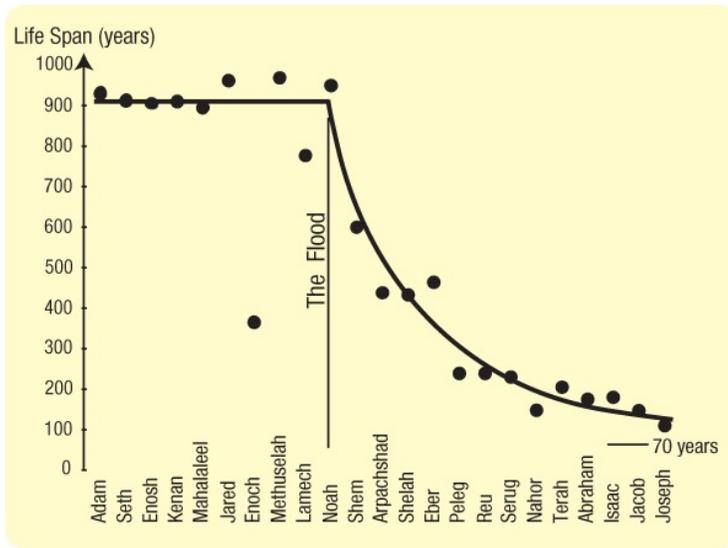
The age decline is an exponential decline, which is what we would expect.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

## Longevity Decline of Patriarchs (Chart)

You will note the gentle curve assigned to these ages after the flood. This is known as an exponential curve,<sup>23</sup> and, as such, it is quite significant. The book of Genesis was written long before anyone knew about logarithms or exponents. Logarithms began to be developed around A.D. 1600<sup>24</sup> and the book of Genesis was “written” around 3000–2000 B.C. (those who do not believe that the Bible is the Word of God, put this somewhere around 1400–400 B.C.). Exponential curves are associated with population growth and other processes involving living things (as well as being associated with the degradation of radioactive material). This should cause the normal person to ask, *how did the writer (s) of Genesis know about the exponential curve?* At the very least, this particular writer recorded data points that fit an exponential curve. Now, if these ages are all reasonable and true and the actual ages of these men, then this makes sense. An author would simply be recording the data points based upon the ages of these men, and we would expect, today, for them to conform to an exponential decay curve. However, if this was just some writer making up ages off the top of his



head, then this makes very little sense at all. A writer today could do that, taking exponential curves into consideration; a writer in the time of Shem or Eber would not have known to do this.

The chart is from: [http://www.creation-science.com/onlinebook/webpictures/faq-declining\\_life\\_spans.jpg](http://www.creation-science.com/onlinebook/webpictures/faq-declining_life_spans.jpg) accessed February 3, 2013.

**And so lives Nahor nine and twenty a year and so he sires Terah. And so lives Nahor after his siring of Terah nineteen a year and one hundred a year. And so he sires sons and daughters.**

Genesis 11:24–25

**Nahor lived to be 29 years old when he fathered Terah. After Nahor fathered Terah, he lived [another] 119 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.**

**Nahor was 29 years old when he fathered Terah. After fathering Terah, Nahor lived an additional 119 years. He fathered other sons and daughters besides.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Targum of Onkelos

And Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and begat Terah. And Nahor lived after he had begotten Terah one hundred and sixteen years, and begat sons and daughters.

Latin Vulgate

And Nachor lived nine and twenty years, and begot Thare. And Nachor lived after he begot Thare, a hundred and nineteen years, and begot sons and daughters.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so lives Nahor nine and twenty a year and so he sires Terah. And so lives Nahor after his siring of Terah nineteen a year and one hundred a year. And so he sires sons and daughters.

Peshitta (Syriac)

And Nahor lived twenty-nine years, and begot Terah; 25 And Nahor lived after he begot Terah one hundred and nineteen years, and begot sons and daughters.

<sup>23</sup> See [http://www.worldwideflood.com/general/noahs\\_age\\_files/trend\\_after\\_noah.gif](http://www.worldwideflood.com/general/noahs_age_files/trend_after_noah.gif) for a mathematical approximation of this curve. Accessed February 3, 2013.

<sup>24</sup> <http://mathdl.maa.org/mathDL/46/?nodeId=3495&pa=content&pf=1&sa=viewDocument> accessed February 3, 2013.

Septuagint (Greek)                   And Nahor lived one hundred and seventy-nine years, and begot Terah. And Nahor lived one hundred and twenty-five years after he had begotten Terah, and begot sons and daughters, and he died.

Significant differences:

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Contemporary English V.	When Nahor was twenty-nine, he had a son named Terah. Nahor had more children and died at the age of one hundred forty-eight.
Easy English	When Nahor had lived for 29 years, he became Terah's father. v25 Then Nahor lived for 119 more years and he had other sons and daughters.
Easy-to-Read Version	After Nahor was 29 years old, his son Terah was born. After Terah was born, Nahor lived 119 years more. During that time he had other sons and daughters.
Good News Bible (TEV)	When Nahor was 29 years old, he had a son, Terah; after that, he lived another 119 years and had other children.
<i>The Message</i>	When Nahor was twenty-nine years old, he had Terah. After Nahor had Terah, he lived 119 more years and had other sons and daughters.
New Century Version	When Nahor was 29 years old, his son Terah was born. 25 After that, Nahor lived 119 years and had other sons and daughters.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	<sup>24</sup> NaHor was seventy-nine years old when he became father to Terah. <sup>25</sup> And after he became father to Terah, he lived a hundred and twenty-nine years (as he fathered other sons and daughters), and then he died.
NIRV	When Nahor had lived 29 years, he became the father of Terah. 25 After Terah was born, Nahor lived 119 years. And he had other sons and daughters.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Complete Jewish Bible	Nachor lived twenty-nine years and fathered Terach. 25 After Terach was born, Nachor lived another 119 years and had sons and daughters.
The Expanded Bible	When Nahor was 29 years old, his son Terah was born. 25 After that, Nahor lived 119 years and had other sons and daughters.
New Advent Bible	And Nachor lived nine and twenty years, and begot Thare. 25 And Nachor lived after he begot Thare, a hundred and nineteen years, and begot sons and daughters.
NIV, ©2011	When Nahor had lived 29 years, he became the father of Terah. 25 And after he became the father of Terah, Nahor lived 119 years and had other sons and daughters.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	And Naḥor lived twenty-nine years, and brought forth Terah. And after he brought forth Terah, Naḥor lived one hundred and nineteen years, and brought forth sons and daughters.

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

International Standard V .

**Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):**

The Heritage Bible .

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Kaplan Translation .

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible .

Translation for Translators .

The Voice .

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version    And living is Nahor seventy-nine years, and begetting is he Terah. And living is Nahor after his begetting Terah a hundred and twenty-nine years. And begetting is he sons and daughters. And he died.

English Standard V. – UK    When Nahor had lived for 29 years, he fathered Terah. 25 And Nahor lived after he fathered Terah for 119 years and had other sons and daughters.

New RSV    When Nahor had lived for twenty-nine years, he became the father of Terah; 25and Nahor lived after the birth of Terah for one hundred and nineteen years, and had other sons and daughters.

Syndein/Thieme    And Nahor lived nine and twenty years, and sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} Terah {father of Abraham}. And Nahor lived after he caused the birth of {yalad} Terah an hundred and nineteen years, and sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} sons and daughters.

Young's Updated LT    And Nahor lives nine and twenty years, and sires Terah. And Nahor lives after his siring Terah an hundred and nineteen years, and sires sons and daughters.

**The gist of this verse:**    Nahor was 29 years old when he fathered Terah. After fathering Terah, Nahor lived an additional 119 years, fathering other sons and daughters besides.

**Genesis 11:24**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced <i>khaw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
Nâchôwr (נָחֹר) [pronounced <i>naw-KHOHR</i> ]	<i>snorting [of a horse]; hoarse, dry hot; transliterated Nahor</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #5152 BDB #637
têsha' (תֵּשָׁע) [pronounced <i>TAY-shahg'</i> ]	<i>nine, ninth</i>	masculine singular noun; ordinal or cardinal numeral	Strong's #8672 BDB #1077
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

### Genesis 11:24

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
‘es <sup>e</sup> rîym (עֲשֵׂרִים) [pronounced ges <sup>e</sup> - REEM]	<i>twenty</i>	plural numeral adjective	Strong's #6242 BDB #797
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
’êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Terach (תְּרַח) [pronounced THE-rahkh]	<i>delay; a tree and is transliterated Terah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #8646 BDB #1076

**Translation:** Nahor lived to be 29 years old when he fathered Terah.

What great names for Terah and Nahor. Nahor was sleepy, so the grace of God passed him on by; Terah was given the command to go to Canaan, but he delayed the plan of God by not going (we will study this in this chapter).

Genesis 11:24 [Nahor lived to be 29 years old when he fathered Terah.](#) (Kukis mostly literal translation)

### Genesis 11:25

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châyâh (חָיָה) [pronounced khaw-YAW]	<i>to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
Nâchôwr (נָחֹר) [pronounced naw- KHOHR]	<i>snorting [of a horse]; hoarse, dry hot; transliterated Nahor</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #5152 BDB #637
’achârêy (אַחֲרָי) [pronounced ah-kuh- RAY]	<i>behind, after; following; after that, afterwards; hinder parts</i>	preposition; plural form	Strong's #310 BDB #29

Genesis 11:25			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Terach (תֵּרַח) [pronounced THE-rahkh]	<i>delay; a tree and is transliterated Terah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #8646 BDB #1076
têsha' (עֶשֶׂת) [pronounced TAY-shahg]	<i>nine, ninth</i>	masculine singular noun; ordinal or cardinal numeral	Strong's #8672 BDB #1077
'âsâr (עָשָׂר) [pronounced gaw-SAWR]	<i>ten; –teen [resulting in numbers 11–19]</i>	masculine/feminine singular noun	Strong's #6240 BDB #797
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mê'âh (מֵאָה) [pronounced may-AW]	<i>one hundred, a hundred, hundred</i>	feminine singular numeral; construct form	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
bânîym (בָּנִים) [pronounced baw-NEEM]	<i>sons, descendants; children; people; sometimes rendered men</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bath (בָּת) [pronounced bahth]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #1323 BDB #123

**Translation:** After Nahor fathered Terah, he lived [another] 119 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.

Nahor did not enjoy any great blessings and his life will be significantly shorter than his grandson's life span (Noah will live to be 175 years old).

Genesis 11:25 After Nahor fathered Terah, he lived [another] 119 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:24–25 Nahor lived to be 29 years old when he fathered Terah. After Nahor fathered Terah, he lived [another] 119 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:24–25 Nahor was 29 years old when he fathered Terah. After fathering Terah, Nahor lived an additional 119 years. He fathered other sons and daughters besides. (Kukis paraphrase)

What follows below is the English translation from the Masoretic text (the Hebrew text) interspersed with Greek text (abbreviated LXX) where there are differences.

Gen 11:11–26 And Shem lived 500 years after he fathered Arpachshad and he had other sons and daughters. When Arpachshad had lived 35 years, he fathered Shelah. And Arpachshad lived 403 years after he fathered Shelah [the Greek text has, instead: *And Arphaxad lived 135 years, and fathered Cainan. And Arphaxad lived 400 years after he had fathered Cainan, and he later fathered more sons and daughters, and died. And Cainan lived 130 years and fathered Salah (Shelah); and Canaan lived 330 years after he had sired Salah, and fathered more sons and daughters, and died.*]. He also fathered sons and daughters. Shelah lived 30 years [the Greek text, the LXX, reads 130 years] and fathered Eber. And after he fathered Eber, Shelah lived 403 years [LXX—330 years]. He also fathered more sons and daughters. Eber lived 34 years [LXX—134 years] and fathered Peleg. After he fathered Peleg, Eber lived 430 more years [LXX—270 years] and he fathered more sons and daughters as well. Peleg lived 30 years [LXX—130 years] and fathered Reu. After he fathered Reu, Peleg lived 209 more years and he fathered more sons and daughters. Reu lived 32 years [LXX—132 years] and fathered Serug. After he fathered Serug, Reu lived 207 years and he fathered more sons and daughters. Serug lived 30 years [LXX—130 years] and fathered Nahor. After he fathered Nahor, Serug lived 200 more years and he fathered more sons and daughters. Nahor lived 29 years [LXX—179 years] and fathered Terah. After he fathered Terah, Nahor lived 119 years [LXX—125 years] and he fathered additional sons and daughters as well. Terah lived 70 years and fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran.

Obviously, there are some serious disparities between the Masoretic and Greek texts with regards to the ages. The Greek text actually adds an additional 875 years (if my math can be depended upon). The only differences which are pertinent here are the years in which one man fathered another, not how long they lived after.

Let's look at this line working backwards from Abraham to the flood (the ages given is the age of the father when he sires this particular son—the person cited above him in the chart):

When did the flood occur?				
The Line of Shem	Masoretic (Hebrew) Text		Septuagint (Greek Text)	
Abraham	Most seem to agree that Abram was born in or around 2160 B.C.			
Terah (Genesis 11:26)	Lived 70 years and then he fathered Abraham. Terah would therefore be born 2230 B.C.		70 years	2230 B.C.
Nahor (Genesis 11:24)	29	2259 B.C.	179	2409 B.C.
Serug (Genesis 11:22)	30	2289 B.C.	130	2539 B.C.
Rue (Genesis 11:20)	32	2321 B.C.	132	2671 B.C.
Peleg (Genesis 11:18)	30	2351 B.C.	130	2801 B.C.
Eber (Genesis 11:16)	34	2385 B.C.	134	2935 B.C.

When did the flood occur?			
The Line of Shem	Masoretic (Hebrew) Text		Septuagint (Greek Text)
Shela (Shala) (Genesis 11:14)	30	2415 B.C.	130 3065 B.C.
Cainan (Genesis 11:13 in LXX only; he is also named in the book of Luke)			130 3195 B.C.
Arphaxad (Genesis 11:12)	35	2450 B.C.	130 3325 B.C.
Flood (Genesis 11:10)	2	2452 B.C.	2 3327 B.C.

Shem was born about 100 years before the flood; so, according to Genesis 11:10, that would have been about 2550 B.C. in the Hebrew and 3425 B.C. in the Greek. According to the Hebrew, man is approximately 6000 years old; according to the Greek, man is approximately 7000 years old.

This assumes that there are no missing names in the text and that the numbers given are accurate.

I do not pretend to know which line is accurate or whether Cainan properly belongs in this line or not. Robby Dean argues against Cainan [here](#), which argument I have not summarized, as I don't see it as important. Man being 6000–7000 years old is good enough for me at this point. As I have pointed out many times in the past, this is in complete agreement with normal human population growth estimates. It is the evolutionist who must layer theory upon theory upon theory in order to justify his faith that modern man is 1 million years old.

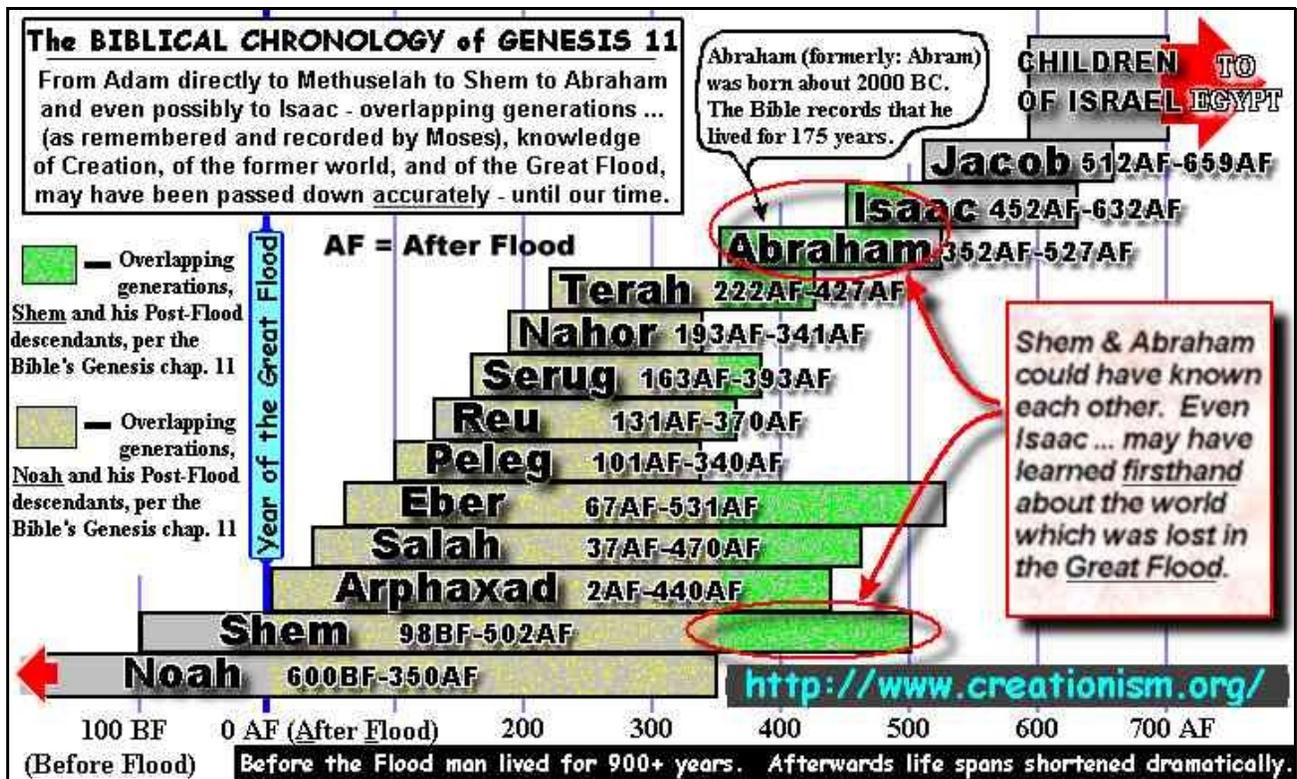
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The Bible and modern archeology synch up fairly well from around 2300 B.C. and forward. Most modern archeology is based upon 19<sup>th</sup> century precepts, which have not changed dramatically for over 100 years, even though they were developed before carbon dating. They are also based upon evolutionary theory, where modern man is thought to have been around for about 1 million years, whereas, the Bible has man on this earth for around 6000–7000 years.

This does synch up quite nicely with world population growth curves, which are perfectly consistent with man being 6000 or 7000 years old, and not at all consistent with being 1 million years old, as evolution teaches. For more information on this, see [World Population Growth \(HTML\)](#) ([PDF](#)).

I have seen several charts, and this one, [The Biblical Chronology of Genesis 11](#), is one of the clearest and easiest to follow:



This came from <http://www.creationism.org/lifespan.jpg> Bear in mind that Cainan, who is named in the LXX and in the book of Luke, would add 130 years to everything after Arphaxad. There still could have been an overlap of Shem's life and Abraham's. Also, bear in mind that, there is 875 years difference between the line shown above and that found in the Septuagint (the Greek text). This would have changed the overlap of these generations quite radically. In any case, Shem, Arphaxad, Salah and Eber would have still outlived their sons, grandsons and, in some cases, great grandsons.

### Special Section: Ancient Biblical Texts

When examining the straight genealogical line of Shem, we saw how the Hebrew text had fewer years between Shem and Abram than did the Greek text. In fact, I have spoken of the Greek and the Hebrew texts on several occasions, but without giving many details. So, here are some details:

The original text of the Old Testament was written in Hebrew. However, the Hebrews first used the old Phœnician alphabet until Nehemiah's time (444 B.C.), at which time, they then used the Aramaic script. This is because the final ancient incarnation of an independent Israel—the nation of Judah—was conquered by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. and the people were actually carried off to Babylon. Then Babylon was conquered by Cyrus the Great, a Persian, and then, in 516 B.C., the Jews were allowed to return to their land.

The Jews returned to the land, but with several books (Daniel and Esther) which were written in Aramæan and their other holy books were now written with an Aramæan alphabet. Since Cyrus the Great had only conquered and controlled Babylon for a short time before allowing the Jews to return, we must reasonably suppose that both the Babylonians and the Persians used the Aramæan language.

The Old Testament, at this time, was also translated into the Aramaic, which translation is called the Targums. The Hebrew of this era and the Aramaic of this era are quite similar languages, employing the same alphabet and many of the same words and language structure. I do not know the ancient languages well enough to distinguish between them, but we have 2 very similar languages at this point, both using the same alphabet, but with both Hebrew manuscripts and an Aramæan translation.

The Hebrews, around 200 B.C., then began to use the square letters of the Aramaic script, but the language was still Hebrew. Here is a chart of the Phœnician alphabet side-by-side the Hebrew alphabet: <http://hebrewoldtestament.com/hebrewalpha.htm> Bear in mind that this is actually an Aramæan alphabet adopted for the Hebrew language. So, for hundreds of years, we have the original manuscripts, all adopted to an Aramæan alphabet, but also from that era, there are the Targums, which are free translations (paraphrases) from the Hebrew into the Aramæan language.

This history and background is based upon the Old Testament Scriptures themselves, upon the opinions of ancient historians, and upon actual manuscripts found called the Dead Sea Scrolls (it is my understanding that partial manuscripts containing all 3 alphabets were found). Prior to 1947, the oldest Hebrew manuscripts which we had, had been copied in the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. (this is known as the Masoretic text).

The Greek translation, called the Septuagint, and abbreviated LXX, would have been made from manuscripts far older than we have access to today. However, that does not mean that they worked from original manuscripts; nor were these manuscripts necessarily more accurate. Furthermore, the Greek text represents a very uneven translation. However, when it comes to numbers, if I was going to lean in any direction, it would be toward the Greek text (however, in most other respects, I lean toward the Hebrew text).

So there are no misunderstandings, when speaking of the Greek and Hebrew texts in the study of the book of Genesis, we are dealing with the Old Testament specifically. The background and various texts pertaining to the New Testament is a completely different topic.

### Ancient Manuscripts of the Bible

The Texts	Text/Commentary
The Masoretic Text (the Hebrew text)	<p>Originally, the Old Testament Hebrew text was not divided into chapters or verses. Furthermore, they used a consonantal alphabet for their written language (there were no vowels in the original Hebrew manuscripts). However, prior to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947, our most ancient Hebrew Old Testament manuscripts came from the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D.</p> <p>The Masoretes (circa 500–1000 A.D.) were dedicated to preserving the text of the Old Testament, to which they added vowel points, so that the words could be pronounced (the vowel points are dots and bars, all written above or below the consonants, so that the original text remains unchanged). The Old Testament portion of our English Bibles are based upon the Masoretic text, because we simply did not have any older Hebrew manuscripts.</p>

The manuscripts from the Masoretes extent today only go back to the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. This is because, as a manuscript became worn and old, the Masoretes would recopy it. Once they had produced an accurate copy (and they had very exacting rules to determine this), they would destroy the older manuscript.

With the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947, we now have all 3 types of ancient Hebrew manuscripts dating back before 100 B.C. and earlier, which manuscripts confirm the accuracy of the Masoretic text of a millennium later. However, none of these are complete manuscripts of the Old Testament.

## Ancient Manuscripts of the Bible

The Texts	Text/Commentary
The Targums (the Aramaic text)	<p>After the Jews had been conquered in 586 B.C. and then returned to their land in 516 B.C., many returning to the land apparently spoke both Hebrew and Aramaean, 2 very similar languages which used the same alphabet. Some only spoke Aramaean. Some Jews remained in Babylon, as they were born there, raised there, and had no connection to the Land of Promise. So, somewhere around this time period, Aramaean translations (actually, paraphrases) of portions of the Old Testament were made, presumably for those Jews who remained in Babylon (and, very likely, for the Persians as well). It appears that, in some ancient synagogues, the Hebrew and Aramaic texts are read alternately. It is possible that there is even an Old Testament passage which alludes to such a practice (Nehemiah 8:1–8; particularly, v. 8). Because most Jews now spoke Aramaean, these targums made it possible for them to hear, read and understand the Old Testament Scriptures.</p>
<p>There were ancient copies of the targums discovered with the Dead Sea Scrolls. Because these are paraphrases, many scholars do not hold the targums in high regard, and it is unclear as to how many targums are extant and from what time period.</p>	
The Septuagint (the Greek Text and abbreviated LXX)	<p>Just as the Jews forsook Hebrew for Aramaic, they began speaking Greek soon after Alexander the Great conquered much of the world (during the 300's B.C.).</p> <p>Somewhere between 300–100 B.C., 70 men (most accounts say 72 men) were commissioned to translate the Old Testament into Greek. We do not know how long it took or whether there were exactly 70 men, or how many of them lasted until the end of the project, or who did what. However, sometime during that time period, approximately 70 men took Hebrew manuscripts, much older than we possess today (the Dead Sea Scrolls aside) and translated the Hebrew Old Testament into the Greek language.</p> <p>This was the first known great translation of an entire book in history that we actually have copies of.</p> <p>One source claimed that, of the 350 times the Old Testament is quoted in the New, in only 50 of those instances does the text differ greatly from the LXX.<sup>25</sup> Another claimed that, of the approximately 263 times the Old Testament is quoted, 85 are taken almost verbatim from the LXX, and there are another 100 or so which bear some resemblance to the Greek text.<sup>26</sup></p>
<p>Insofar as I can determine, there are portions of the Septuagint in the Dead Sea Scrolls; and that, prior to their discovery, our oldest Alexandrian Septuagint manuscripts dated back to the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. There are at least 2 different versions of the Septuagint (or portions of it), although they are certainly not very different in text.</p>	
<p>There have been several ancient Greek translations of the Old Testament; some of which are extant; others of which we know through other historical documents. The Hexapla was 6 versions of the Bible, side-by-side, in 6 columns, 4 of them being different Greek versions of that era. This was put together in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D. by Origen, but I don't believe we have even a partial manuscript of this.</p>	

<sup>25</sup> From <http://www.bible-history.com/faussets/S/Septuagint/> accessed September 21, 2010.

<sup>26</sup> From [http://www.christianmissionconnection.org/The\\_Septuagint\\_A\\_Critical\\_Analysis.pdf](http://www.christianmissionconnection.org/The_Septuagint_A_Critical_Analysis.pdf) accessed September 21, 2010.

## Ancient Manuscripts of the Bible

The Texts	Text/Commentary
<p>The Aramaic (Syriac) Text</p>	<p>As mentioned, probably the earliest translation of the Old Testament was made into Aramaic around the time of Nehemiah. We do not have any manuscripts from this period of time.</p> <p>The Hebrews borrowed one form of the Aramaic alphabet around 444 B.C. and then another form of the Aramaic alphabet around 200 B.C. and used this alphabet to copy and recopy the Old Testament Scriptures<sup>27</sup>. The Jews, for 70 years, had been removed from Judæa and were under the control of Persia (modern-day Iran). So, they would have brought their language, to some degree, with them when they returned to the Land of Promise. For all intents and purposes, a new generation of Jews, raised from youth in Persia, returned to Judæa.</p> <p>The Peshitta is the common Aramaic text today (also called Syriac) and it is actually a dialect of the Aramaic.</p>
<p>The oldest Aramaic (Syriac) Old Testament manuscript dates back to A.D. 464 (which is quite old). How close this is to the earliest Aramaic translation of the Old Testament is unclear.</p> <p>In my studies of the Old Testament, the Syriac text seems to be the furthest from the Greek and Hebrew.</p> <p>When it comes to the New Testament, there is a whole debate about whether it was originally written in the Greek or in the Aramaic.</p>	
<p>The Latin Text (called the Vulgate)</p>	<p>Because Rome conquered most of the world, people first spoke Greek (because Rome had a Greek culture and spoke Greek) and later, Latin. By the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D., some areas conquered by Rome spoke Latin primarily, so there were translations made of the Old and New Testaments into Latin (although, none of those are extant today). What followed over the next 2 centuries was a number of different Latin translations.</p> <p>Saint Jerome was commissioned by Pope Damasus I near the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D. to do the official Latin translation. <i>Vulgate</i> means <i>vulgar, common</i>, and the idea was, to make a translation of the Bible into the language of the (common) people. Jerome was not the only person to have a hand in all of this.</p> <p>Although there are problems which developed with the Catholic church over the many centuries (the chief ones as a result of intermingling politics, power and the church; and goofy precepts which began by tradition), the Latin Vulgate was an excellent Old and New Testament translation. I tend to find more agreement between the Hebrew and the Latin than with the Greek or Syriac (when there are differences).</p>
<p><i>The oldest extant manuscript of the Vulgate is the Codex Amiatinus (Biblioteca Laurenziana, Florence), written at Wearmouth or Jarrow between c.690 and 700.</i><sup>28</sup></p>	
<p>The Greek, Syriac and Latin translations were made from Greek and Hebrew manuscripts—manuscripts which are, for the most part, older than what we have today.</p>	

<sup>27</sup> Norman Geisler and William Nix; *A General Introduction to the Bible*; Chicago; Moody Press, ©1968, p. 244.

<sup>28</sup> From <http://www.answers.com/topic/vulgate> accessed September 21, 2010.

## Ancient Manuscripts of the Bible

### The Texts

### Text/Commentary

It needs to be noted that, when a translation is done, there is a smoothing out of the language and the sentence structure. That is, there may be some difficult phrasing or sentence structure, or even a sentence which does not make sense, and a translation general will smooth it out so that it makes sense. The same is true of your English translation. Almost every sentence should make sense in your English Bible. In the Hebrew, this is not always the case, part of the problem being the transmission of the manuscripts over the years.

These ancient translations run into the same problems that we do: if there is a difference in text, which text should be taken? If a sentence does not make sense, how can we make it make sense? If a phrase is idiomatic, do we give it a literal translation or do we translate it in a way to give the idiom a modern understanding?

We consider the autographs of the Hebrew text to be the inspired text. The autograph is a perfect copy of what was originally written, and there are no autographs extant today. The MT (Masoretic text) is considered to be the closest thing that we have to the autographs, with some deference given to the Dead Sea Scrolls and to ancient translations (Greek, Latin and Syriac).

The most dramatic differences between texts are the number of years named; and the spelling of some proper nouns. When it comes to the Law or to narrative, there are very few significant differences between the MT and the Dead Sea Scrolls (that is, if you read an English Bible based upon the MT or upon the Latin or upon the Greek, you are not going to come away with a completely different understanding of the Old Testament).

Most modern translations are made from the original Greek (New Testament) and Hebrew (Old Testament; with some portions written in Aramaic). However, deference is given to the ancient translations named above, as well as to other translations and alternate readings. In my study of the Old Testament, where I ponderously look at each Hebrew word, I do come across a fair amount of deviation. However, very little of this deviation is doctrinally substantive. In the book of Samuel, for instance, the biggest problem that I have come across is in 1Samuel 14:18, where King Saul appears to ask for the Ark of God to be brought to him, he probably called for the Ephod of God instead. I have never come across a different reading which made me question or want to revise any major or minor doctrine. That is, I never looked at a verse and said, "If you read it this way, it gives this spin to the doctrine of redemption, but if you read it that way, it puts a different spin on that doctrine." So, despite the textual problems, none are so great as to actually change a doctrine from the Word of God.

It is worth noting that, the accuracy of the New Testament of the Bible is greater than the accuracy of Shakespeare's plays which we have today. The New Testament, written in the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D., before the invention of the printing press, is far more accurate than the text of the 37 plays written by Shakespeare, which were written in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, after the invention of the printing press. In every single one of Shakespeare's plays, there are gaps where text ought to be; so scholars have simply tried to fill in the blanks with text which fits the context. On the other hand, there is no indication that any text is missing from the New Testament, written 1600 years previous to Shakespeare.<sup>29</sup>

The background for the Old Testament and New Testament manuscripts is entirely different.

For more information about the Peshitta, see <http://www.peshitta.org/>

If this area of study is interesting to you, let me recommend Geisler and Nix's *A General Introduction to the Bible* or any of Josh McDowell's books on apologetics (e.g., *A Ready Defense*, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict Vol. I*).

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Previously, we studied the ancient texts of the Bible; now let's return to the text itself:

<sup>29</sup> Josh McDowell, *A Ready Defense*; Here's Life Publishers; ©1990; p. 24.

**Gen 11:10–26** These are the generations of Shem. Shem was a hundred years old and fathered Arpachshad two years after the flood. And Shem lived 500 years after he fathered Arpachshad (he also had other sons and daughters). When Arpachshad had lived 35 years, he fathered Shelah. And Arpachshad lived 403 years after he fathered Shelah [the Greek text has, instead: *And Arphaxad lived 135 years, and fathered Cainan. And Arphaxad lived 400 years after he had fathered Cainan, and he later fathered more sons and daughters, and died. And Cainan lived 130 years and fathered Salah (Shelah); and Canaan lived 330 years after he had sired Salah, and fathered more sons and daughters, and died.*]. He also fathered sons and daughters. Shelah lived 30 years [the Greek text, the LXX, reads 130 years] and fathered Eber. And after he fathered Eber, Shelah lived 403 years [LXX—330 years]. He also fathered more sons and daughters. Eber lived 34 years [LXX—134 years] and fathered Peleg. After he fathered Peleg, Eber lived 430 more years [LXX—270 years] (he also fathered more sons and daughters). Peleg lived 30 years [LXX—130 years] and fathered Reu. After he fathered Reu, Peleg lived 209 more years and he fathered more sons and daughters. Reu lived 32 years [LXX—132 years] and fathered Serug. After he fathered Serug, Reu lived 207 years (he also fathered more sons and daughters). Serug lived 30 years [LXX—130 years] and fathered Nahor. After he fathered Nahor, Serug lived 200 more years (he also fathered more sons and daughters). Nahor lived 29 years [LXX—179 years] and fathered Terah. After he fathered Terah, Nahor lived 119 years [LXX—125 years] and he fathered additional sons and daughters as well. Terah lived 70 years and fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran.

Shem would have had direct knowledge of the flood and those who had descended from him would have had second-hand knowledge of the flood. Abraham could have gotten information about the flood and the pre-deluvian age directly from Shem, who lived during that time; or less directly from, say, Eber. Shem lived approximately 100 years before the flood, so he actually lived during the antediluvian era (the same is true of his brothers). Furthermore, it is likely that Shem knew Methuselah and Lamech (his grandfather and great grandfather), and both of them were alive during Adam's life. So, even though there are 11 generations from Adam to Seth and 10 generations from Seth to Abram, Abram has only 3 or 4 people between Adam and him.

We cannot underestimate the existence of faith and positive volition toward the Word of God. Adam saw the restored earth from the 6<sup>th</sup> day forward. Noah and Shem saw the angelic corruption of the human race. Shem saw the flood. Peleg was alive during the partitioning of the human race due to division of the languages. But, bear in mind, by the time that we get down to Abram, even if there are only 3 or 4 people between him and Adam, these are still just words, and man individually chooses how he is to understand them. That is, some historical accounts are passed down for a dozen or two generations, and some understand these accounts to be the words of God and some do not. It is a choice that we make. Now, many lessons ago, I gave you some of the **amazing things** found in just the first 2 chapters of Genesis, which distinguish this book of being just a collection of stories, myths and traditions; and later, I gave another list of the **amazing things** in the first 6 chapters of Genesis. Nevertheless, it is possible to go through that list and decide, "I am not convinced;" and then reject the Bible as the Word of God. For me, the more I study the Bible, the more I am convinced that the Bible is the Word of God. That is faith, but not blind faith. There is considerable evidence for what I believe. However, another man would simply dismiss the evidence and choose to place his faith in another opinion.

Our faith, no matter how we apportion it, is powerful. Politically, over the past several years, I have observed friends and family members speaking disparagingly of others, and even cutting off relationships altogether, all over political issues. There are people with such an amazing faith in the goodness, power and competence of government, despite all empirical evidence to the contrary, that they are willing to place a massive amount of faith and dependence upon our government and in leaders who seem to share this same faith (for instance, many want to see the government take over the healthcare industry, because they have faith that the government will do a fair and competent job; many of these people believe that government will do this even more cheaply than the private sector, because the profit motive will be removed from the equation).

I've seen actual beat downs on video, based upon differences in political theory, which is based upon faith (e.g., the union thugs who beat down an African-American because they thought he was a part of the TEA party movement). The political opinions of these union thugs and the African American were all based upon faith. These opinions were so strong that, those in the union believed in what they were doing.

A general observation which I have made is, the more a person has faith in God and in the Bible, the less faith they have in man and government; and such people seem to prefer as decentralized a form of government as is possible with as many checks and balances as can be legally applied. For those whose faith in God is scattered, hard to define, nonexistent or simply not the foundation of their lives, they seem to have a great deal more faith in charismatic politicians and large government, which is continually *moving the country forward*, whatever that means. Their faith in a man who says he will move the country forward is astonishing to me. Gallup has done many polls on this and related topics, and the political party which favors less government has more people who identify themselves as religious or strongly religious and who attend church more often than those of the party which has greater faith in government, and, therefore, wants more of it.<sup>30</sup> It is not a difficult concept—if you have little or no faith in God, then you have to place your trust in something else, and, for many people, that is government and charismatic and/or likeable individuals (2 politicians come to mind—Rod Blagojevich and Charlie Rangle, who are both associated with corruption, and yet are very charming and likeable individuals).

In a less contentious realm, we all have great faith in our cars and driving ability and the rules of the road; and we step into our cars day after day, despite the risk involved. I personally get on planes regularly, and trust that they will take me safely from point A to point B, despite the fact that, I still cannot wrap my mind around thousands of tons of steel flying 2000 miles as if it were nothing at all. And I don't care how many pictures I see of arrows showing the movement of air around the wings of a plane which provide lift, it is still an amazing and even suspect thing to me. Yet, because of my great faith, I fly several times a year, and give it very little thought.

Most of life is like this. My faith in planes is reaffirmed with each and every flight, despite the dubious notion of this hulk of steel flying through the air. And my faith in the Bible is reaffirmed, as I learn more and more about it. There may be considerable evidence involved, but, in the end, where we place our faith is always a choice.

Having faith in Jesus Christ is also a choice. Only a handful of people saw Him die on the cross, and they are all dead today. Only one man of that group wrote about it (the Apostle John). Furthermore, no one actually saw our Lord bear our sins, because Palestine was enshrouded in a thick darkness when God the Father poured out our sins on God the Son (Matthew 27:45).

Is there evidence that our Lord died for our sins? Certainly, the Bible is filled with types of Jesus Christ, even from the very beginning. The Old Testament is filled with prophecies about Jesus Christ. There are so many of these, that it is mind-boggling; yet, all a person who does not want to believe, has to say is, "So what?" and that ends that.

One of the most humorous things to me is someone saying, "Well, if God wants me to believe in Him, then all He has to do is tell me directly." This is spoken by a person who, if you said, "How would you know it is God?" would answer, "I would just know. It would be obvious." Somehow, a person without a belief in God will argue that they would know God if God just spoke to them. That in itself indicates a great deal of faith.

Jesus Christ is God in the Flesh; He is God made manifest (John 1:1–3, 14). Yet people met Him face to face and they rejected Him as the Messiah. He did amazing things—miracles, in fact—and yet the religious leaders of His day criticized Him for it. He deftly handled the Word of God, and was able to out-argue any scribe or Pharisee, and still, they demanded that He be crucified.

Choosing to place your trust in Jesus Christ for salvation is a choice; no one can argue you into it and no one can force you to do it. You choose to believe or you choose not to believe. We all have faith and we all choose to place our faith in a variety of people, philosophies and institutions. The person who tells you that he only bases his life upon what he sees or has logically proven to him, is either lying, or he is a person who is totally lacking in introspection (I had a college professor once tell me that she only believed in peer-reviewed studies and this is what she based her life and her philosophies upon).

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<sup>30</sup> <http://www.gallup.com/poll/142826/Republicans-Remain-Disproportionately-White-Religious.aspx> for example.

So, anyway, Abram, who comes along either 300 or 1200 years after the flood, is told about the origins of the earth, the fall of man, the intermingling of the fallen angels and mankind, and the flood; and the Seed of the Woman; and Abram believes in Jesus Christ and God credits him with righteousness based upon this choice that he makes (Genesis 15:6). He hears these words about Jehovah Elohim and he believes them. So, even though Abram is only removed from Adam by fewer than a half-dozen men, what happened prior to Abram's life is a matter of faith on his part.

For these ancient fathers to live for several generations—outliving sons, grandsons and great grandsons—could be a powerful cultural influence. Noah's sons lived for hundreds of years and for several generations; and this helps to explain the origins of ancestor worship.

History is revised and distorted all of the time. When I went to school, I was taught that most of our founding fathers (for the United States) were deists. That is, they believed that God wound up the earth like a clock and then wandered off to do something else, leaving us to fend for ourselves. I believed this for decades; teachers taught me this and I read it in my history books, and so I believed it. In the past 5 years, I have been exposed to the writings and speeches of our founding fathers, and it turns out that most of them appear to be born again believers, often using the word *Providence* (always capitalized) to refer to God or to God's will. You will note, I have been exposed to evidence from both sides: books and teachers which claim one thing; and other books and papers which claim to be the original words of our founding fathers. I never met a founding father, never saw a speech that he gave, and I never saw any founding father write down words on a piece of parchment. I have taken it on faith that, these documents that I have seen are accurate transmissions of the words they wrote 250 (or so) years ago. My understanding of history has to necessarily be based upon faith.

So it is with Abram and whatever words he recorded (I personally believe that he wrote the first 24 chapters of Genesis, and that the first 11 were probably transmitted to Abram orally). Someone told him, this is what has transpired since the beginning of time, and Abram believed these words and wrote them down.

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<b>And so lives Terah seventy a year and so he sires Abram, Nahor and Haran.</b>	Genesis 11:26	<b>Terah had lived to be 70 years old and he fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran.</b>
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**By age 70, Terah had fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Targum of Onkelos	And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram and Nahor and Haran.
Latin Vulgate	And Thare lived seventy years, and begot Abram, and Nachor, and Aran.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so lives Terah seventy a year and so he sires Abram, Nahor and Haran.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Terah lived seventy-five years, and begot Abram, manor, and Haran.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Terah lived seventy years and begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran.
Brenton's Septuagint	And Tharrha lived seventy years, and begot Abram, and Nachor, and Arrhan.

Significant differences:

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Contemporary English V.	After Terah was seventy years old, he had three sons: Abram, Nahor, and Haran, who became the father of Lot. A portion of the next verse was included for context.
Easy English	After Terah had lived for 70 years, he became Abram's, Nahor's and Haran's father.
Easy-to-Read Version	After Terah was 70 years old, his sons Abram, Nahor, and Haran were born.
New Berkeley Version	Terah lived 70 years and got Abram, Nahor and Haran.

New Century Version After Terah was 70 years old, his sons Abram, Nahor, and Haran were born.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible After Terah was seventy years old, he became father to Abram, NaHor, and Haran. The notes for the AEB, at this point, will be placed at the end of this verse.  
 New American Bible (R.E.) When Terah was seventy years old, he begot Abram [Abram is a dialectal variant of Abraham. God will change his name in view of his new task in 17:4.], Nahor and Haran. Jos 24:2; 1 Chr 1:26-27.  
 NIRV Terah lived for 70 years. Then he became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

The Expanded Bible After Terah was 70 years old, his sons Abram, Nahor, and Haran were born.  
 Ferar-Fenton Bible And Terah lived seventy years, when Abram, Nahor and Haran were born to him.  
 HCSB Terah lived 70 years and fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.  
 New Advent Bible And Thare lived seventy years, and begot Abram, and Nachor, and Aran.

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

International Standard V .

**Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):**

The Heritage Bible .

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Kaplan Translation .

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

Kretzmann's Commentary .  
 Lexham English Bible .  
 Translation for Translators .  
 The Voice .

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

*The Amplified Bible* After Terah had lived 70 years, he became the father of [at different times], [b]Abram and Nahor and Haran, [his firstborn]. Abram is only mentioned first by way of dignity. Noah's sons also are given as "Shem, Ham, and Japheth" in Gen. 5:32, although Shem was not the oldest, but for dignity is named first, as is Abram here (Adam Clarke, The Holy Bible with A Commentary).  
 Concordant Literal Version When Terah had lived for 70 years, he fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.  
 Green's Literal Translation And Terah lived seventy years and fathered Abram, Nahor, and Haran.  
 New RSV When Terah had lived for seventy years, he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran.  
 Syndein/Thieme And Terah {name means 'delay'} lived seventy years and sired/'caused the birth of {salad} Abram {name means 'father of high and windy places'}, Nahor {name means snoring/snorting}, {and} Haran {not to be confuse with the town of the same name - name means 'dried up' or 'dead on the vine'}.  
 Webster's Bible Translation And Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

Young's Updated LT

And Terah lives seventy years, and sires Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

**The gist of this verse:**

Terah's 3 significant sons were born after he was 70: Abram, Nahor and Haran.

**Genesis 11:26a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
châyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced <i>khaw-YAW</i> ]	<i>to live, to have life, to revive, to recover health, to be healed, to be refreshed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
Terach (תֵּרַח) [pronounced <i>THE-rahkh</i> ]	<i>delay; a tree and is transliterated Terah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #8646 BDB #1076
shib <sup>er</sup> tyim (שִׁבְעִים) [pronounced <i>sh<sup>p</sup>v-GEEM</i> ]	<i>seventy</i>	numeral	Strong's #7657 BDB #988
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced <i>shaw-NAW</i> ]	<i>year</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040

**Translation:** Terah had lived to be 70 years old...

By the time that Terah had turned 70, he had 3 sons of note.

**Genesis 11:26b**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i> ]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'Ab <sup>e</sup> râm (אֲבִרָם) [pronounced <i>ab<sup>v</sup>-RAWM</i> ]	<i>father of elevation, exalted father; and is transliterated Abram</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

## Genesis 11:26b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Nâchôwr (נַחֲוָר) [pronounced naw-KHOHR]	<i>snorting [of a horse]; hoarse, dry hot; transliterated Nahor</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #5152 BDB #637
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Hârân (הָרָן) [pronounced haw-RAWN]	<i>mountaineer; transliterated Haran</i>	masculine singular proper noun:	Strong's #2039 BDB #248

**Translation:** ...and he fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran.

Terah fathers Abram, Nahor and Haran. Nahor here is the grandson of Nahor of a few verses back.

Genesis 11:26 Terah had lived to be 70 years old and he fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:26 By age 70, Terah had fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran. (Kukis paraphrase)

The AEB gives us an important note at this juncture.

### The American English Bible Explains Genesis 11:26

Many have assumed that because Genesis 11:26 states, 'Now Terah lived seventy years and begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran,' that Abram (later known as AbraHam) was born when Terah was 70. The truth is, Abraham was not born for another 60 years! How can we be sure of this?

Notice that when Stephen was delivering his masterful sermon recorded in Acts 7, he stated that Abraham moved to the land of Palestine 'after the death of his father.' Yet, if Terah was 205 years old when he died (see Genesis 11:32), and Abraham departed Haran when he was 75 (see Genesis 12:4), then Terah had to be 130, not 70, when Abraham was born.

In light of this information, Henry Morris and John Whitcomb have aided us in better understanding Genesis 11:26 by paraphrasing it as follows: 'And Terah lived seventy years and begat the first of his three sons, the most important of whom (not because of age but because of the Messianic line) was Abram.'<sup>31</sup>

There is a lot going on here, and it needs to be expanded upon greatly. However, we are going to hold this further explanation until we get to Genesis 12:1 and God tells Abram to go west to Canaan. Now, if you think you spot perhaps a slight contradiction here, there isn't—but it needs to be fully explained. If you have no idea what I mean, then do not worry about it.

[Chapter Outline](#)

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<sup>31</sup> From [http://www.2001translation.com/Genesis.htm#\\_130](http://www.2001translation.com/Genesis.htm#_130) accessed January 31, 2013 (there is more information on that page).

Over the past few weeks, as I have worked on a group of about 10 lessons, I have been pondering two questions: what does the line of Shem mean, if anything; and what happened during this time period? Somewhere between 300–1200 years go by, and we know that (1) man settled in the Euphrates Valley and built the tower of Babel and that (2) God confused the languages and scattered mankind. There are a few other things which I believe may be implied by the text (specifically, by the genealogy).

Given that Peleg’s name is given as being significant in Scripture, let me postulate that, the names of some of these men may have reflected the eras in which they lived (or, the era to which they were born into).

### The Meaning of the Names in Abram’s Line

Name	BDB Meaning	Smith’s Meaning	Discussion
<b>Shem</b>	<i>name</i>	<i>name</i>	<p>Shem may be better defined by his sons and where they ended up: Syria (Aram), Chaldea (Arphaxad), parts of Assyria (Asshur), of Persia (Elam), and of the Arabian peninsula (Joktan). Semitic languages find their origin with Shem.</p> <p>Perhaps the name Shem became synonymous with the concept of reputation and fame (everyone would have known Shem, for hundreds of years). Maybe this concept became an integral part in the building of the Babel tower: <i>And they said, “Come, let us build us a city and a tower, and its top in the heavens. And let us make a name [= shem] for ourselves, lest we be scattered upon the face of the whole earth.”</i> (Genesis 11:4).</p>
<b>Arpachshad</b>	<i>I shall fail as the breast: he cursed the breast-bottle</i>	<i>stronghold of the Chaldees</i>	<p>Also spelled <i>Arphaxad</i>. His name is less defined than the others. Most place him in the Chaldees. Perhaps his name refers to the actual building of this city (however, by my estimation, this would have been too early in time).</p>
<b>Cainan</b>	<i>decree, statute</i>		<p>This is the missing man from the Hebrew text. During his time, man began to set up a governmental system with laws, <i>decrees and statutes</i>, since approximately 300 people would be alive during his generation.</p>
<b>Shelah</b>	<i>sprout</i>	<i>a petition</i>	<p>It was determined that, if there are laws, there must be a system of judicial prudence, where men could go and <i>petition</i> on their own behalf.</p>

## The Meaning of the Names in Abram's Line

Name	BDB Meaning	Smith's Meaning	Discussion
<b>Eber</b>	<i>the region beyond</i>	<i>the region beyond</i>	Eber's name suggest that his family had begun to think about the land further out. This suggests that this generation left the mountains and moved into the Euphrates valley. Or, perhaps they began to look outward from the Euphrates valley. Most of his life and that of Arpachshad would have overlapped.
<b>Peleg</b>	<i>division</i>	<i>division</i>	Peleg was alive around the time that the languages were confounded. For him to receive this name at birth, means that he would have been brought up in a family which, for the first time, spoke a different language than the rest of civilization. In his generation, mankind separated into several families. There may have been as many as 300,000 people alive during Peleg's life.
<b>Rue</b>	<i>friend</i>	<i>friend</i>	People had to choose what they would do, when languages were confused. They banded together by language and by clans, calling one another friends (implying a cultural similarity based upon familial similarities).
<b>Serug</b>	<i>branch</i>	<i>branch</i>	Now that these families began to spread apart, Serug was viewed as a branch of the family.
<b>Nahor</b>	<i>snorting</i>	<i>snorting</i>	His name also means <i>hoarse, dry, hot</i> ; and may describe the climatic conditions for several decades of the Euphrates valley.
<b>Terah</b>	<i>delay</i>	<i>station</i>	Terah was said to be an idolater in the Bible, and is the reason that Abram had to separate himself from Terah. Because of his idolatry, blessing from God was <i>delayed</i> until Abram.
<b>Abram</b>	<i>exalted father</i>	<i>a high father</i>	Abram is known as the father of the Jewish race.

Quite obviously, this is only a theory, but one which I believe to be solid. For the Hebrew line, the meaning of a man's name reflected the thinking of his father, which reasonably mirrors the world in which he finds himself. Therefore, the names of some of these men tell us something about the world in which they grew up, and, more specifically, about the world as their father perceived it.

## Special Section: Population Growth; Abram's Line

At this juncture we are nearly ready complete Genesis 11 and move into the life of Abram (Abraham) with lesson #101.

We now have no reason to doubt that Abram had the ability to read and write. At one time, so-called scholars of a century ago doubted that Moses wrote the Pentateuch (the first 5 books of the Bible) because they claimed that writing did not exist during his time. A bizarre theory of authorship was borne out of this, called the JEPD theory or documentary hypothesis. They claimed that, 1000 years after Moses died, one author wrote a lot of stuff using the word *Elohim* in it (E); another wrote a lot of stuff using the word *Jehovah* in it (J); another put together the Deuteronomic code (D); and then some priest took all of this and compiled it, putting the finishing touches on the Old Testament (P). Now, the Elohimist and the Jehovahist did not write separate books—no—that would be too easy. They wrote various lines and chapters, and all of this was later woven together. And, of course, the Elohimist used the word *Jehovah* and the Jehovahist used the word *Elohim*. The idea was preponderance of usage. If you have never heard of this theory before, no doubt it sounds pretty bizarre and convoluted to you. This all came about because most *scientists, historians* and *archaeologists* agreed (i.e., there was a consensus) that Moses could not read and write because no one could read and write way back then. So, theologians, knowing that scientists, historians and archaeologists are always honest and forthright (tongue-in-cheek), adopted theories to account for the idea that Moses could not read or write. I mention this because this goofy theory is now taught in most seminaries, even though it was based on false theories of history. Now, we have all kinds of writings from the era of Moses, and from before his time, and virtually all historians and archaeologists agree that Moses could read and write. I mention this because (1) you may come across this theory in the future and think it sounds pretty cool (it can be presented persuasively) and because (2) this is the theory which predominates most Protestant seminaries today.

This is an illustration of one way that Satan works. He takes a consensus and builds lies around it, and manages to somehow foist this upon the theological world. The Bible is not clear as to how Satan is able to influence our thinking, but the Bible is clear that he is able to. 1Timothy 4:1–2: **Now the Spirit expressly says that, in later times, some will depart from the faith [the sound teachings of Bible doctrine] by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared.** 2Corinthians 11:13–15: **For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness.** Their end will correspond to their deeds.

Since then, we have found that writing and various mediums for writing, existed long before Moses. In fact, according to Will Durant, written history is at least 6000 years old and can be traced back to the Near East<sup>32</sup> (which area includes the Fertile Crescent, the area where Terah and his family lived).

Durant writes: *In this rough theater of teeming peoples and conflicting cultures were developed the agriculture and commerce, the horse and wagon, the coinage and letters of credit, the crafts and industries, the law and government, the mathematics and medicine, the enemas and drainage systems, the geometry and astronomy, the calendar and clock and zodiac, the alphabet and writing, the paper and ink, the books and libraries and schools, the literature and music, the sculpture and architecture, the glazed pottery and fine furniture, the monotheism and monogamy, the cosmetics and jewelry, the checkers and dice, the te-pins and income-tax, the wet-nurses and beer, from which our own European and American culture derive by a continuous succession through the mediation of Crete and Greece and Rome. The "Aryans" did not establish civilization—they took it from Babylonia and Egypt; Greece did not begin civilization—it inherited far more civilization than it began; it was the spoiled heir of three millenniums of arts and sciences brought to its cities from the Near East by the fortunes of trade and war. In studying and honoring the Near East, we shall be acknowledging a debt*

<sup>32</sup> *The Story of Civilization; 1. Our Oriental Heritage*, by Will Durant; MJF Books, ©1963; p. 116.

*long due to the real founders of European and American civilization.*<sup>33</sup> Durant goes on to say that we have discovered advanced cultures as old as 4500 B.C.<sup>34</sup>

As we saw in the previous lesson, the period of time between the flood to the birth of Abram was about 300 years, according to the Hebrew text, and nearly 1200 years, according to the Greek text. The Greek numbers roughly line up with Durant (however, Durant and others teach that human history stretches further back). In any case, *culture and recorded history* roughly approximates the Biblical timeline.

Mathematically, the numbers of the Bible match up with what we know about human population growth far more reasonably than the numbers of evolution. In evolution, each phase of man (*homo habilis*, *homo erectus*, *homo sapiens*) runs for about 1 million years, and that *homo sapiens* have been on this earth for about 1 million years. This does not match up at all with normal population growth figures.

If you have been a part of any public school system, you have heard over and over again that the age of man (*homo sapiens*) is 1 million years. So, many of us have been brought up to believe that man has been on this planet for a million years (our particular grouping of man). However, if we are to look at population growth studies—taking into account wars, sickness, fertility rates, etc.—today’s population on the earth lines up mathematically with the flood of Noah occurring 4500–5500 years ago. There are no credible population growth models of any sort which line up with man being a million years old. The evolutionary theory requires a whole host of additional theories in order to explain today’s population. This is not a minor problem; evolution is off by a factor of about 180, which is a huge discrepancy.

To understand what it means to be off by a factor of 180, let’s consider baking a cake, and the package says to add 1 cup of water. If you are off by a factor of 180, that means, you add 180 cups (22½ gallons) of water. Will you end up with anything which is even close to being a cake?

Let’s use a golfing illustration: you are facing a difficult putt of 5 yards and you are off by a factor of 180. That means, you gently strike the ball, and, instead of going 5 yards, it goes 900 yards instead. That is how far off evolution is from matching up with normal human population growth curves. Their explanation is to offer up more theories<sup>35</sup> to explain why their original theories are correct (which is not a good argument for any theory; that is, a theory to back up a theory logically proves nothing).

As a teacher, I taught that populations grew exponentially and could be approximated with an exponential equation (along with virtually every Algebra II and Pre-Calculus book at that time).<sup>36</sup> We could use this curve to look forward (which is why a scientist will estimate that there will be such-and-such population in such-and-such a year); but we can also take these same equations to peer backwards into time, to determine when man began. One assignment I gave to my students was to determine how long man has lived on this earth. Their answers were anywhere from 1000 years to 25,000 years (this all depends upon what population figures the student works with). The highest value, 25,000 years, is 1/40<sup>th</sup> 1 million years, which is the approximate age of *homo sapiens* (according to *science*), and the students who came up with this figure carefully chose data points in order to maximize the age of man (that was their intent). This would suggest that the population of humans built up to present-day levels, and then suddenly dropped back to a handful of people *40–180 times* in order to conform with normal, human population growth. In other words, mankind endured approximately 100 ice ages (or similar worldwide events) over the past million years in order for our population to be what it is today (which theory would also require for man’s population on this earth to be similar to the population of today—about 6 or 7 billion—100 times in the past).

<sup>33</sup> *The Story of Civilization; 1. Our Oriental Heritage*, by Will Durant; MJF Books, ©1963; p. 116.

<sup>34</sup> *The Story of Civilization; 1. Our Oriental Heritage*, by Will Durant; MJF Books, ©1963; p. 117. Even though the Biblical timeline puts advanced civilization after the flood 1000–2000 years later, we are still very roughly in the same ballpark when it comes to a clearly advanced society.

<sup>35</sup> Such as, man did not grow in population for 990,000 years; or mankind was destroyed almost entirely by worldwide disasters several time.

<sup>36</sup> Some Algebra II books today may not have this equation in them because Algebra II has been dumbed down over the past 10–15 years.

I cover this in greater detail at <http://kukis.org/evolution/Worldpopulationgrowth.htm> or, in a pdf format, at <http://kukis.org/evolution/Worldpopulationgrowth.pdf> where I show you the actual mathematics involved.

I have discussed this problem at length with quite a number of people, and what evolutionists do is, they explain and *support* their theory with other theories. They theorize various reasons why early mankind's birthrate and population growth is not consistent with the number of years man has been on earth (that is, by their estimation).

The same approach is done with the layers of the earth. Whereas we would expect the layers of earth with the oldest fossils to be at the bottom, and for each layer of earth above that to be populated with more recent fossils, this is not the case. In fact, approximately 95% of the earth is out of synch with these drawings which you find in most geological textbooks, with each layer of earth laying neatly on top of an older layer of earth. How does evolution and geology account for this? More theories.

I attended two college logic courses, and one of the fallacies of logic should have been known as the Fallacy of Too Many Theories, or the Fallacy of Theoreticus Maximus; that is, the idea that you cannot justify one theory by offering up another theory, which is supported by another theory. There comes a point at which you are just making stuff up. The people I would disagree with would offer up a variety of weird theories in order to explain away the fact that normal human population growth is in agreement with the Bible, but not at all with evolution (which fact would make many of them bilious).

If you understand the human population growth model, and you want to see the strength of a person's faith, discuss this with someone who believes in evolution. The end result can degenerate into name calling, anger, and hissy fits. Such a person has been taught all of his life that evolution is true; that it is the only reasonable scientific explanation, that only rubes and religious fanatics believe otherwise (and those who have been indoctrinated since birth), and they will defend that theory with great vigor, no matter what their own personal understanding of the issue happens to be. If they find themselves running out of arguments, they will call you stupid or brainwashed (or worse); and they will never yield an inch. This is the power of faith.

In previous lessons, we covered the line of Seth (Noah's son) to Terah (Abram's father). That is where we will pick it up again.

## Chapter Outline

## Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines

### Terah's Family Moves from Ur of the Chaldees to Haran

**And these [are] generations [or, *genealogies, history, families*] of Terah: Terah sired Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran sired Lot.**

Genesis  
11:27

**These [are] the generations [genealogies, families, history] of Terah: Terah fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot.**

**What follows is the genealogy of Terah: Terah fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos

These are the generations of Terah. Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot.

Latin Vulgate

And these are the generations of Thare: Thare begot Abram, Nachor, and Aran. And Aran begot Lot.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And these [are] generations [or, <i>genealogies, history, families</i> ] of Terah: Terah sired Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran sired Lot.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Now these are the descendants of Terah: Terah begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begot Lot.
Septuagint (Greek)	And these are the generations of Terah: Terah begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begot Lot.

Significant differences:

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	These are Terah's descendants. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran became the father of Lot.
Contemporary English V.	After Terah was seventy years old, he had three sons: Abram, Nahor, and Haran, who became the father of Lot. This is how the CEV combines vv. 26–27
Easy English	This is the history of Terah's family. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. Haran was Lot's father.
Easy-to-Read Version	This is the story of Terah's family. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran was the father of Lot.
Good News Bible (TEV)	These are the descendants of Terah, who was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran was the father of Lot.
<i>The Message</i>	This is the story of Terah. Terah had Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran had Lot.
New Berkeley Version	This is the Terah genealogy: Abram, Nahor and Haran were born to Terah and Lot was born to Haran;...
New Century Version	<b>The Story of Terah's Family</b> This is the family history of Terah. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran was the father of Lot.

#### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	<b>These are the generations of Terah:</b> Terah became father to Abram, NaHor, and Haran; and Haran became father to Lot.
<i>God's Word</i> <sup>TM</sup>	This is the account of Terah and his descendants. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran was the father of Lot.
New American Bible (R.E.)	<i>Terah.</i> These are the descendants of Terah.* Terah begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran, and Haran begot Lot. Descendants of Terah: elsewhere in Genesis the story of the son is introduced by the name of the father (25:12, 19; 36:1; 37:2). The Abraham-Sarah stories begin (11:27-32) and end with genealogical notices (25:1-18), which concern, respectively, the families of Terah and of Abraham. Most of the traditions in the cycle are from the Yahwist source. The so-called Elohist source (E) is somewhat shadowy, denied by some scholars but recognized by others in passages that duplicate other narratives (20:1-18 and 21:22-34). The Priestly source consists mostly of brief editorial notices, except for chaps. 17 and 23.
NIRV	Here is the story of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. And Haran became the father of Lot.
Today's NIV	<b>Abram's Family</b> This is the account of Terah's family line. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. And Haran became the father of Lot.

#### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	These are the progeny of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran begat Lot.
Complete Jewish Bible	Here is the genealogy of Terach. Terach fathered Avram, Nachor and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot.
The Expanded Bible	<b>The Story of Terah's Family</b> This is the family history [These are the generations; 2:4] of Terah. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran was the father of Lot.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Now this is the line of Terah: Terah begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begot Lot.
New Advent Bible	And these are the generations of Thare: Thare begot Abram, Nachor, and Aran. And Aran begot Lot.
NIV – UK	<b>Abram's family</b> This is the account of Terah's family line. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. And Haran became the father of Lot.

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

International Standard V .

**Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):**

The Heritage Bible .

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Kaplan Translation .

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible .

Translation for Translators .

The Voice .

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

*The Amplified Bible* Now this is the history of the descendants of Terah. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran was the father of Lot.

The Geneva Bible Now these [are] the generations of Terah: Terah begat 1 Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran begat Lot. He makes mention first of Abram, not because he was the first born, but for the history which properly belongs to him. Also Abram at the confusion of tongues was 43 years old, for in the destruction of Sodom he was 99 and it was destroyed 52 years after the confusion of tongues.

NASB Now these are *the records of* the generations of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran became the father of Lot.

New RSV Now these are the descendants of Terah. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran was the father of Lot.

Syndein/Thieme Now these are the generations of Terah. Terah sired/'caused the birth of' {yalad} Abram, Nahor, and Haran. And Haran sired/'caused the birth of' {salad} Lot {name means 'secret and self-seeking'.

Webster's Bible Translation Now these [are] the generations of Terah: Terah begat Abram, Nahor, and Haran: and Haran begat Lot.

Young's Updated LT

And these *are* births of Terah: Terah has sired Abram, Nahor, and Haran; and Haran has begotten Lot.

**The gist of this verse:**

Terah fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot.

**Genesis 11:27a**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êlleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced <i>ALE-leh</i> ]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural	Strong's #428 BDB #41
tôwl <sup>e</sup> dôth (תּוֹלְדוֹת) [pronounced <i>tohl<sup>e</sup>-DOTH</i> ]	<i>generations, results, proceedings, genealogies, history, course of history; origin; families; races</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #8435 BDB #410
Terach (תְּרַח) [pronounced <i>THE-rahkh</i> ]	<i>delay; a tree and is transliterated Terah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #8646 BDB #1076

**Translation:** These [are] the generations [genealogies, families, history] of Terah:...

This begins possibly a new section to take up from v. 10, which began with the *generations of Shem*, who would have been Terah's Great<sup>6</sup> grandfather. Probably, because of Cainan, Shem would have been Terah's Great<sup>7</sup> grandfather. There are 10 generations from Shem through Abram—or, if there is a Cainan—Abram is 10 generations removed from Shem.

As was noted in setting this chapter up, it was not impossible for a man to be alive while there are 10 generations of his sons and descendants alive at the same time. That was the case for Shem, a unique period of time in human history (there are several unique periods of time in human history recorded in the Bible).

Therefore, it is possible that Shem could have recorded all of these generations from his father Noah down to Terah; and, at that point, someone else (Abram, most likely) picks it up from there.

**Genesis 11:27b**

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Terach (תְּרַח) [pronounced <i>THE-rahkh</i> ]	<i>delay; a tree and is transliterated Terah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #8646 BDB #1076
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-LAHD</i> ]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Genesis 11:27b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'Ab <sup>e</sup> râm (אַבְרָם) [pronounced ab <sup>v</sup> -RAWM]	<i>father of elevation, exalted father;</i> and is transliterated <i>Abram</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4
This is the first mention of Abraham in Scripture.			
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Nâchôwr (נָחֹר) [pronounced naw-KHOHR]	<i>snorting [of a horse]; hoarse, dry hot;</i> transliterated <i>Nahor</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #5152 BDB #637
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Hârân (הָרָן) [pronounced haw-RAWN]	<i>mountaineer;</i> transliterated <i>Haran</i>	masculine singular proper noun:	Strong's #2039 BDB #248

**Translation:** ...Terah fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran;...

One of the untold stories of the Bible, insofar as I know, is that Abram, when back in Mesopotamia, was told to go forth to Canaan; and it appears as though this order included Terah. It is even possible that Terah was spoken to by God as well.

What appears to be the case, most of the time, is that God appears to man very much in the form of a man. I would not be shocked if the Revealed God looked just as the adult Jesus appeared 2000+ years later. Just as there is never a physical description of the Preincarnate Revealed God, there is never a physical description of Jesus.

These four men, this father and three of his sons, would make some of the most consequential decisions of human history, and not a single one of them was a ruler or a political figure or a man of note in his time.

Genesis 11:27c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Hârân (הָרָן) [pronounced haw-RAWN]	<i>mountaineer;</i> transliterated <i>Haran</i>	masculine singular proper noun:	Strong's #2039 BDB #248
yâlad (יָלַד) [pronounced yaw-LAHD]	<i>sired, fathered, became the father of, became the ancestor of; to became the founder of</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect (specifically with a masculine subject)	Strong's #3205 BDB #408

### Genesis 11:27c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Lôwt̄ (לוֹט) [pronounced <i>lohṯ</i> ]	<i>hidden; a covering, a veil; wrapped up; transliterated Lot</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3876 BDB #532

This is the first time Lot is named in scripture.

**Translation:** ...and Haran fathered Lot.

There is someone else who is figured into this equation, and that is Lot, Haran's son and Abram's nephew.

*Lot* means *envelope, covering, concealment*. Because of his father's death, Lot, Abram's nephew, was likely raised as Abram's younger brother, almost as the baby of the family. As such, like the baby of most families, he was possibly spoiled and the incidents which follow in Genesis seem to indicate that Lot was used to getting his way and that Abram was used to allowing his youngest "brother" to choose.

Genesis 11:27 These [are] the generations [genealogies, families, history] of Terah: Terah fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:27 What follows is the genealogy of Terah: Terah fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot. (Kukis paraphrase)

**And so dies Haran upon faces of Terah, his father in a land of his birth in Ur of the Chaldees.**

Genesis  
11:28

**Haran died before Terah, his father, in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldees.**

**Haran died before his father Terah in the place where he was born, Ur of the Chaldees.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos

And it was when Nimrod had cast Abram into the furnace of fire because he would not worship his idol, and the fire had no power to burn him, that Haran's heart became doubtful, saying, If Nimrod overcome, I will be on his side: but if Abram overcome, I will be on his side. And when all the people who were there saw that the fire had no power over Abram, they said in their hearts, Is not Haran the brother of Abram full of divinations and charms, and has he not uttered spells over the fire that it should not burn his brother? Immediately (min yad, out of hand) there fell fire from the high heavens and consumed him; and Haran died in the sight of Terah his father, where he was burned in the land of his nativity, in the furnace of fire which the Kasdai had made for Abram his brother.

Latin Vulgate

And Aran died before Thare his father, in the land of his nativity in Ur of the Chaldees.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And so dies Haran upon faces of Terah, his father in a land of his birth in Ur of the Chaldees.

Peshitta (Syriac)

And Haran died before his father Terah in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans.

Septuagint (Greek) And Haran died in the presence of Terah his father, in the land in which he was born, in the country of the Chaldees.

Significant differences:

### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Easy English Haran died in the city called Ur. That was in the country where the people called Chaldeans lived. It was the country where Haran was born. Haran's father Terah was still alive.

Easy-to-Read Version Haran died in his home town, Ur of Babylonia [Literally, "Ur of the Chaldeans." A city in southern Babylonia.], while his father Terah was still alive.

Good News Bible (TEV) *The Message* ...and Haran died in his hometown of Ur in Babylonia, while his father was still living. Haran died before his father, Terah, in the country of his family, Ur of the Chaldees.

New Berkeley Version ...but Haran died in his father Terah's presence in his native land at Chaldean Ur.

New Century Version While his father, Terah, was still alive, Haran died in Ur in Babylonia, where he was born.

### Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible Haran died in the presence of Terah his father, in the land where he was born, the country of the Chaldeans.

Beck's American Translation While his father Terah was with him, Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, in the country of his relatives.

New American Bible Haran died before his father Terah, in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans. Ur of the Chaldeans: Ur was an extremely ancient city of the Sumerians (later, of the Babylonians) in southern Mesopotamia. The Greek text has "the land of the Chaldeans." In either case, the term Chaldeans is an anachronism, because the Chaldeans were not known to history until approximately a thousand years after Abraham's time.

New American Bible (R.E.) Haran died before Terah his father, in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans. **Ur of the Chaldeans:** Ur was an extremely ancient city of the Sumerians (later, of the Babylonians) in southern Mesopotamia. The Greek text has "the land of the Chaldeans." After a millennium of relative unimportance, Ur underwent a revival during the Neo-Babylonian/Chaldean empire (625-539 B.C.). The sixth-century author here identified the place by its contemporary name. As chap. 24 shows, Haran in northern Mesopotamia is in fact the native place of Abraham. In the Genesis perspective, the human race originated in the East (3:24; 4:16) and migrated from there to their homelands (11:2). Terah's family moved from the East (Ur) and Abraham will complete the journey to the family's true homeland in the following chapters.

NIRV Haran died in Ur in Babylonia. That was the land where he had been born. Haran died while his father Terah was still alive.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Complete Jewish Bible Haran died in the face of his father Terah over the land of his kindred in Ur, Iraq. Haran died before his father Terach in the land where he was born, in Ur of the Kasdim.

The Expanded Bible While his father, Terah, was still alive, Haran died in Ur [<sup>c</sup>a major city in southern Mesopotamia] ·in Babylonia [<sup>L</sup>of the Chaldeans; <sup>c</sup>Chaldea was another name for Babylon], where he was born.

Ferar-Fenton Bible Haran died before his father in his native country in Ur of the Kaldees.

HCSB	Haran died in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans, during his father Terah's lifetime.
NET Bible®	Haran died in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans [The phrase of the Chaldeans is a later editorial clarification for the readers, designating the location of Ur. From all evidence there would have been no Chaldeans in existence at this early date; they are known in the time of the neo-Babylonian empire in the first millennium b.c.], while his father Terah was still alive [Heb "upon the face of Terah his father."].
NIV – UK	While his father Terah was still alive, Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, in the land of his birth.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

International Standard V .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation .

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible .

Translation for Translators .

The Voice .

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	Haran died before his father Terah [died] in the land of his birth, in [c]Ur of the Chaldees. Abram's home town was Ur of the Chaldees. As the result of extensive archaeological excavations there by C. Leonard Woolley in 1922-34, a great deal is known about Abram's background. Space will not permit more than a glimpse at excavated Ur, but a few items will show the high state of civilization. The entire house of the average middle-class person had from ten to twenty rooms and measured forty to fifty-two feet; the lower floor was for servants, the upper floor for the family, with five rooms for their use; additionally, there was a guest chamber and a lavatory reserved for visitors, and a private chapel. A school was found and what the students studied was shown by the clay tablets discovered there. In the days of Abram the pupils had reading, writing, and arithmetic as today. They learned the multiplication and division tables and even worked at square and cube root. A bill of lading of about 2040 B.C. (about the era in which Abram is believed to have lived) showed that the commerce of that time was far-reaching. Even the name "Abraham" has been found on the excavated clay tablets (J.P. Free, Archaeology and Bible History).
English Standard V. – UK	Haran died in the presence of his father Terah in the land of his kindred, in Ur of the Chaldeans.
NASB	Haran died in the presence [Or during the lifetime of] of his father Terah in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans.
New King James Version	And Haran died before his father Terah in his native land, in Ur of the Chaldeans.

Syndein/Thieme	And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees {land of the Chaldeans}.
Webster's Bible Translation	And Haran died before his father Terah, in the land of his nativity, in Ur of the Chaldees.
Young's Updated LT	And Haran dies in the presence of Terah his father, in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldees.

**The gist of this verse:** While still in Ur of the Chaldees, Haran, Terah's son, died before Terah did.

Genesis 11:28a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mûwth (תומ) [pronounced <i>mooth</i> ]	<i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
Hârân (רַהַר) [pronounced <i>haw-RAWN</i> ]	<i>mountaineer; transliterated Haran</i>	masculine singular proper noun:	Strong's #2039 BDB #248
‘al (לע) [pronounced <i>gah</i> ]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
pânîym (פנים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i> ]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural construct (plural acts like English singular)	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, ‘âl and pânîym mean <i>upon the face of, facing, in front of, before (as in preference to), in addition to, overlooking</i> .			
Terach (תַּרְחַ) [pronounced <i>THE-rahkh</i> ]	<i>delay; a tree and is transliterated Terah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #8646 BDB #1076
‘âb (אב) [pronounced <i>aw<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>father, both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; founder, civil leader, military leader</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1 BDB #3
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced <i>b<sup>eh</sup></i> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
‘erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i> ]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #776 BDB #75
môwl <sup>e</sup> deth (תּוֹלֵדוֹת) [pronounced <i>mohl<sup>e</sup>-DETH</i> ]	<i>birth, origin, native; kindred, family; progeny, [female] offspring, children; circumstances of birth</i>	feminine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4138 BDB #409

**Translation:** Haran died before Terah, his father, in the land of his birth,...

Terah, whose name means *to delay*, was supposed to leave Ur of the Chaldees and to take Abram and the rest of his family with him. He did not. He stayed in Ur of the Chaldees. Then, the almost unthinkable occurred: his son Haran died of old age before Terah died. This is the worst nightmare of a parent, to have their child die before them; and this is a great sadness to see your child die of old age right before your own eyes. That what appears to be the case here. Terah was supposed to leave Ur of the Chaldees and he did not. So he sees his son Haran die.

You will note that there is an emphasis upon Haran dying in the country of his birth. He was not supposed to be there. He was not supposed to die there. God needed to light a fire under Terah, and He did. His son dies before Terah dies. This deeply affects Terah, and he finally leaves Ur of the Chaldees.

This is a very moving narrative, to the father of Haran. We know, in retrospect, that with the ages decreasing exponentially, that this would happen; however, there is nothing to suggest that these people were expecting this. There are few things sadder than a parent burying his own son (or daughter).

It may be worthwhile to lay down some suggestions as to why people lived longer in those days, both in terms of spiritually and physically. The physical part is easy to answer. We have a limited gene pool, and that gene pool became more and more limited as time went on, with specific groups choosing (mostly because of language) to stay within their own families. This combined with what was probably an explosion in bacteria after the flood, where so many living creatures died and rotted and had their rotted pieces carried all over the earth. We know that, there is a limited way in which we interact with bacteria and that most of the bacteria in our bodies are desirable and good for us. However, since the flood, with the proliferation of so much bacteria, men became more and more susceptible to bacterial diseases and degeneration.

The spiritual reason for this is more interesting. Perhaps men close to the flood had a great spiritual life and a greater relationship with God; and, therefore, a greater capacity for life. As men got further and further from the flood, and, therefore, further and further from a full understanding of God's judgment for evil, they became more and more degenerate, and less open to spiritual things. As man's capacity for life decreased, so did his lifespan.

What we have here is quite unusual, but something which began to occur often—children who died before their parents died. In fact, this became the order of the day for many generations until the life span of man settled at a particular value. Bear in mind, this is just a theory which has occurred to me. I do not have any Scripture to back it up.

### Genesis 11:28b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
יִּוְר (ורא) [pronounced oor]	<i>brightness of fire, flame; transliterated Ur</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #218 BDB #22
Kas <sup>e</sup> ddiym (כַּסְדִּימ) [pronounced kahsd-DEEM]	<i>clod-breakers; is transliterated Chaldees, Kasdim, Chaldeans, Chaldea</i>	proper singular noun gentilic/territory	Strong's #3679 & #3778 BDB #505

This is the first occurrence of the Chaldeans in Scripture.

**Translation:** ...in Ur of the Chaldees.

The Bible emphasizes the place of Haran's death. He was not supposed to be there; he was not supposed to be remaining in Ur of the Chaldees. He was supposed to leave; but Terah delayed; Terah did not move his family out of there, and Haran died.

Genesis 11:28 **Haran died before Terah, his father, in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldees.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:28 **Haran died before his father Terah in the place where he was born, Ur of the Chaldees.** (Kukis paraphrase)

I have been saying that he died of old age, and, as we will examine carefully in the next chapter, he could have been considered old—however, Haran may have died because they remained in Ur of the Chaldees. The Bible does not state this directly, but his death appears to be the impetus to get Terah off his duff and moving out toward Canaan.

Acts 7:2, 4 tell us that Abraham lived in Mesopotamia prior to living in Haran, so this indicates that either Ur was in Mesopotamia, Abram and company traveled through Mesopotamia on the way to Haran. Mesopotamia indicates the region between and around the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. Abram, to move from where we believe Ur to be up to Haran, would have traveled along the Euphrates River, through Mesopotamia (which can indicate a very large area; or it can indicate the northwestern portion along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, whereas Babylon can refer to the more southeastern area. In either case, he traveled through and lived in the Mesopotamian area.

**Gen 11:27–28** Now these are the generations of Terah: Terah fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran. And Haran fathered Lot. And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans.

*These are the generations of* appears to begin each section of Genesis. This would have been a good place to begin Genesis chapter 12. The NIV translates this as, **This is the account of Terah**; the Concordant Literal Version reads: **And these are the genealogical annals of Terah:...** The ERV reads: **This is the story of Terah's family.** This will not be about Terah, but more about his sons; and then we will focus on one son, Abram.

For many of these genealogies, you should get the impression as if one particular person is pointing to another particular person who is pointing to someone else in particular. This is not some random listing of names. Terah will point to Abram; Abram will point to Isaac, and Isaac will point to Jacob. And so it goes, until this line is followed out to Jesus Christ (in many different passages, but finally summed up in Luke 3). Somehow, 6 or 10 different authors, separated in time by 1000–3000 years, out of the millions of people who have lived on this earth, were able to, choose the 75 men who formed a line from Adam to Jesus. There are 77 if we go from God (Luke 3:38) to Jesus (Luke 3:23). Although Luke lists all those in the royal line, he would have gotten these names from several Old Testament sources (we covered this back in **the Genealogy of Jesus Christ**).

**Gen 11:27–28** Now these are the generations of Terah: Terah fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran. And Haran fathered Lot. And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans.

That Haran died before his father was actually commonplace. As we have noticed with each successive generation, their lifespan decreases, and fathers and even grandfathers are outliving their progeny.

Ur of the Chaldeans is located where one branch of the Tigris meets the Euphrates River, not too far from the Persian Gulf. The entire valley around the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers is called the Fertile Crescent. This general area would be later called Babylonia and later Mesopotamia (Acts 7:2), and it is known as Iraq today. When one compares its former designation, *the fertile crescent*, to what this area is today, the transformation has been quite remarkable.

Azzam Awash writes in *Natural History*: *Five thousand years ago the entire region [of the fertile crescent] was lush, fertile--an ideal birthplace for human civilization. Archeological studies published*

*this year show that between 3000 B.C. and 2000 B.C. a concatenation of cities stretched eastward from Mesopotamia all the way to modern-day India and Pakistan. Yet the most extensive evidence of urban evolution comes from the old riverbanks of the Tigris and Euphrates. Solid wheels were used, and perhaps invented, there. Organized cultivation of wheat and barley began on those marshy shores. The cities' inhabitants developed a written language. And a distinct separation between state and temple was recorded.*<sup>37</sup>

We do not know with any certainty exactly where Ur of the Chaldeans was. Up until 1850, it was assumed that this was Urfa, which was near Haran (Charan) in Southern Turkey (which, in my opinion, is way, way off). Others place it at Ura' near Haran (Charan—also, way off). What seems to be the most accepted interpretation is Ur is Uri, in modern Tell el-Muqaayyar. Excavations in this area have produced a layer of water-laid clay, indicating a great flood; cemeteries dating back to 2500 B.C.; and the ruins of a ziggurat (which is a temple tower built to heathen gods). I will assume that this is much closer to the Persian Gulf. Later, Ur was ruled by neo-Babylonian (Chaldean) kings. Abram moved from Ur to Haran with his family (Genesis 11:28, 31).

Archeology has uncovered a great deal of information concerning the society in which Abram's family possibly lived prior to this move (this may have been the society which developed after Abram and company left). They have found the remains of five temples which appeared to have surrounded the Ziggurat of king Ur-Nammu in a semi-circle. The largest was 300' x 180' with thick, fortress like walls, and it was dedicated to the moon-god. To give you the concept of the strength of the materials, there were water fountains there which are still standing; the water troughs were coated with bitumen. There were temple kitchens with still-functioning ovens.

What has also been discovered at this site are spacious, comfortable homes. Whereas, excavations which found homes dating to 600 B.C. were fairly simple, one-story, three or four room houses, built around a courtyard, these in Ur, dating back to the earth 4<sup>th</sup> millennium B.C. were two-storied villas with 13+ rooms, the bottom floor built of sturdy fired brick and the top with mud brick, the walls coated with plaster and whitewashed. The front door led to a small entry hallway into an inner court, which had paving (not unlike, in concept, to our tiled entryways of the present), and then there was a reception room, kitchen, living rooms private rooms and a domestic chapel. A lavatory was hidden under the stone staircase, which led to private and guest rooms.

This was a very prosperous society, revealing great comforts and advances, including hymnals and mathematical tables which reveals formulas for the extraction of square and cube roots. This indicates, if this is from whence Abram proceeded, that he was not a simple Nomad, but a man emerging from a highly organized, advanced city, leaving to move toward the promised land and away from the idolatry which abounded.

Again, this is disputed, partially due to the fact that the Septuagint does not read *Ur of the Chaldees* but rather *land of the Chaldees*. Further it is cited that Abram lived like a nomad with his family and herds, but this would be expected because he left this area.

We have already examined the lines of Japheth and Ham; and Japheth's sons spread out the furthest, going both west, northwest and north. Ham went west and southwest from the Euphrates valley. The line of Shem stayed, for the most part, in the Euphrates valley.

**Gen 11:27–28** Now these are the generations of Terah: Terah fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran. And Haran fathered Lot. And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldeans.

Abram's brothers are Nahor and Haran, which makes Lot Abram's nephew.

At this point, the book of Genesis changes. Previous to this, we have studied 2000–3000 years of human history in Genesis 1–11 (along with one verse which may go back millions of years into pre-human history). Although we followed 2 specific straight-line (or linear) genealogies which took us from Adam to Noah and then from Noah to Abram, we have not really looked at anyone's life in any sort of detail. Individuals have been mentioned along with

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<sup>37</sup> From [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1134/is\\_9\\_116/ai\\_n21092828/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1134/is_9_116/ai_n21092828/) accessed October 5, 2010.

an incident or two from that person's life, but much of this has been a rather long period of human history condensed down to 10 chapters (maybe more, if we include the Book of Job). However, now, we will focus on the life of Abraham (then on the lives of Isaac, Jacob and Joseph). In fact, the lives of these 4 men comprise the content of the rest of the book of Genesis.

Since the book of Genesis is ready to pivot from a study of human history to the study of several individuals, let's examine this transition in points.

### Transitional Point in the Book of Genesis

1. At this point, in the book of Genesis, we are transitioning from a history of mankind to the lives of 4 specific individuals.
2. God has a plan for mankind as well as for angelic beings. Genesis 1–10 gives us an early history of the earth and of mankind.
3. So far, we have studied the 5 divine institutions: the human soul, work, marriage, family and nation. Each of the divine institutions has a dramatic effect upon our lives; and each involves a system of authority and our own free will.
  - 1) We have seen the importance of individual choices, perhaps best illustrated by Adam, Eve, Cain, some of those in Cain's line, Enoch, and those of Noah and his family.
  - 2) We have seen the importance of work, particularly in the building of the ark in obedience to God (as well as the untold story of the collecting of the animals and the care for these animals before and during the flood). Furthermore, you will recall in the line of Cain, men were often identified with their vocation (as is the case today; when you meet someone for the first time, you almost immediately you ask, "And what do you do?").
  - 3) We have seen the corporate witness of a marriage—first with Adam and Eve (where the position of authority was reversed) and later where the proper chain of command appears to have been retained, with Noah and his wife.
  - 4) There is the corporate witness of Noah's family, which involved the authority of Noah, work, and positive volition on the part of Noah and all who are in his family (the whole ark thing would not have worked without the entire family functioning as a unit, even though the Biblical focus is upon Noah).
  - 5) Finally, we have seen that God requires man to be separated into nations (the corporate witness of a nation will be a part of God's promises to Abram and then later, when these promises begin to be fulfilled by the nation Israel in subsequent books of the Bible).
4. However, what the key is, the volition of the individual soul. This is what the book of Genesis will continue to focus on man's volition.
5. As we get into the life of Abraham we will see that God appears to shift from working through mankind as a whole to working through one man, and then through his descendants. God excludes everyone else in the human race because the human race is, for the most part, in rebellion against God. They are exhibiting negative volition, are involved in idolatry and have rejected God, so that God now selects one man, Abram, and through him, He is now going to deal with the rest of the human race. In this respect, Abram is also a type of Christ.
6. This demonstrates God's determination to bless mankind despite human rebellion. No matter how negative man gets, no matter how rebellious the human race becomes, God reveals His determination to bless man. This is grace. Therefore, grace will continue to be a major theme, just as it is throughout all of Scripture. There will be a great emphasis upon grace in the life of Abram. Blessing becomes the dominant theme, whereas, in the first eleven chapters, there was this continual rebellion so that cursing (or divine discipline on the human race) has been the dominant theme (although, clearly, individuals were delivered throughout the first 10 chapters of Genesis).
7. What we see in each of the men in the second part of Genesis—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph—is the constant struggle of the believer to operate on divine viewpoint instead of on human viewpoint, arrogance and autonomy. This is the struggle that we as individuals constantly face. We will see this again and again in Abram's life. Despite what God has promised him, despite the blessing of God, despite God's personal appearance to Abram on numerous occasions, Abram still tries to live his life and solve his problems apart from God. This continues to be a problem and will continue to plague nation

## Transitional Point in the Book of Genesis

Israel later on. But we see in these men the constant struggle that the believer has, between his desire to live independently of God and his need to have a relationship with God.

8. In Abraham we see a progression in spiritual growth before he receives the promised blessing. Everything moves toward that promised blessing in the seed of Abraham. That is the focal point of the promise. The blessing to all men ultimately comes through the seed, which Paul will interpret as the Lord Jesus Christ, but, in context, the promised seed focuses on Isaac. Isaac is that funnel through which that blessing that God promises will come. Before Abraham receives the promise he has to be mature enough to have the capacity to handle the promise. That is true for us. We have to be mature enough to handle the blessings that God gives us or He won't always distribute them. Abraham has to go through many tests and training procedures before God finally, when Abram is age 100, brings about His promise in the birth of Isaac.
9. There are crucial doctrines that are taught through the life of Abraham. First of all, we have doctrines related to salvation.
  - 1) Regeneration: This comes through the fact that Sarah is barren. It is impossible for her to give birth and Abraham is sexually dead, and yet God regenerates them. He gives life where there is death. Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, the three wives of the patriarchs are all barren. God is teaching a principle: that He is the one who brings life where there is death, just as He brings spiritual life where there is spiritual death.
  - 2) Justification: Paul develops this in Romans 4 and also in Galatians. Abram is the Old testament picture of justification by faith alone in Jehovah Elohim alone.
  - 3) Also we see substitutionary atonement in Genesis 22, when Abram is to take Isaac and sacrifice him, the promised seed, to God. God at the last minute stays his hand and provides a substitute through the ram that is caught in the bushes by the altar.
  - 4) In Abram we have perhaps the greatest example in Scripture of the life of faith. We walk by faith and not by sight, and Abram is a picture of the faith-rest life (we will have the doctrine of faith-rest in the very near future).
  - 5) Abram is also a picture of the personal sense of eternal destiny, and this is seen in Hebrews 11:8-19: *By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out into a place which he was afterward going to receive for an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he went. By faith he lived in the land of promise as a stranger, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs of the same promise with him. For he looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. By faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him who had promised to be faithful. Because of this came into being from one, and that of one having [sexually] died, even as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as innumerable as the sand which is by the seashore. These all died by way of faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off. And they were persuaded of them and embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they who say such things declare plainly that they seek a fatherland. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from which they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they stretch forth to a better fatherland, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. By faith Abraham, being tested, offered up Isaac. And he who had received the promises offered up his only-begotten son, of whom it was said that in Isaac your Seed shall be called, concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from where he even received him, in a figure.*

All of these points will be examined in greater detail as we delve into the life of Abram.

The final 5 points come from [Robert Dean's Genesis Study lesson #065](#) (these points were edited).

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

**And so takes Abram—and Nahor—to themselves women. And a name of a woman of Abram [is] Sarai and a name of a woman of Nahor [is] Milcah a daughter of Haran, a father of Milcah and Iscah.**

Genesis  
11:29

**Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram's wife [is] Sarai and the name of Nahor's wife is Milcah, [who is] the daughter of Haran, [who was] the father of Milcah and Iscah.**

**Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram's wife is Sarai and the name of Nahor's wife is Milcah, who is the daughter of Haran, who was the father of Milcah and Iscah.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### **Ancient texts:**

Targum of Onkelos	And Abram and Nahor took to them wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sara, and the name of the wife of Nahor, Milcha, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcha and the father of Iska, who is Sara.
Latin Vulgate	And Abram and Nachor married wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai: and the name of Nachor's wife, Melcha, the daughter of Aran, father of Melcha and father of Jescha.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so takes Abram—and Nahor—to themselves women. And a name of a woman of Abram [is] Sarai and a name of a woman of Nahor [is] Milcah a daughter of Haran, a father of Milcah and Iscah.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves; the name of Abrams wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahors wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and Iscah.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Abram and Nahor took to themselves wives; the name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nachor's wife was Milcah, daughter of Haran, and he was the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah.

Significant differences:

#### **Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Contemporary English V.	Abram married Sarai, but she was not able to have any children. And Nahor married Milcah, who was the daughter of Haran and the sister of Iscah.
Easy English	Abram and Nahor both married. Abram's wife was called Sarai and Nahor's wife was called Milcah. Milcah was Haran's daughter. Haran was both Milcah's and Iscah's father.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Abram married Sarai, and Nahor married Milcah, the daughter of Haran, who was also the father of Iscah.
<i>The Message</i>	Abram and Nahor each got married. Abram's wife was Sarai; Nahor's wife was Milcah, the daughter of his brother Haran. Haran had two daughters, Milcah and Iscah.
New Living Translation	Meanwhile, Abram and Nahor both married. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah. (Milcah and her sister Iscah were daughters of Nahor's brother Haran.)

#### **Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	Both Abram and NaHor took women for themselves. Abram's woman was named Sara, and NaHor's woman was named Malcha. She was the daughter of Haran (the father of Malcha and Jescha).
New American Bible (R.E.)	Abram and Nahor took wives; the name of Abram's wife was Sarai [Sarai: like Abram, a dialectal variant of the more usual form of the name Sarah. In 17:15, God

will change it to Sarah in view of her new task.], and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah, daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and Iscah. Gn 17:15.

NIRV Abram and Nahor both got married. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai. The name of Nahor's wife was Milcah. She was the daughter of Haran. Haran was the father of Milcah and Iscah.

### Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Complete Jewish Bible Then Avram and Nachor took wives for themselves. The name of Avram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nachor's wife was Milkah the daughter of Haran. He was the father of Milkah and of Yiskah.

The Expanded Bible Abram and Nahor both married [took wives]. Abram's wife was named Sarai, and Nahor's wife was named Milcah. She was the daughter of Haran, who was the father of both Milcah and Iscah.

JPS (Tanakh—1985) Abram and Nahor took to themselves wives, the name of Abram's wife being Sarai and that of Nahor's wife Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and Iscah.

New Advent Bible And Abram and Nachor married wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai: and the name of Nachor's wife, Melcha, the daughter of Aran, father of Melcha and father of Jescha.

NET Bible® And Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai [The name Sarai (a variant spelling of "Sarah") means "princess" (or "lady"). Sharratu was the name of the wife of the moon god Sin. The original name may reflect the culture out of which the patriarch was called, for the family did worship other gods in Mesopotamia.], and the name of Nahor's wife was Milcah [The name Milcah means "Queen." But more to the point here is the fact that Malkatu was a title for Ishtar, the daughter of the moon god. If the women were named after such titles (and there is no evidence that this was the motivation for naming the girls "Princess" or "Queen"), that would not necessarily imply anything about the faith of the two women themselves.]; she was the daughter of Haran, the father of both Milcah and Iscah.

NIV – UK Abram and Nahor both married. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife was Milkah; she was the daughter of Haran, the father of both Milkah and Iscah.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

International Standard V .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation .

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible .

Translation for Translators .

## The Voice

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version	And taking are Abram and Nahor to themselves wives. The name of Abram's wife is Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife is Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah and the father of Iscah.
English Standard Version	And Abram and Nahor took wives. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milcah and Iscah.
The Geneva Bible	And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abrams wife [was] Sarai; and the name of Nahors wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah [Some think that this Iscah was Sarai.].
Syndein/Thieme	And Abram and Nahor took them wives. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai {means 'contentious' or even stronger - b*tch}. And the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah.
Young's Literal Translation	And Abram and Nahor take to themselves wives; the name of Abram's wife is Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife is Milcah, daughter of Haran, father of Milcah, and father of Iscah.

**The gist of this verse:** Abram and Nahor both took wives in Ur of the Chaldees: Sarai and Milcah respectively. Milcah was the daughter of Haran, who fathered both Milcah and Iscah.

Genesis 11:29a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law-KAHKH]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542
ʾAbêrâm (אַבְרָם) [pronounced ab <sup>v</sup> -RAWM]	<i>father of elevation, exalted father; and is transliterated Abram</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Nâchôwr (נָחֹר) [pronounced naw-KHOHR]	<i>snorting [of a horse]; hoarse, dry hot; transliterated Nahor</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #5152 BDB #637
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾîshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAW]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine plural noun	Strong's #802 BDB #61

**Translation:** Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves.

This appears to have occurred in Ur of the Chaldees.

Genesis 11:29b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
ʾîshshâh (אִשְׁשָׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAW]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #802 BDB #61
ʾAb <sup>er</sup> râm (אַבְרָם) [pronounced ab <sup>v</sup> -RAWM]	<i>father of elevation, exalted father; and is transliterated Abram</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4
Sâray (סָרַי) [pronounced saw-RAY or saw-RAH-ee]	<i>my prince; my princess, nobility; transliterated Sarai</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #8297 BDB #979

**Translation:** [The name of Abram's wife \[is\] Sarai...](#)

As we will find out in Genesis 20, Sarai is actually Abraham's half-sister; same father, but a different mother. Interestingly enough, we are not told that here.

Genesis 11:29c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shêm (שֵׁם) [pronounced shame]	<i>name, reputation, character; fame, glory; celebrated; renown; possibly memorial, monument</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #8034 BDB #1027
ʾîshshâh (אִשְׁשָׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAW]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #802 BDB #61
Nâchôwr (נָחֹר) [pronounced naw-KHOHR]	<i>snorting [of a horse]; hoarse, dry hot; transliterated Nahor</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #5152 BDB #637
Mil <sup>e</sup> kâh (מִלְכָּה) [pronounced mihl-KAW]	<i>queen; and is transliterated Milcah</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #4435 BDB #574

**Translation:** [...and the name of Nahor's wife is Milcah,...](#)

Nahor may have been sleepy, but he did marry a woman whose name meant *queen*.

This is the first time for awhile that wives are named (we do not even know the names or the origins of the wives of Noah and his sons).

## Genesis 11:29d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
bath (בַּת) [pronounced <i>bahth</i> ]	<i>daughter; village</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #1323 BDB #123
Hârân (הָרָן) [pronounced <i>haw-RAWN</i> ]	<i>mountaineer; transliterated Haran</i>	masculine singular proper noun:	Strong's #2039 BDB #248

**Translation:**...[who is] the daughter of Haran,...

Interestingly, we do not have any background given to us here about Sarai, but we look at Nahor's wife instead. She is the daughter of Haran. There are two Haran's in this context, and it is likely that the Haran here is Nahor and Abraham's brother. He has a daughter, Nahor's niece, whom he marries.

Because Haran is specifically said to be the father of Milcah and Iscah here, and in v. 29, he is the father of Lot; it is possible that these are two different Haran's. On the other hand, it is more likely that Nahor is marrying his niece, as there were no prohibitions concerning that during that time. Milcah could possibly mean royalty (what father hasn't called his daughter *princess*?). Thieme suggests that Sarai means *contentious* or *bitchy*. Rotherham supports this. Terah had at least two wives and Sarai was Abram's half sister by the other wife (Genesis 20:12).

## Genesis 11:29e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'âb (אָב) [pronounced <i>aw<sup>b</sup>v</i> ]	<i>father, both as the head of a household, clan or tribe; founder, civil leader, military leader</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1 BDB #3
Mil <sup>e</sup> kâh (מִלְכָּה) [pronounced <i>mihl-KAW</i> ]	<i>queen; and is transliterated Milcah</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #4435 BDB #574
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or וַ) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Yiç <sup>e</sup> kâh (יִצְחָה) [pronounced <i>yih<sup>s</sup>-KAW</i> ]	<i>watching, observant, one who looks forth; transliterated Iscah, Yiska, Yiscah</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #3252 BDB #414

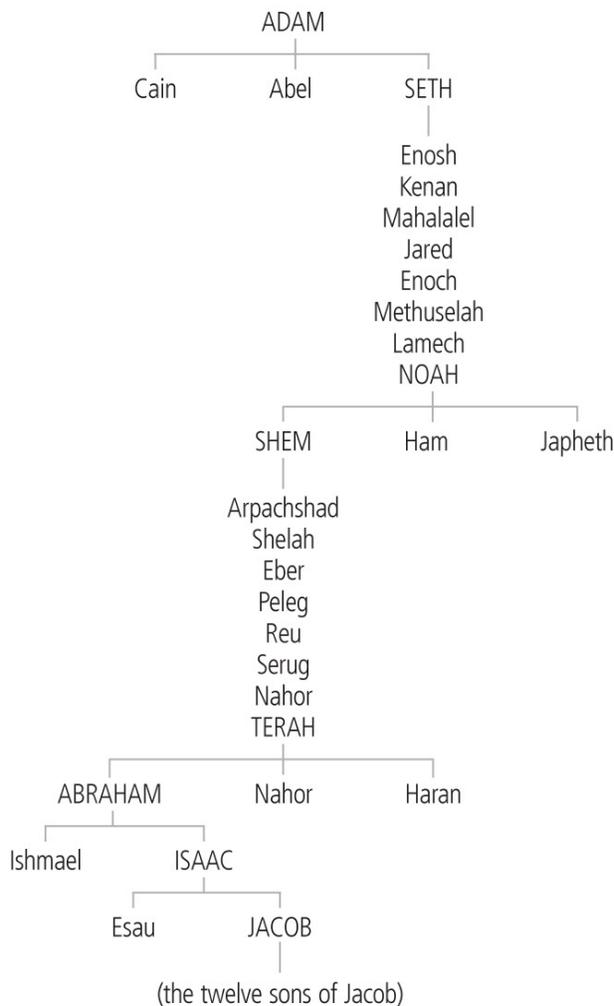
**Translation:**...[who was] the father of Milcah and Iscah.

Haran is the father of both Milcah and Iscah. Milcah will actually be mentioned on several occasions throughout the Bible: Genesis 11:29 22:20, 23 24:15, 24, 47. Iscah is only mentioned once, although Jewish tradition identifies her with Sarai. Abraham will, on at least two occasions, ask his wife to agree to pretend that she is his sister. When called on this, in Genesis 20:12, Abraham says: “**And yet she really is my sister, daughter of my father; only not daughter of my mother. And she became my wife.**” It is not impossible for to mean that she is descended from his father Terah, but is actually the daughter of Haran and his wife. That would suggest that Abraham’s answer at this time was still hedging somewhat; but it is not an impossibility. What makes it more unlikely is, Sarai’s name is found right here in this verse; why call her by a different name a few words later?

Genesis 11:29 **Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram’s wife [is] Sarai and the name of Nahor’s wife is Milcah, [who is] the daughter of Haran, [who was] the father of Milcah and Iscah.** (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:29 **Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram’s wife is Sarai and the name of Nahor’s wife is Milcah, who is the daughter of Haran, who was the father of Milcah and Iscah.** (Kukis paraphrase)

**The Genealogies of Genesis**



From: <http://www.esvstudybible.org/sb/images/1200/diagram-01-01.png>

**The Genealogies of Genesis**

**Gen 11:29** And Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram's wife was Sarai. And the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah.

Interestingly enough, this is the first time that we learn anything about the wives. We knew Eve, but we were told virtually nothing about the wives of Noah, Shem, Ham or Japheth (not their names or their origins).

Milcah, Nahor’s wife, is also his niece. We will find out in Genesis 20:12 that Sarai is either Abram’s half-sister (same father but different mothers) or his niece (the granddaughter of Terah).

**And so is Sarai barren; not to her a child.** Genesis 11:30 **Sarai continued to be barren; she did not have a child [lit., (there was) not to her a child].**

**Sarai continued to be barren; she had no children.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Targum of Onkelos	And Sara was barren, she had no child.
Jerusalem targum	And Sara was barren, she had no son.
Latin Vulgate	And Sarai was barren, and had no children.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so is Sarai barren; not to her a child.
Peshitta (Syriac)	But Sarai was barren; she had no child.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Sarai was barren, and did not bear children.

Significant differences:

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Common English Bible	Sarai was unable to have children.
Easy English	Sarai was *barren. That means that she had no children.
Easy-to-Read Version	Sarai did not have any children because she was not able to have children.
New Berkeley Version	But Sarai was sterile, she remained childless.
New Century Version	Sarai was not able to have children.
New Life Bible	But Sarai could not give birth. She had no child.
New Living Translation	But Sarai was unable to become pregnant and had no children.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	Now, Sara was sterile, so she didn't have any children.
Christian Community Bible	<i>Sarai was barren, having no child.</i>
NIRV	But Sarai wasn't able to have children.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Ancient Roots Translinear	Sarai was barren with none begotten by her.
The Expanded Bible	Sarai was not able to have children [was barren; had no children].
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Sarah was sterile and had no child for herself.
NET Bible®	But Sarai was barren; she had no children.
NIV – UK	Now Sarai was childless because she was not able to conceive.

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

International Standard V .

**Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):**

The Heritage Bible .

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Kaplan Translation .

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

Kretzmann's Commentary .  
 Lexham English Bible .  
 Translation for Translators .  
 The Voice .

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version	Yet coming is Sarai to be barren. No child is hers.
Emphasized Bible	And, Sara, remained barren,—she had no child,...
LTHB	And Sarai was barren; there was no child to her.
New RSV	Now Sarai was barren; she had no child.
Syndein/Thieme	But Sarai was barren - she had no child. {Note: Until Abraham is 100 years old, this is a problem for Abraham to overcome - his great test of faith. Another great principal contentious believers are barren - count on it! They are trouble makes, egotistical, and sensitive - what a combination. They hide their egotism and criticism with a facade of humility and self-effacement. They also have a tremendous approbation lust - they demand your attention!}.
Young's Updated LT	And Sarai is barren—she has no child.

**The gist of this verse:** In contrast with the lists of births and genealogies, Sarai, Abraham's wife, is barren.

Genesis 11:30a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass	3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Sâray (סָרַי) [pronounced saw-RAY or saw-RAH-ee]	my prince; my princess, nobility; transliterated Sarai	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #8297 BDB #979
ʿâqâr (עָקָרָה) [pronounced ʿaw-KAWR]	barren, sterile	feminine singular, adjective	Strong's #6135 BDB #785

**Translation:** Sarai continued to be barren;...

Although the imperfect tense with a wâw consecutive usually indicates that we have a series of actions, Sarai simply continues to be barren over a long period of time.

Sarai's barrenness was a problem in the ancient world. At that time, it was a sign of prosperity to have a lot of children. God had commanded man to fill the earth and, as we have seen in our study of genealogies, most families did just that, often having 10–20 children. Sarai's barrenness is also mentioned in Genesis 16:1–2.

Genesis 11:30b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
ʿêyn (אֵין) [pronounced ān]	nothing, not, [is] not; not present, not ready; expresses non-existence, absence or non-possession; [there is] no [none, not one, no one, not]	particle of negation; substantive of negation	Strong's #369 BDB #34

Genesis 11:30b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person feminine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
vâlâd (וּלְדוֹ) [pronounced vaw-LAWD]	<i>offspring, child, boy</i>	masculine singular noun; pausal form	Strong's #2056 BDB #409
Since the noun vâlâd occurs nowhere else, this is probably the noun:			
yeled (יְלֵד) [pronounced YEH-led]	<i>child, one born; son, boy, youth</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3206 BDB #409

**Translation:** ...she did not have a child [lit., (there was) not to her a child].

As you may notice in the Hebrew above, there is a minor problem with the final word in this verse. In the Hebrew, in a written manuscript, it is easy to see how one letter could be mistaken for the other. The general meaning is not in dispute.

**Gen 11:30** But Sarai was barren. She had no child.

Genesis 11:30 Sarai continued to be barren; she did not have a child [lit., (there was) not to her a child]. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:30 Sarai continued to be barren; she had no children. (Kukis paraphrase)

Sarai's barrenness was a problem in the ancient world. At that time, it was a sign of prosperity to have a lot of children. God had commanded man to fill the earth and, as we have seen in our study of genealogies, most families did just that, often having 10–20 children. These children provided a better life for themselves and for their parents; and they took care of their parents in their old age.

Sarai's barrenness is also mentioned in Genesis 16:1–2 and will be an important theme from that point on. That Abram's wife Sarai is barren will become the most important issue in hers and Abram's marriage. After several years of marriage, they produced no child, which is why this remark to be made. Whether the human author or God the Holy Spirit is foreshadowing at this point is unknown.

The Meanings of the Names of Abram, Sarai, Nahor and Milcah				
Name	Abram	Sarai	Nahor	Milcah
Meaning	<i>exalted father; father of high and windy places</i>	<i>my princess; possibly, contentious, bitchy</i>	<i>snoring</i>	<i>queen</i>

R. B. Thieme Jr. says that Sarai means *contentious, bitchy*. Rotherham is the only other person I could find who suggested the same thing. It is possible that Sarai (SRY in the Hebrew) is short for sherîyûth (שְׂרִיטָה) [pronounced *sher-ee-RUTH*], which means *firmness, hardness, stubbornness*. Strong's #8307 BDB #1057.

And so takes Terah Abram, his son, and Lot, son of Haran, son of his son, and Sarai, his daughter-in-law, a woman of Abram his son, and so they go out with them from Ur of the Chaldees to go a land-ward of Canaan. And so they come as far as Charan and so they remain there.

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11:31

Terah then took Abram, his son, and Lot, Haran's son ([Lot was also Terah's] grandson), and Sarai, his daughter-in-law, the wife of Abram, his son, and they go out together [lit., *with them*] from Ur of the Chaldees toward the land of Canaan. However [lit., *and so*], they went as far as Charan and remained there.

Terah then took Abram, his son, and Lot, his grandson (by Haran), and Sarai, his daughter-in-law, and they all went out together from Ur of the Chaldees going toward the land of Canaan. However, they only went as far as Charan and stopped there to live.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

#### Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos	And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot bar Haran, the son of his son, and his daughter-in-law Sara the wife of Abram his son, and went forth with them from Ura of the Kasdai, to go to the land of Kenaan. And they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.
Latin Vulgate	And Thare took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Aran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, the wife of Abram his son, and brought them out of Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Chanaan: and they came as far as Haran, and dwelt there.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so takes Terah Abram, his son, and Lot, son of Haran, son of his son, and Sarai, his daughter-in-law, a woman of Abram his son, and so they go out with them from Ur of the Chaldees to go a land-ward of Canaan. And so they come as far as Charan and so they remain there.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abrams wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan: and they came as far as Haran, and they settled there.
Septuagint (Greek)	And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot his grandson, the son of Haran, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, the wife of Abram his son, and led them forth out of the land of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan, and they came as far as Haran, and dwelt there.

Significant differences:

#### Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Terah decided to move from Ur to the land of Canaan. He took along Abram and Sarai and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran. But when they came to the city of Haran, they decided to settle there instead.
Easy English	Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot (Haran's son), and his son's (Abram's) wife Sarai. Together they went out from Ur, where the people called Chaldeans lived. They planned to go to the country called Canaan. But when they came to the city called Haran, they settled there.
Easy-to-Read Version	Terah took his family and left Ur of Babylonia. [70] They planned to travel to Canaan. Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot (Haran's son), and his daughter-in-law Sarai (Abram's wife). They traveled to the city of Haran and decided to stay there.

<i>The Message</i>	Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot (Haran's son), and Sarai his daughter-in-law (his son Abram's wife) and set out with them from Ur of the Chaldees for the land of Canaan. But when they got as far as Haran, they settled down there.
New Berkeley Version	Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they migrated together from Chaldean Ur, to move into the land of Canaan; but when they got as far as Haran [Probably named for the son and brother who had died.] they settled there.
New Century Version	Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot (Haran's son), and his daughter-in-law Sarai (Abram's wife) and moved out of Ur of Babylonia. They had planned to go to the land of Canaan, but when they reached the city of Haran, they settled there.
New Life Bible	Terah took his son Abram, and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram and they went together from Ur of the Chaldeans to the land of Canaan. But when they went as far as Haran, they made their home there.
New Living Translation	One day Terah took his son Abram, his daughter-in-law Sarai (his son Abram's wife), and his grandson Lot (his son Haran's child) and moved away from Ur of the Chaldeans. He was headed for the land of Canaan, but they stopped at Haran and settled there.

#### **Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	Then Terah took Abram (his son), along with Abram's woman Sara (his daughter-in-law), his grandson Lot (the son of Haran), and carried them from the land of the Chaldeans toward the land of Canaan. But when they got to Haran, they took up living there.
Beck's American Translation	Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot, Haran's son, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and together they left Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the country of Canaan. But when they came to Haran, they lived there.
Christian Community Bible	<i>Terah took his son Abram, his grand son Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law, the wife of Abram, and made them leave Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan. But on arrival in Haran they settled there.</i>
New American Bible	Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot, son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and brought them out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to go to the land of Canaan. But when they reached Haran, they settled there. The Samaritan and Greek texts include Nahor and his wife in Terah's migration to Haran. Although this is probably due to scribal harmonization, Nahor's family actually did migrate to Haran; cf ? Genesis 24:10; ? 27:43.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot, son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and brought them out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to go to the land of Canaan. But when they reached Haran, they settled there. Joshua 24:3; Neh 9:7; Jdt 5:6-9; Acts 7:4.
NIRV	Terah started out from Ur in Babylonia. He took his son Abram with him. He also took his grandson Lot. Lot was the son of Haran. And Terah took his daughter-in-law Sarai. She was the wife of his son Abram.
New Jerusalem Bible	Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law the wife of Abram, and made them leave Ur of the Chaldaeans to go to the land of Canaan. But on arrival in Haran they settled there.

#### **Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Ancient Roots Translinear	Terah took Abram, his son, and Lot, the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, the woman of his son Abram. They proceeded from Ur in Iraq to go to the land of Canaan. They came to Harran (Turkey) and dwelled there.
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Bible in Basic English	And Terah took Abram, his son, and Lot, the son of Haran, and Sarai, his daughter-in-law, the wife of his son Abram and they went out from Ur of the Chaldees, to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran, and were there for some time.
Complete Jewish Bible	Terach took his son Avram, his son Haran's son Lot, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Avram's wife; and they left Ur of the Kasdim to go to the land of Kena'an. But when they came to Haran, they stayed there.
The Expanded Bible	Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot (Haran's son), and his daughter-in-law Sarai (Abram's wife) and moved out of Ur of ·Babylonia [ <sup>t</sup> the Chaldeans; 11:28]. They had planned to go to the land of Canaan, but when they reached the city of Haran [ <sup>c</sup> a city in northern Syria], they settled there.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Terah however took Abram his son and Lot his grandson, the son of Haran, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, the wife of Abram his own son, and departed from Ur of the Kaldees to travel to the land of Canaan; and arriving at Haran they settled there.
NIV – UK	Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and together they set out from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan. But when they came to Harran, they settled there.

### Limited Vocabulary Translations:

International Standard V .

### Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):

The Heritage Bible .

### Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Kaplan Translation .

### Expanded/Embellished Bibles:

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible .

Translation for Translators .

The Voice .

### Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And Terah took Abram his son, Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and they went forth together to go from Ur of the Chaldees into the land of Canaan; but when they came to Haran, they settled there.
Concordant Literal Version	And taking is Terah Abram, his son, and Lot, the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai, his daughter-in-law, wife of Abram, his son, and faring forth is he with them from Ur of the Chaldeans, to go to the land of Canaan. And coming are they as far as Charan, and dwelling there are they.
Darby Translation	And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth together out of Ur of the Chaldeans, to go into the land of Canaan, and came as far as Haran, and dwelt there.
English Standard Version	Terah took Abram his son and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife, and they went forth together from Ur of the

Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan, but when they came to Haran, they settled there.

The Geneva Bible And Terah [Though the oracle of God came to Abram, yet the honour is given to Terah, because he was the father.] took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his sons son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abrams wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran [Which was a city of Mesopotamia.], and dwelt there.

Green's Literal Translation And Terah took his son Abram, and Lot, Haran's son, his grandson and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife. And he went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan. And they came to Haran and lived there.

NASB Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran, his grandson, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went out together [Lit with them] from Ur of the Chaldeans in order to enter the land of Canaan; and they went as far as Haran, and settled [Lit dwelt] there.

New King James Version And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there.

New RSV Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out together from Ur of the Chaldeans to go into the land of Canaan; but when they came to Haran, they settled there.

Syndein/Thieme And Terah took {indicates Terah was in charge} Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter in law, his son Abram's wife, and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan. And they came unto Haran, and 'dwelt in prosperity' there. {Note: See Acts 7:2 and following. It is explained there that God actually ordered Abram to leave Ur of the Chaldees and go to Palestine BEFORE he lived in Haran. Abram was actually disobeying the Lord when he 1) lived in Haran and 2) stayed with his father and Lot. Notice it says 'Terah took'. That means that even though Terah was an unbeliever and priest to a false god, Abram allowed Terah to 'lead him'.}

World English Bible Terah took Abram his son, Lot the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife. They went forth from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan. They came to Haran, and lived there.

Young's Updated LT And Terah takes Abram his son, and Lot, son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, wife of Abram his son, and they go out with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go towards the land of Canaan; and they come unto Charan, and dwell there.

**The gist of this verse:** Terah, Lot, Abram and Sarai all go towards Canaan, but stop in Charan (Haran).

Genesis 11:31a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because	wāw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
lāqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law-KAHKH]	to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3947 BDB #542

Genesis 11:31a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
Terach (תֵּרַח) [pronounced THE-rahkh]	<i>delay; a tree and is transliterated Terah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #8646 BDB #1076
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'Abêrâm (אַבְרָם) [pronounced ab <sup>v</sup> -RAWM]	<i>father of elevation, exalted father; and is transliterated Abram</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Lôwt (לוֹט) [pronounced lohṫ]	<i>hidden; a covering, a veil; wrapped up; transliterated Lot</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #3876 BDB #532
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
Hârân (הָרָן) [pronounced haw-RAWN]	<i>mountaineer; transliterated Haran</i>	masculine singular proper noun:	Strong's #2039 BDB #248

**Translation:** Terah then took Abram, his son, and Lot, Haran's son...

The people which Terah took were Abram and Lot, Abram's nephew.

We will later find out that there are other people related the Abram who appear to be living out here. However, the text is quite specific as to who is taken there. Obviously servants and slaves would have come as well, but it is not clear if this is an exhaustive list.

It is important to note that it is Terah here, the father, taking these people. Abram is not leading anyone, which is what we would expect, as he is Terah's son. But there is more to this than that.

Genesis 11:31b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #1121 BDB #119
bên (בֶּן) [pronounced bane]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

**Translation:**...([Lot was also Terah's] grandson),...

As often occurs in Scripture, the relationship is carefully defined. Lot is the son of Terah's son; in other words, Lot is Terah's grandson.

Genesis 11:31c			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i> ]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i> ]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
Sâray (סָרַי) [pronounced <i>saw-RAY</i> or <i>saw-RAH-ee</i> ]	<i>my prince; my princess, nobility; transliterated Sarai</i>	feminine singular proper noun	Strong's #8297 BDB #979
kallâh (כַּלְיָה) [pronounced <i>kahl-LAW</i> ]	<i>daughter-in-law, spouse, wife</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #3618 BDB #483
Kallâh is rendered <i>daughter-in-law, spouse, wife</i> . We do not have an exact English equivalent as its translation depends upon who is speaking or who this is in reference to. It is an absolute noun which we only have relative nouns to stand in for it.			
'îshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced <i>eesh-SHAW</i> ]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #802 BDB #61
'Ab <sup>e</sup> râm (אַבְרָם) [pronounced <i>ab<sup>v</sup>-RAWM</i> ]	<i>father of elevation, exalted father; and is transliterated Abram</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #87 BDB #4
bên (בֵּן) [pronounced <i>bane</i> ]	<i>son, descendant</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1121 BDB #119

**Translation:** ...and Sarai, his daughter-in-law, the wife of Abram, his son,...

If Sarai is being taken, this means that Sarai married Abram in Ur of the Chaldees.

Genesis 11:31d			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (וּ) [pronounced <i>wah</i> ]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced <i>yaw-TZAWH</i> ]	<i>to go [come] out, to go [come] forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422

## Genesis 11:31d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>with, at, near, by, among, directly from</i>	preposition (which is identical to the sign of the direct object); with the 3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #854 BDB #85

**Translation:** ...and they go out together [lit., with them]...

*They go with them* could indicate that these are not the only people who are going from Ur of the Chaldees. However, it could simply indicate that they are going out together with their servants and slaves and employees.

## Genesis 11:31e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'Ûwr (אוּר) [pronounced oor]	<i>brightness of fire, flame; transliterated Ur</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #218 BDB #22
Kas <sup>e</sup> ddiym (כַּסְדִּימ) [pronounced kahsd-DEEM]	<i>clod-breakers; is transliterated Chaldees, Kasdim, Chaldeans, Chaldea</i>	proper singular noun gentilic/territory	Strong's #3679 & #3778 BDB #505
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הָלַךְ) [pronounced haw-LAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
'erets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced EH-rets]	<i>earthward (all or a portion thereof), on [toward, upon] the earth; on [upon, toward] the land [territory, country, continent; ground, soil]</i>	feminine singular noun with the directional hê	Strong's #776 BDB #75
K <sup>e</sup> na'an (כְּנַעַן) [pronounced k <sup>e</sup> NAH-ğahn]	<i>which possibly means merchant and is transliterated Canaan</i>	masculine proper noun; territory	Strong's #3667 BDB #488

**Translation:** ...from Ur of the Chaldees toward the land of Canaan.

Here is the fascinating portion of this verse: they are going *toward* the land of Canaan. Now, this suggests that Canaan was to be their eventual destination. If it is not, then why mention it at all? They are certainly not heading due west to Canaan, in terms of going that direction. They are moving in a northwesterly direction. That is not going towards Canaan. To get to Canaan, they will have to eventually start going in the southwesterly direction. However, since Canaan is mentioned here, that indicates that, at one time, this was the eventual destination.

When one begins to put all of the clues together, it becomes clear that Genesis 12:1 is not the first time that Abraham—or members of his family—were told to go to Canaan by God.

Genesis 11:31f			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâlak <sup>e</sup> (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK <sup>e</sup> ]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
'ad (עד) [pronounced gahd]	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until</i>	preposition	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
Chârân (חרן) [pronounced khaw-RAWN]	<i>parched; mountaineer; road, path transliterated Haran, Charan</i>	masculine singular proper noun/location	Strong's #2771 BDB #357

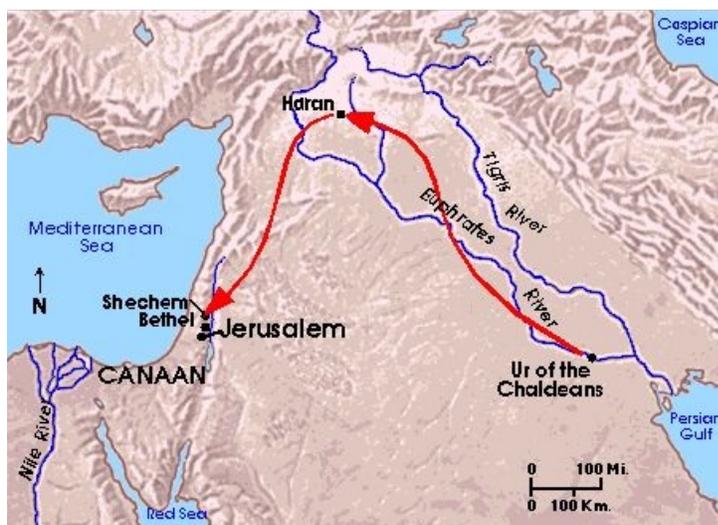
**Translation:** However [lit., and so], they went as far as Charan...

Haran is on or near the Euphrates River.

Haran, Lot's late father, spells his name with an *h* (ח ; called he) and Haran, the place (called Charran in the KJV), is spelled with a *ch* (ח ; called het). Many translations do not differentiate between the two and called them both *Haran*. Charan was an important city on the trade route between the Mediterranean and the Mesopotamian area and it is unclear in this context as to how established it was. It was a flourishing city during the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium B.C., which would place it in this time-frame, either immediately before or after. If Terah and family came from a burgeoning, advanced city, it would be likely that they would be most comfortable staying in such a city. We are not given a reason for their move and we do not know if God had told them or just caused them to move. God moved me to Houston from California; however, He did not directly contact me and tell me to move. Living in two large cities would indicate that in order to do any trading and carry on any kind of commerce, Terah and family would have to learn the languages of those in that area. Being major cities, there may be have up to two or more languages spoken in each area and some variations of each.

**Map of Haran**

Although I am not 100% convinced of Haran's position on this map, it is in generally the right place. The general movement of Abram is given here; they certainly did not cross over the Euphrates several times. This image taken from a portion of this map: [http://oneyearbibleimages.com/haran\\_map.jpg](http://oneyearbibleimages.com/haran_map.jpg)



It appears as though Abram's family stopped here, either because they were taken by the name of the place or they were not willing to go any further and they named the place themselves.

Beck's American Translation seems to capture this sense: Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot, Haran's son, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and together they left Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the country of Canaan. But when they came to Haran, they lived there.

Genesis 11:31g			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
yâshab (יָשַׁב) [pronounced yaw-SHAH <sup>AV</sup> ]	<i>to remain, to stay; to dwell, to live, to inhabit; to sit</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3427 BDB #442
shâm (שָׁם) [pronounced shawm]	<i>there; at that time, then; therein, in that thing</i>	adverb of place	Strong's #8033 BDB #1027

**Translation:** ...and remained there.

This was not where they were supposed to end their journey. Abram and his family were to have gone to Canaan, but they did not. What appears to be the case is, Terah, Abram's father, as the eldest, was calling the shots. So, Abram intended to go to Canaan. They arrived in Charan and Terah made the decision to stop there.

You will note that this is exactly the same phrase which ended v. 2. *Then it was when they journeyed from the east that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and, therefore, they stayed there.* What is the significance of this? The people in Genesis 11:2 were supposed to fan out across the earth, but they did not; here, the family of Abram were to go to Canaan, but they did not. They stopped in Haran and stayed there, being outside of God's geographical will.

**Gen 11:31** And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot, the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife. And he went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan. And they came to Charan [Haran] and lived there.

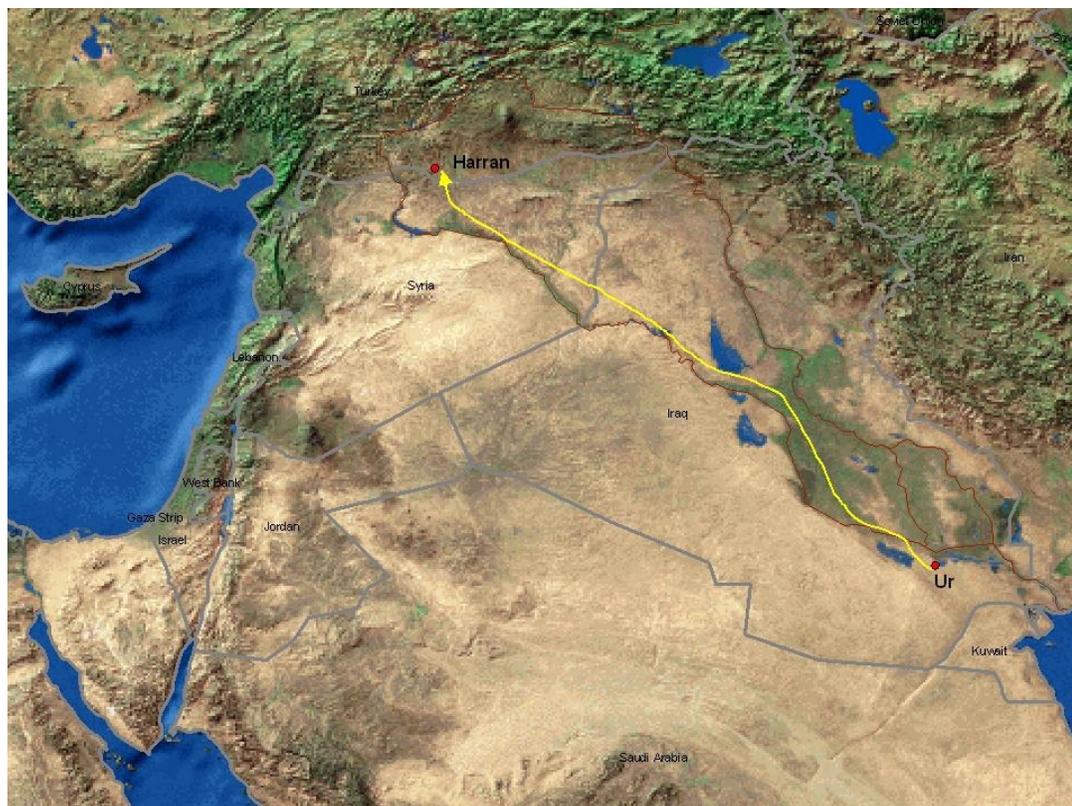
Genesis 11:31 Terah then took Abram, his son, and Lot, Haran's son ([Lot was also Terah's] grandson), and Sarai, his daughter-in-law, the wife of Abram, his son, and they go out together [lit., *with them*] from Ur of the Chaldees toward the land of Canaan. However [lit., *and so*], they went as far as Charan and remained there. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:31 Terah then took Abram, his son, and Lot, his grandson (by Haran), and Sarai, his daughter-in-law, and they all went out together from Ur of the Chaldees going toward the land of Canaan. However, they only went as far as Charan and stopped there to live. (Kukis paraphrase)

Interestingly enough, Sarai has now been mentioned 3 times in the previous 3 verses, but her familial relationship to Abram is not discussed here. I do not have an explanation for that. However, it is not really pertinent to the context.

Terah and his family traveled northwest up the Euphrates River, apparently. This would have been a major trade route during that time. Haran (the city; also spelled *Charan*) was about 80% of the way to the land of Canaan, and, at that time, it may have even been seen as the eastern edge of the land of Canaan. We are never given a reason for this journey. Perhaps the death of Haran back in Ur of the Chaldees made Terah want to move elsewhere.

### A Map of Abraham's Journey



From [http://www.genesisfiles.com/Images/Ur\\_HarranMap.jpg](http://www.genesisfiles.com/Images/Ur_HarranMap.jpg)

In the map above, in the far right bottom corner is the Persian Gulf. The 2 rivers leading to that gulf are the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The land around these rivers, at the time, was known as the fertile crescent (much of which is Iraq today). It is called a crescent because it also takes in the area of Palestine along the Mediterranean Sea (imagine a crescent moon superimposed, face-down, upon this map).<sup>38</sup>

The yellow line in the map above is a reasonable guess as to the route that Terah and company took (along the Euphrates River) to Charan. Southwest of Charan is the Land of Canaan, bordered on the west (the left-hand side of the map) by the Mediterranean Sea.

**Gen 11:31** And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot, the son of Haran, his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife. And he went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan. And they came to Charan [Haran] and lived there.

When it comes to several city's names, we do not know the origin of the name, but we can certainly guess. Haran, Terah's son, died back in Ur of the Chaldees, but, apparently, the rest of the family (under Terah) moved to Charan (Haran). In the Hebrew, these 2 proper nouns are very similar, and it is not out of the question for one to be derived from the other (and a poor manuscript could result in one being easily mistaken for the other). Furthermore, *Charan* and *Haran* mean the same thing: *mountaineer*.

Did Terah and company simply stop at a city with a name similar to Terah's son? Did Terah name this city, which eventually became its name (and possibly recorded here as a gloss). We are not given any clues, apart from the name itself.

Charan was an important city on the trade route between the Mediterranean and the Mesopotamian area and it is unclear in this context as to how well established it was by this time. It was a flourishing city during the 3<sup>rd</sup>

<sup>38</sup> The crescent moon and a star are used to symbolize Islam. Some attribute this to early idolatry among the Arabs (the worship of celestial bodies), this fertile crescent of old may have played a part in the selection of this symbol.

millennium B.C., which would place it in this time-frame, either immediately before or after. Living in two large cities would indicate that in order to do any trading and carry on any kind of commerce, Terah and family would have to learn the languages of those in that area. Being major cities, there were probably two or more languages spoken in each area and some variations of each.

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**And so are days of Terah, five years and two hundred a year. And so dies Terah in Charan.**      Genesis 11:32      **Terah's days were 205 years. He [lit., Terah] died in Charan.**

**Terah lived for 205 years and died in Charan.**

Here is how others have translated this verse:

**Ancient texts:**

Targum of Onkelos	And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years. And Terah died in Haran.
Latin Vulgate	And the days of Thare were two hundred and five years, and he died in Haran.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And so are days of Terah, five years and two hundred a year. And so dies Terah in Charan.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran.
Septuagint (Greek)	And all the days of Terah in the land of Haran were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.

Significant differences:

**Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:**

Contemporary English V.	Terah's whole life lasted 205 years. He died in Haran.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Terah died there at the age of 205.
New Berkeley Version	At Haran, Terah died at the age of 205.
New Living Translation	Terah lived for 205 years [Some ancient versions read 145 years; compare 11:26 and 12:4.] and died while still in Haran.

**Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:**

American English Bible	So, Terah lived there in the land of Haran for two hundred and five years, and then he died.
Beck's American Translation	Terah lived to be 205 and then died in Haran.
New American Bible (R.E.)	The lifetime of Terah was two hundred and five years; then Terah died in Haran. Since Terah was seventy years old when his son Abraham was born (v. 26), and Abraham was seventy-five when he left Haran (12:4), Terah lived in Haran for sixty years after Abraham's departure. According to the tradition in the Samaritan text, Terah died when he was one hundred and forty-five years old, therefore, in the same year in which Abraham left Haran. This is the tradition followed in Stephen's speech: Abraham left Haran "after his father died" (Acts 7:4).
NIRV	Terah lived for 205 years. He died in Haran.
New Jerusalem Bible	Terah's life lasted two hundred and five years; then he died at Haran.
Revised English Bible	Terah was two hundred and five years old when he died in Haran.

**Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):**

Bible in Basic English	And all the years of Terah's life were two hundred and five: and Terah came to his end in Haran.
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The Expanded Bible Ferar-Fenton Bible	Terah lived to be 205 years old, and then he died in Haran. The lifetime of Terah was two hundred and five years; and Terah died in Haran.
JPS (Tanakh—1985) NET Bible®	The days of Terah came to 205 years; and Terah died in Haran. The lifetime [Heb "And the days of Terah were."] of Terah was 205 years, and he [Heb "Terah"; the pronoun has been substituted for the proper name in the translation for stylistic reasons.] died in Haran.

**Limited Vocabulary Translations:**

International Standard V .

**Catholic Bibles (those having the Imprimatur):**

The Heritage Bible .

**Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:**

Kaplan Translation .

**Expanded/Embellished Bibles:**

Kretzmann's Commentary .

Lexham English Bible .

Translation for Translators .

The Voice .

**Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:**

Concordant Literal Version	And coming are all the days of Terah to be two hundred and five years. And dying is Terah in Charan.
English Standard Version Syndein/Thieme	The days of Terah were 205 years, and Terah died in Haran. And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years. Terah died in Haran. {Note: God wanted to bless Abram, but until Terah was dead and Abram left behind Haran He could not do so. So what dynamited Abram out of Haran? It took the grace of God! The death of Terah. Otherwise Abram would remain in Haran - that 'dried up place'. So he had to be jolted into waking up - in this case by the death of his beloved father.} {SideNote: RBT says it was 645 years between Abram leaving Haran and the Exodus Generation left Egypt. The age of the Patriarchs was 215 years in the age of Israel. The sojourn in Egypt was 430 years. 30 years of prosperity and 400 years of captivity. The Exodus took place in 1441BC. So if you add 645 to that date, then Abram left Haran in 2086BC. If you look at the Cambridge Ancient History, you can see most of humanity was extremely primitive at this time. Abram was a 'man before his time'. Abram left Haran when he was 75 years old (Genesis 12:4). Abram was about 100 years old at the birth of Isaac was 25 years (Genesis 21:5) in Canaan. Now in Genesis 25:26 Isaac was 60 when Jacob was born. So this is 25+60= 85 years since Abram left Haran. Genesis 47:9 we learn that Jacob was 130 when he was in Egypt and stood before Pharaoh so that adds up 85+130= 215 years. Now the 430 comes from Exodus 12:40-41 is the remark on the 430 years.}.
Young's Updated LT	And the days of Terah are two hundred and five years, and Terah dieth in Charan.

**The gist of this verse:** Terah lives to be 205 and then dies in Charan.

Genesis 11:32a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced haw-YAW]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
yâmîym (יָמִיַם) [pronounced yaw-MEEM]	<i>days, a set of days; time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
Terach (תֵּרַח) [pronounced THE-rahkh]	<i>delay; a tree and is transliterated Terah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #8646 BDB #1076
châmêsh (חָמֵשׁ) [pronounced khaw-MAYSH]	five	masculine singular numeral	Strong's #2568 BDB #331
shânîym (שָׁנִיַם) [pronounced shaw-NEEM]	years	feminine plural noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040
w <sup>e</sup> (or v <sup>e</sup> ) (וּ, וַ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mâ'thayim (מֵאֵתַיִם) [pronounced maw-thah-YIM]	two hundred	feminine dual numeral (not certain about the spelling)	Strong's #3967 BDB #547
shânâh (שָׁנָה) [pronounced shaw-NAW]	year	feminine singular noun	Strong's #8141 BDB #1040

**Translation:** Terah's days were 205 years.

Terah finally moved out of Ur of the Chaldees, but he did not go far enough. He lived for 205 years.

Genesis 11:32b			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
wa (or va) (ו) [pronounced wah]	<i>and so, and then, then, and; so, that, yet, therefore, consequently; because</i>	wâw consecutive	No Strong's # BDB #253
mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced mooth]	<i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
Terach (תֵּרַח) [pronounced THE-rahkh]	<i>delay; a tree and is transliterated Terah</i>	masculine singular proper noun	Strong's #8646 BDB #1076

## Genesis 11:32b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's #
b <sup>e</sup> (ב) [pronounced b <sup>eh</sup> ]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
Chârân (חָרָן) [pronounced khaw- RAWN]	<i>parched; mountaineer; transliterated Haran, Charan</i>	masculine singular proper noun/location	Strong's #2771 BDB #357

**Translation:** He [lit., Terah] died in Charan.

Terah died in Charan rather than in the land of Canaan.

One chronology places this time period as being circa 2086 B.C. Abram leaves his father, apparently after he had died Charan, and moves to the land of Canaan. He obviously keeps in touch through whatever methods were available.

One expositor, Dr. C.D. Ginsburg, believes that this verse has been transposed. Abraham did not write this as a diary, recording each day as it came. In fact, it is possible that Eber died after Abram passed away. The previous section was a family tree, likely put together by Abraham from previous records, possibly with Eber's date left open to be filled in as his predecessors passed away.

If the dates given are accurate (which has been discussed), then the flood occurred roughly 300 years previous to this. This obviously plays havoc with archeological data, since it is likely that we can push civilization back at least to 4000-3000 B.C. If the chronology of the Septuagint (or the Alexandrine Text) is accurate, then we are roughly a millennium after the flood. This seems more reasonable to me. Again, this pushes the history of man back 6000–7000 years.

I have suggested, throughout this chapter, that Abram—and possibly his father—had been called previously to go to Canaan. Now let's lay all of this out.

## The Two Calls to Abram

1. If you know a little about the Bible and about Abraham, then you are familiar with Genesis 12:1–3 **Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."** (ESV)
2. We have a series of wâw consecutives followed by imperfect verbs in Genesis 11:31, 32 and 12:1, which often indicates a series of chronological acts. What is suggested is, Terah lives out his life in Haran, dies, and then God comes to Abram, telling him to go to the land of Canaan. Furthermore, God makes it very clear that Abram needs to separate from his family and his father's house.
3. V. 31 is quite a mouthful, but let's take a look at it again: **Terah then took Abram, his son, and Lot, Haran's son ([Lot was also Terah's] grandson), and Sarai, his daughter-in-law, the wife of Abram, his son, and they go out together [lit., with them] from Ur of the Chaldees toward the land of Canaan. However [lit., and so], they went as far as Haran and remained there.** If Terah is moving his family out of Ur, and they go to Haran and stop, why mention that they are going *toward* the land of Canaan? They did not really move toward the land of Canaan, which was almost due west, but they moved in a northwesterly direction. This suggests that Canaan was their ultimate destination. We do not know if it was in the mind of Terah, but it was God's ultimate destination for Abram.
4. You will also notice in v. 31 that it is Terah who takes his family that direction, and not Abram. Now, of

## The Two Calls to Abram

course, we would expect that, as Terah is the father; but if Abram got the call of God alone, then he should have led them out. However, it is possible that Abram got the call, told his father, and his father said, "Look, we will move out there with you." And obviously, he did not keep to this.

5. Look at Terah's name—it means *delayed*. Let me suggest to you that Terah and Abram together, when Abram was an adult, got the call from God to move to Canaan. However, Terah, as the patriarch of the family, moved to Haran and then stopped. In fact, it appears that he needed the death of his son Haran to get him off his duff to move up the Euphrates in the first place.
6. As a side note, it is not impossible that Terah's name was changed slightly to mean *delay* in order to indicate that blessing from God was delayed. God the Holy Spirit does enjoy language, and throughout the Bible, names are changed slightly to reflect a person's history and actions. This does not mean, however, that you ought to join a cult, where the leader of that cult gives you a new name.
7. Now let's go to Stephen's sermon in Acts 7:2–4 **And Stephen said: "Brothers and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he lived in Haran, and said to him, 'Go out from your land and from your kindred and go into the land that I will show you.' Then he went out from the land of the Chaldeans and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him from there into this land in which you are now living."** (ESV). According to Stephen, Abram got the call to move to Canaan when he was still in Mesopotamia, which would have been Ur of the Chaldees. God told Abram to separate at that time. What appears to be the case is, Abram talked his family into all moving, but they got three-fourths of the way there and stopped.
8. Again, the imperfect tense of the verb *to say* in Genesis 12:1. A perfect tense would suggest a past event; an imperfect tense tied together with a series of *wâw* consecutives suggests a series of chronological events. In case you need an example, Genesis 15:6 uses a perfect tense: **And Abram had believed Y<sup>e</sup>howah and He counted it to him as righteousness.** *Believed* is in the perfect tense, something which had occurred in Abram's past. He did not believe in the Revealed Lord in the narrative contained in Genesis 15:6, but at a previous point in time. However, *counted* (or, *reckoned*, *imputed*) is in the imperfect tense, where God continues to count Abram as being righteous.
9. So, God called Abram (and possibly Terah) back in Ur of the Chaldees, and they half-responded to this call, but blessing to Abram was delayed. However, after Terah died, then Abram was told *again* to leave his family and move to the land of Canaan, and this time, he obeyed almost completely (he did bring Lot along).

I am not sure that this makes any practical difference to the believer in Jesus Christ; but this is what the text appears to be telling us.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

**Gen 11:32** And the days of Terah were two hundred and five years. And Terah died in Charan.

Genesis 11:32 Terah's days were 205 years. He [lit., *Terah*] died in Charan. (Kukis mostly literal translation)

Genesis 11:32 Terah lived for 205 years and died in Charan. (Kukis paraphrase)

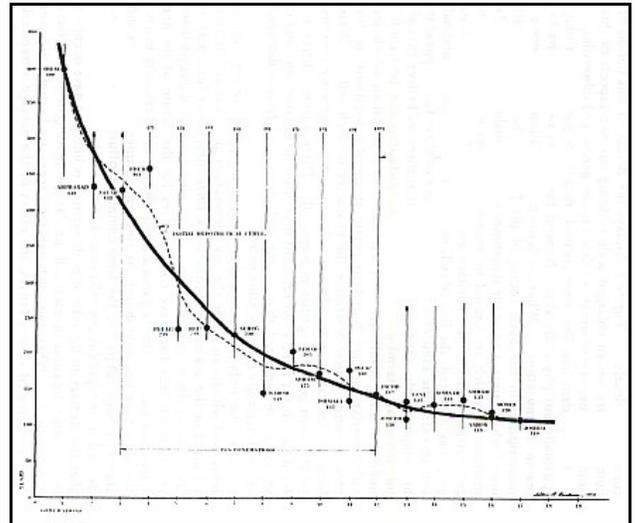
The life span of man dropped off dramatically after the flood. Noah lived 950 years, but his son Shem lived only 600 years. His son Arpachshad lived only 468 years. And the decrease of life span continues down to Terah, who lives only 205 years.

In fact, this life span decrease roughly models **an exponential decay curve** (see below), which is quite surprising, if you think the writers of Genesis simply pulled numbers out of a hat. However, this is perfectly in line with normal decay curves of any kind. Interestingly enough, growth curves are closely associated with the growth or expansion of life; and the decay curve (a related equation) is associated with the death and decay of life (and other things). These exponential curves are universal, and integral to all life and death. That the ages of Noah's descendants

conform to such a curve is what we would expect in a true recording of history; it is not what we would find in a fictionalized account.

Without sin, Adam’s body was designed by God to live forever. After sinning, Adam’s body lived nearly 1000 years. Those who descended from Adam also had long life spans as well. However, with the flood, the gene pool was dramatically narrowed to one family, and that one family entered into a world with a great deal more bacteria (millions of people, animals and plants would have been destroyed by the flood), and who knows what else changed which affected our lifespan. The end result was a decrease of the life span of man from nearly 1000 years to 70 or so.

From the very beginning, the Bible is concerned with a particular family line, beginning with Adam, and now, having worked its way down to Abraham. The book of Luke will actually follow this line of Adam all the way to Jesus (which is the genetic line of our Lord, which goes through Mary). However, many authors, over a period of several thousand years, knew, through the guidance of God the Holy Spirit, which line to follow.



From <http://custance.org/old/seed/fig3s.jpg>

With Abraham’s salvation, we will begin the Age of Israel (also known as the Jewish Age). The Age of Israel may be broken down into 3 parts: the time of the Patriarchs (from Abraham to Joseph); the nation Israel (from Joseph’ death to our Lord’s ascension into heaven); and the Tribulation, which will begin at the termination of the Church Age and will continue for a shortened 7 years.

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines**

**Chapter Outline**

**Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines**

**Beginning of Document**

**Definition of Terms**

**Introduction and Text**

**Chapter Summary**

**Addendum**

**A Complete Translation**

[www.kukis.org](http://www.kukis.org)

**Exegetical Studies in Genesis**

**A Set of Summary Doctrines and Commentary**

**An Abbreviated Exegesis of Genesis 11:**

Bible translation used: The Scriptures 2009. Unless otherwise noted, all other quotations will be taken from this translation as well.

In the Scriptures 2009, instead of *God*, we have the word *Elohim*, which is a transliteration from the Hebrew. The other name for God, YHWH (or Jehovah, Yahweh, Adonai, Lord, JHWH, Y<sup>e</sup>howah) is represented with the actual Hebrew יהוה. The reason for there being so many different words used here is interesting. Originally, the Hebrew was written without vowels—not just YHWH, but every single Hebrew word. Because the Hebrew Scriptures (which we know as the Old Testament) were read aloud so often, the reader could look at the Hebrew consonants and know the word that was there. In fact, the Masorettes, who preserved the Bibles' pronunciation, introduced diacritical marks in the 7th century A.D. (these are vowel points, which was added above and below the original

Hebrew text). Up to that time, every word in the Bible was read aloud except for one, and that was YHWH. When the Jews came to this proper name, they said, *Adonai* (= *Lord*). As a result, the Jews preserved the pronunciation of the Biblical text for all but one word. Of the nearly 100 translations of the Old Testament to which I refer, any one of those eight forms may be found—and one of them, the Message (I believe) uses *GOD*. Furthermore, Bible translations are not necessarily consistent at this point. One place we may read *Lord*, and elsewhere we may read *Jehovah* in the same translation.

## The Subsections of Genesis 11

**God's Opinion of One Nation** (vv. 1–9)

**The Genealogy of Shem** (vv. 10–25)

**Terah's Descendants** (vv. 26–32)

### God's Opinion of One Nation

Genesis 11:1 **And all the earth had one language<sup>a</sup> and one speech.**

As would make perfect sense, everyone on earth was descended from one of Noah's three sons. Obviously, everyone would speak the same language.

Genesis 11:2 **And it came to be, as they set out from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shin'ar,<sup>b</sup> and they dwelt there.**

<sup>a</sup>Heb. lip.

<sup>b</sup>Earlier name for Babel.

They came down from the Mountains of Ararat, where the Ark had settled. They had come out of the east and were proceeding west. They come to a plain in the land of Shinar (that is, Babylon); and the people decide to live there.

God did not tell the people, "Find a suitable stop and all of you make your lives there." But that is what they decided to do.

Genesis 11:3 **And they said to each other, "Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for mortar.**

They figured out rather quickly that they had natural building materials right there on site so that they could build a plethora of buildings.

Genesis 11:4 **And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens, and make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered over all the face of the earth."**

It appears that they are at or near the intersection of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, so they would build a massive tower right there, so that when they went off exploring, they could have find their way back to where they had come from. They just look for this tower. The tower was going to be very high.

Genesis 11:5 **Then הויה [= *Jehovah*, *Y<sup>e</sup>howah*] came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built.**

God, being omniscient, was aware of this taking place from eternity past. However, there are angelic observers watching what men would do (both fallen and elect angels). Perhaps this has become the focal point of some serious discussion in the throne room of God, so that God chooses to make an appearance.

Now, when God makes an appearance on earth, in whatever form, He is going to involve Himself in the affairs of the earth in some way. Previously, God had taken the rib from Adam and made a woman from that rib. That was

a big change in human dynamics. When Cain killed Abel, God interacted directly with Cain regarding the divine consequences that he would face. For awhile, God had not spent much time on earth. However, with the corruption of the human species in Genesis 6, God returned to earth, interacting primarily with a man named Noah. Big changes took place after that.

Therefore, if God is going to somehow manifest His presence on earth, while man is building this great tower, this means that He is going to do something.

Genesis 11:6 And הוהי said, "Look, they are one people and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do! And now, they are not going to be withheld from doing whatever they plan to do.

It is not necessary that God is visible or manifest to the people building this tower. However, He is manifest to the angels at this point, which is with whom He appears to be talking.

Man's intelligence is a fascinating thing. We tend to move way ahead when we are able to collaborate. Let me suggest a few big items: nuclear weapons, nuclear power, the trip to the moon; oh, and also, a single pencil. There is not one person living today (or ever) who could have developed any of these things on his own. Friedman uses this illustration to tout free enterprise and the free market. I take his exact illustration and show how collaborative mankind's intelligence is.

*Milton Friedman and making a pencil: Look at this lead pencil. There's not a single person in the world who could make this pencil. Remarkable statement? Not at all. The wood from which it is made, for all I know, comes from a tree that was cut down in the state of Washington. To cut down that tree, it took a saw. To make the saw, it took steel. To make steel, it took iron ore. This black center—we call it lead but it's really graphite, compressed graphite—I'm not sure where it comes from, but I think it comes from some mines in South America. This red top up here, this eraser, a bit of rubber, probably comes from Malaya, where the rubber tree isn't even native! It was imported from South America by some businessmen with the help of the British government. This brass ferrule? [Self-effacing laughter.] I haven't the slightest idea where it came from. Or the yellow paint! Or the paint that made the black lines. Or the glue that holds it together. Literally thousands of people co-operated to make this pencil. People who don't speak the same language, who practice different religions, who might hate one another if they ever met! When you go down to the store and buy this pencil, you are in effect trading a few minutes of your time for a few seconds of the time of all those thousands of people. What brought them together and induced them to cooperate to make this pencil? There was no commissar sending ... out orders from some central office. It was the magic of the price system: the impersonal operation of prices that brought them together and got them to cooperate, to make this pencil, so you could have it for a trifling sum.<sup>39</sup>*

Very few people appreciate what Friedman is saying, or the point he is making, but related to his point is, mankind develops some amazing things based upon man's collaborative effort. Take a few people out of this example, and the pencil will lose some important dimension (the paint or the eraser).

God knows that, when mankind works together, they are capable of nearly anything; and man produces things which may not always be for the overall benefit of others.

We have seen a great movement in the pharmaceutical industry over the past 20 years (maybe even a longer period of time than that), where they can make billions of dollars when they ally themselves with the government. Whereas, the idea of them producing medicines for the benefit of man; they have found that they can better serve themselves by abandoning that model and taking a different approach. Produce a vaccine that everyone must take, paid for by the government.

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<sup>39</sup> From <https://thenewinquiry.com/milton-friedmans-pencil/> accessed May 27, 2024.

I use that as an example to indicate how far afield man can go, despite working in full cooperation with others. In any case, God decides, "At this time, it wouldn't be prudent."

Genesis 11:7 "Come, let Us go there and confuse their language, so that they do not understand one another's speech."

God here speaks to the other Members of the Godhead, saying that the key to slowing down man's progress is to confuse their language. To somehow change it so, specific groups all have a specific language. They can understand one another, but they are unable to communicate with the members of a different family line.

How many languages were created? If we look at the number of groups of people who went off on their own, as we reading in Genesis 10, that would have been the number of languages necessary to divide up mankind.

If you look at any of the many maps which follow the distribution of the people of Genesis 10, count up the groups of people and that likely approximates the number of languages which God fabricated.

Genesis 11:8 And הוּי scattered them from there, over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city.

By changing the language or so many groups of men, they find out that, if they do not understand one another, they cannot work together. In fact, it is useless to try. So remaining near one another in close proximity was not going to work out. Therefore, men spread out, going to other lands.

The ones in their specific family had a common culture. God had given that family a common language. Then they set out to find and inhabit a land, and to set appropriate borders to defend. Therefore, they divided themselves up naturally by language, culture and borders.

You will recall that *scatter* is in the Hiphil form, which is the causative stem. So God causes the people to gather in groups and then to go off this way or that. After changing the languages, God does not have to directly do anything else. God sets things in motion, and then allows mankind to make all of the millions of free will decisions which takes this group here, and that group there (as we studied back in Genesis 10).

Genesis 11:9 That is why its name was called Babel,<sup>o</sup> because there הוּי confused the language of all the earth, and from there הוּי scattered them over the face of all the earth.

<sup>o</sup>Babel is derived from a verb which means "to confuse."

Shinar was the previous name. Now this region is being called *Babel*, because the fundamental meaning of that word is *to confuse*. The people were confused when suddenly, each family group spoke a different language.

### The Genealogy of Shem

Genesis 11:10 This is the genealogy of Shēm: Shēm was a hundred years old and brought forth Arpākshad, two years after the flood.

God knows what He wants written in the Scriptures. He needs the line of man from Adam to Abraham to David to Jesus. There was One Entity which made this decision, God the Father, in His plan for mankind. God the Holy Spirit, as the Divine Author of Scripture, made certain that every generation between Adam and Abraham; between Abraham and David, and between David and Jesus was known and recorded. The number of human authors necessary to record these genealogies is somewhere between eight and twelve. Whenever a genealogical line was necessary, God saw to it that it was included as a part of Holy Writ. Every generation from Adam to Jesus is recorded in the Old and New Testaments; including the separate legal line to Jesus through Joseph.

To me, this was a fascinating study; and we went into much greater depth in the complete verse-by-verse study of this chapter.

Genesis 11:11 And after he brought forth Arpaḵshad, Shēm lived five hundred years, and brought forth sons and daughters.

Apart from producing a chart, there is not really any additional commentary which helps us to better understand vv. 11–24.

Genesis 11:12 And Arpaḵshad lived thirty-five years, and brought forth Shelaḥ.

Genesis 11:13 And after he brought forth Shelaḥ, Arpaḵshad lived four hundred and three years, and brought forth sons and daughters.

Genesis 11:14 And Shelaḥ lived thirty years, and brought forth Ĕber.

Genesis 11:15 And after he brought forth Ĕber, Shelaḥ lived four hundred and three years, and brought forth sons and daughters.

Genesis 11:16 And Ĕber lived thirty-four years, and brought forth Peleḡ.

Genesis 11:17 And after he brought forth Peleḡ, Ĕber lived four hundred and thirty years, and brought forth sons and daughters.

Genesis 11:18 And Peleḡ lived thirty years, and brought forth Re'u.

Genesis 11:19 And after he brought forth Re'u, Peleḡ lived two hundred and nine years, and brought forth sons and daughters.

Genesis 11:20 And Re'u lived thirty-two years, and brought forth Seruḡ.

Genesis 11:21 And after he brought forth Seruḡ, Re'u lived two hundred and seven years, and brought forth sons and daughters.

Genesis 11:22 And Seruḡ lived thirty years, and brought forth Naḥor.

Genesis 11:23 And after he brought forth Naḥor, Seruḡ lived two hundred years, and brought forth sons and daughters.

Genesis 11:24 And Naḥor lived twenty-nine years, and brought forth Teraḥ.

Genesis 11:25 And after he brought forth Teraḥ, Naḥor lived one hundred and nineteen years, and brought forth sons and daughters.

The genealogy presented in vv. 10–25 begins with Shem and follows out seven generations starting with his son Arpaḥshad, grandson Shelaḥ, great grandson Eber, great great grandson Peleg (at which time, the languages were confused); great-great-great grandson Rue, great-great-great-great grandson Serug, and then Nahor. After the seventh generation, comes Terah, Abram's father.

### Terah's Descendants

Genesis 11:26 And Teraḥ lived seventy years, and brought forth Abram, Naḥor, and Haran.

Terah fathered three sons that we are aware of.

Genesis 11:27 And this is the genealogy of Teraḥ: Teraḥ brought forth Abram, Naḥor, and Haran. And Haran brought forth Lot.

Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. Abram received the call from God. Nahor, which means sleepy, missed it. Haran died early. Haran left behind a son, Lot, whom Abram took responsibility for.

Genesis 11:28 [And Haran died before his father Terah in the land of his birth, in Ur-kasdim.](#)

Haran, one of Terah's sons, fathered Lot; but he died early in life (apparently).

Genesis 11:29 [And Abram and Nahor took wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai, and the name of Nahor's wife, Milkah, the daughter of Haran the father of Milkah and the father of Yiskah.](#)

Although God will tell Abram to split off from his family completely, he apparently does not follow God's directives completely. Therefore, we will get to know some of the people that Abram was related to.

Genesis 11:30 [And Sarai was barren, she had no child.](#)

Sarai, Abram's wife, was barren. This will change for her at age 90.

Genesis 11:31 [And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from Ur-kasdim to go to the land of Kena'an. And they came to Haran and dwelt there.](#)

Although we do not know it here, Abram received the call from God to go to Canaan. However, it is Terah here who is said to take his son Abram and grandson Lot, along with the others, halfway to Canaan. They will stop in Haran (which is likely named after Abram's deceased brother).

Genesis 11:32 [And the days of Terah came to be two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.](#)

God needed Abram to be in Canaan. As long as Terah, his father, was alive, he would be subject to Terah's choices. The current choice was to stay in Haran and not to go another further. God wants Abram to go all the way to Canaan.

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## Addendum

This is the generational approach.

### The Generation Approach for the End of Genesis (from Gary Everett)

1. The Generations of Terah (& Abraham) — Genesis 11:27 to Genesis 25:11
2. The Generations Ishmael — Genesis 25:12–18
3. The Generations of Isaac — Genesis 25:19 to Genesis 35:29
4. The Generations of Esau — Genesis 36:1–43
5. The Generations of Jacob — Genesis 37:1 to Genesis 50:26

Gary H. Everett *Gary Everett's Bible Commentary*; ©1981-2013; from e-sword, Genesis Genesis 2:4-50:26.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

The ancient historian Josephus seems to take the Old Testament texts at face value and uses them to record the history of this era.

### Josephus' History of this Time Period

## CHAPTER 5. AFTER WHAT MANNER THE POSTERITY OF NOAH SENT OUT COLONIES, AND INHABITED THE WHOLE EARTH.

1. AFTER this they were dispersed abroad, on account of their languages, and went out by colonies every where; and each colony took possession of that land which they light upon, and unto which God led them; so that the whole continent was filled with them, both the inland and the maritime countries. There were some also who passed over the sea in ships, and inhabited the islands: and some of those nations do still retain the denominations which were given them by their first founders; but some have lost them also, and some have only admitted certain changes in them, that they might be the more intelligible to the inhabitants. And they were the Greeks who became the authors of such mutations. For when in after-ages they grew potent, they claimed to themselves the glory of antiquity; giving names to the nations that sounded well (in Greek) that they might be better understood among themselves; and setting agreeable forms of government over them, as if they were a people derived from themselves.

## CHAPTER 6. HOW EVERY NATION WAS DENOMINATED FROM THEIR FIRST INHABITANTS.

5. I will now treat of the Hebrews. The son of Phaleg, whose father Was Heber, was Ragau; whose son was Serug, to whom was born Nahor; his son was Terah, who was the father of Abraham, who accordingly was the tenth from Noah, and was born in the two hundred and ninety-second year after the deluge; for Terah begat Abram in his seventieth year. Nahor begat Haran when he was one hundred and twenty years old; Nahor was born to Serug in his hundred and thirty-second year; Ragau had Serug at one hundred and thirty; at the same age also Phaleg had Ragau; Heber begat Phaleg in his hundred and thirty-fourth year; he himself being begotten by Sala when he was a hundred and thirty years old, whom Arphaxad had for his son at the hundred and thirty-fifth year of his age. Arphaxad was the son of Shem, and born twelve years after the deluge. Now Abram had two brethren, Nahor and Haran: of these Haran left a son, Lot; as also Sarai and Milcha his daughters; and died among the Chaldeans, in a city of the Chaldeans, called Ur; and his monument is shown to this day. These married their nieces. Nabor married Milcha, and Abram married Sarai. Now Terah hating Chaldea, on account of his mourning for Ilaran, they all removed to Haran of Mesopotamia, where Terah died, and was buried, when he had lived to be two hundred and five years old; for the life of man was already, by degrees, diminished, and became shorter than before, till the birth of Moses; after whom the term of human life was one hundred and twenty years, God determining it to the length that Moses happened to live. Now Nahor had eight sons by Milcha; Uz and Buz, Kemuel, Chesed, Azau, Pheldas, Jadelph, and Bethuel. These were all the genuine sons of Nahor; for Teba, and Gaam, and Tachas, and Maaca, were born of Reuma his concubine: but Bethuel had a daughter, Rebecca, and a son, Laban.

Because of the organization of Josephus here, there is some overlap with Genesis 10.

From: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/josephus/ant-1.htm> accessed April 13, 2012. Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews*; Book 1, Chapter 1.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines](#)

Alfred Edersheim wrote a book called *The Bible History, Old Testament*, which is very similar to Josephus, where he simply rewrites much of what is in the Bible, and adds in notes and comments as he deems to be relevant.

This comes from Chapter 8, entitled *Genealogy of Nations - Babel - Confusion of Tongues*.

### Edersheim Summarizes Genesis 11

CHAPTER 8  
Genealogy of Nations - Babel - Confusion of Tongues  
(GENESIS 10-11:10)

IT was the Divine will, that after the flood the whole earth should be repeopled by the descendants of Noah. For this purpose they must, of course, have separated and spread, so as to form the different nations and

## Edersheim Summarizes Genesis 11

tribes among whom the world should be apportioned. Any attempted unity on their part would not only be contrary to the Divine purpose, but also, considering the universal sinfulness of man, prove dangerous to themselves, and even be untrue, since their inward separation had already appeared in the different characters and tendencies of Ham and his brothers. But before recording the judgment by which the Divine purpose was enforced, Scripture gives us the genealogy of the different nations, and this with a threefold object - to show how the earth was all peopled from the descendants of Noah; to define the relation of Israel towards each nationality; and, best of all, to register, as it were, their birth in the book of God, thereby indicating, that, however "in time past He suffered all nations to walk in their own ways," (Acts 14:6) they also were included in the purposes of mercy, and intended finally to "dwell in the tents of Shem."

Of the tower of Babel no certainly ascertained remains have as yet been discovered. It has commonly been identified with the ruins called Birs Nimrud, about six miles to the south-west of the site of ancient Babylon. Birs Nimrud is "a pyramidal mound, crowned apparently by the ruins of a tower, rising to the height of one hundred and fifty-five and a half feet above the level of the plain, and in circumference somewhat more than two thousand feet." 27

Its distance from Babylon, however, seems opposed to the idea that these are the ruins of the tower spoken of in Scripture. But even so, Birs Nimrud can only be a few centuries younger than the tower of Babel; and its construction enables us to judge what the appearance of the original tower must have been. Birs Nimrud faced north-east, and formed a sort of "oblique pyramid, built in seven receding stages. The platform on which these stages rested was of crude brick; the stages themselves of burnt brick, painted in different colors in honor of gods or planets - each stage as it was placed on the other receding, so as to be considerably nearer the back of the building, or the south-west." The first stage, painted black in honor of Saturn, was a square of two hundred and seventy-two feet, and twenty-six feet high; the second stage, orange colored, in honor of Jupiter, was a square of two hundred and thirty feet, and twenty-six high; the third stage, bright red, in honor of Mars, was a square of one hundred and eighty-eight feet, and also twenty-six high; the fourth stage, golden, for the Sun, was one hundred and forty-six feet square, and fifteen high; the fifth stage, pale yellow, for Venus, was one hundred and four feet square, and fifteen high; the sixth stage, dark blue, for Mercury, was sixty-two feet square, and fifteen high; and the seventh stage, silver, for the Moon, was twenty feet square, and fifteen high. The whole was surmounted by a chapel, which must have nearly covered the whole top. The whole height, as already stated, was one hundred and fifty-three feet; or about one-third that of the great pyramid of Egypt, which measures four hundred and eighty feet. It is also interesting to notice, how exactly what we know of early Babylonian architecture tallies with what we read in Scripture: "Let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime (or rather, bitumen) had they for mortar." The small burnt bricks, laid in bitumen, are still there; not only in the tower, but in the still existing ruins of the ancient palace of Babel, which was coeval with the building of the city itself.

Holy Scripture does not inform us whether "the tower" was allowed to stand after the dispersion of its builders; nor yet does it furnish any details as to the manner in which "Jehovah did there confound the language of all the earth." All this would have been beyond its purpose. But there, at the very outset, when the first attempt was made to found, in man's strength, a vast kingdom of this world, which God brought to naught by confounding the language of its builders, and by scattering them over the face of the earth, we see a typical judgment, of which the counterpart in blessing was granted on the day of Pentecost; when, by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, another universal kingdom was to be founded, the first token of which was that gift of tongues, which pointed forward to a reunion of the nations, when the promise would be fulfilled that they should all be gathered into the tents of Shem

Because of the organization of Edersheim here, there is some overlap with Genesis 10.

From <http://www.lewendwater.org/books/v1bhot.pdf> accessed .

It may be helpful to see this chapter as a contiguous whole:

<b>A Complete Translation of Genesis 11</b>	
<b>A Reasonably Literal Translation</b>	<b>A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase</b>
<b>Part I: The Tower of Babel/The Confusion of the Languages</b>	
All the earth is one language and the same words [or, <i>vocabulary</i> ]. Then it was when they journeyed from the east that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and, therefore, they stayed there.	At one time the whole earth spoke the same language and used the same vocabulary. As people moved out of the east, they found a plain in the country of Shinar where they settled.
Therefore, one man said to another [lit., <i>each man said to his neighbor</i> ], “Come, let us make bricks and bake them with fire.” So they had bricks for stone and asphalt for mortar [lit., <i>And to them brick was for stone and asphalt was to them for mortar</i> ].	The men decided to make bricks and to cure them with fire. They therefore were able to use bricks and asphalt for building. They said, “Let us join together and build a city for ourselves as well as a tower with its head in the heavens.
They also said, “Come, we will build a city for ourselves and a tower with its head in the heavens. And we will establish [lit., <i>make, construct</i> ] for ourselves a reputation [or, <i>a monument</i> ] so that we are not scattered over the face of the whole earth.”	Furthermore, we will establish ourselves here as a focal point so that no one scatters us over the face of the earth.”
Then Y <sup>e</sup> howah came down to see the city and the tower that the sons of man had built. Y <sup>e</sup> howah also said, “Observe, the people [are] one with one language—all of them. And [all] this [that] they are beginning to do so that [or, <i>therefore</i> ] nothing is restrained from them [in] all that they imagine to do.	Then Jehovah came down to see both the city and the tower that the men had built. Jehovah also said, “Further observe that these people are one with one language. Whatever they want to do, they can do; there is nothing that is restrained from them in their imagination.
Come, let us go down and confuse their languages there so that one man may not understand the language of his neighbor.”	Come and let us go down there and confuse their languages so that no man can understand what his neighbor is saying.”
So, Y <sup>e</sup> howah caused them to be scattered over the face of all the earth. As a result [lit., <i>and so</i> ], they ceased building the city.	So, Jehovah caused them to be scattered over the face of the entire earth. As a result, they stopped building this city.
Therefore its name is called Babel, for there, Y <sup>e</sup> howah confounded the languages of the entire earth. Then, Y <sup>e</sup> howah caused them to be scattered throughout [lit., <i>upon the face of</i> ] the entire earth.	Therefore, the name of this city was called Babel, because it was here that Jehovah confounded the languages of all mankind. By this, Jehovah caused them to be scattered throughout all the earth.
<b>Part II: The Genealogies: The Line of Shem</b>	
These [are] the generations [genealogies, families, history] of Shem:	What follows is the genealogical line of Shem.
Shem [was] 100 years old when he fathered Arphaxad two years after the flood. After fathering Arphaxad, Shem lives [another] 500 years. He also fathered [other] sons and daughters.	Shem was 100 years old when he fathered Arphaxas two years after the flood. After fathering Arphaxad, Shem lived another 500 years. He also fathered other sons and daughters.
Arphaxad lived 35 years and fathered Cainan. Arphaxad lived 400 years after he fathered Cainan and fathered other sons and daughters [as well].	After living 35 years, Arphaxad fathered Cainan. Arphaxad fathered other sons and daughters, living another 400 years after he fathered Cainan.

<b>A Complete Translation of Genesis 11</b>	
<b>A Reasonably Literal Translation</b>	<b>A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase</b>
When Cainan was 130 years old, he became the father of Shelah. After the birth of Shelah, Cainan lived another 330 years and had other sons and daughters.	Cainan lived for 130 years before fathering Shelah, and then he lived 330 years after fathering Shelah; fathering other sons and daughters as well.
Shelah lived 30 years and fathered Eber. Shelah lived 403 years after siring Eber and he [also] had [more] sons and daughters.	Shelah fathered Eber when he was 30. He lived an additional 403 years after fathering Eber and had more sons and daughters besides.
Eber lived to be 34 years old when he fathered Peleg. After Eber fathered Peleg, he lived [another] 430 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.	Eber was 34 years old when he fathered Peleg. After fathering Peleg, Eber lived an additional 430 years. He fathered other sons and daughters besides.
Peleg lived to be 30 years old when he fathered Reu. After Peleg fathered Reu, he lived [another] 209 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.	Peleg was 30 years old when he fathered Reu. After fathering Reu, Peleg lived an additional 209 years. He fathered other sons and daughters besides.
Rue lived to be 32 years old when he fathered Serug. After Rue fathered Serug, he lived [another] 207 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.	Rue was 32 years old when he fathered Serug. After fathering Serug, Rue lived an additional 207 years. He fathered other sons and daughters besides.
Serug lived to be 30 years old when he fathered Nahor. After Serug fathered Nahor, he lived [another] 200 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.	Serug was 30 years old when he fathered Nahor. After fathering Nahor, Serug lived an additional 200 years. He fathered other sons and daughters besides.
Nahor lived to be 29 years old when he fathered Terah. After Nahor fathered Terah, he lived [another] 119 years, [during which time] he fathered [more] sons and daughters.	Nahor was 29 years old when he fathered Terah. After fathering Terah, Nahor lived an additional 119 years. He fathered other sons and daughters besides.
Terah had lived to be 70 years old and he fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran.	By age 70, Terah had fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran.
<b>Part II: The Genealogies: Terah, His Family, and the Call of Y<sup>e</sup>howah</b>	
These [are] the generations [genealogies, families, history] of Terah:	What follows is the genealogy of Terah:
Terah fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot. Haran died before Terah, his father, in the land of his birth, in Ur of the Chaldees.	Terah fathered Abram, Nahor and Haran; and Haran fathered Lot. Haran died before his father Terah in the place where he was born, Ur of the Chaldees.
Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram's wife [is] Sarai and the name of Nahor's wife is Milcah, [who is] the daughter of Haran, [who was] the father of Milcah and Iscah. Sarai continued to be barren; she did not have a child [lit., (there was) not to her a child].	Abram and Nahor took wives for themselves. The name of Abram's wife is Sarai and the name of Nahor's wife is Milcah, who is the daughter of Haran, who was the father of Milcah and Iscah. Sarai continued to be barren; she had no children.

A Complete Translation of Genesis 11	
A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
Terah then took Abram, his son, and Lot, Haran's son ([Lot was also Terah's] grandson), and Sarai, his daughter-in-law, the wife of Abram, his son, and they go out together [lit., <i>with them</i> ] from Ur of the Chaldees toward the land of Canaan. However [lit., <i>and so</i> ], they went as far as Charan and remained there.	Terah then took Abram, his son, and Lot, his grandson (by Haran), and Sarai, his daughter-in-law, and they all went out together from Ur of the Chaldees going toward the land of Canaan. However, they only went as far as Charan and stopped there to live.
Terah's days were 205 years. He [lit., <i>Terah</i> ] died in Charan.	Terah lived for 205 years and died in Charan.
<a href="#">Chapter Outline</a>	<a href="#">Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines</a>

Doctrinal Teachers* Who Have Taught Genesis 11			
	Series	Lesson (s)	Passage
R. B. Thieme, Jr.	1976 Abraham (Genesis 11:26–22:24) (#600)	#1–6	Genesis 11:26–32
	1963 Dispensations (#201)	#21	Genesis 11:26–32
	1992 Spiritual Dynamics (#376)	#186	Genesis 11:6–8
Ken Reed	<a href="https://www.lakeeriebiblechurch.org/exegesis/">https://www.lakeeriebiblechurch.org/exegesis/</a>		Genesis 38–50
Dr. Robert Dean	<a href="https://deanbible.org/old-testament-menuitem/genesis-menuitem">https://deanbible.org/old-testament-menuitem/genesis-menuitem</a>		Genesis 1–50
Bill Wenstrom	<a href="https://www.wenstrom.org/index.php?option=com_libwritten&amp;view=libwritten&amp;selCat=2&amp;Itemid=124">https://www.wenstrom.org/index.php?option=com_libwritten&amp;view=libwritten&amp;selCat=2&amp;Itemid=124</a>		Genesis 1–50
Jack M. Ballinger	<a href="http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/genesisindex.html">http://www.versebyverse.org/classnotes/Genesis/genesisindex.html</a>		Genesis 1–49
Ron Snider	<a href="http://www.makarios-bible-church.org/oldtest.html">http://www.makarios-bible-church.org/oldtest.html</a>		Genesis 1–50

\* By doctrinal teacher, I mean a man whose primary focus is the teaching of the Word of God, verse-by-verse and book by book. A believer under the teaching of such a man should fully understand the gospel and rebound after less than a month in attendance.

When it comes to teaching, I should think that a 45 minute teaching session would be the bare minimum; and that, at least 3x a week (with provisions for getting teaching in some way on the other days of the week). Although this man may interact or even learn from other teachers, he should clearly be the authority over his church; and the authority over him is the Word of God and God the Holy Spirit (Who guides the pastor in his study).

ICE teaching would also be a part of the package, ICE being an acronym standing for Isagogics (a teaching of the history of that time in order to understand the context of a passage), Categories (a study of categories of Bible doctrine), and Exegesis (a close study of each passage, word-by-word whenever necessary).

Despite Genesis 10–11 being great chapters in the Word of God, they are rarely taught by any pastor-teacher, as their value is often underestimated.



These two sections of chapter 11 are so different as to require two Word Clouds to represent each section. Do these two sections have any words in common at all?

<b>Chapter Outline</b>		<b>Charts, Graphics and Short Doctrines</b>
<b>Beginning of Document</b>	<b>Definition of Terms</b>	<b>Introduction and Text</b>
<b>Chapter Summary</b>	<b>Addendum</b>	<b>A Complete Translation</b>
<b><a href="http://www.kukis.org">www.kukis.org</a></b>		<b>Exegetical Studies in Genesis</b>