Romans 1:21-32 summarizes the type of behavior we find in Genesis 11— the progression, the posture, and the plight of sin:

- They did not worship God.
- They were unthankful.
- They professed to be wise (scholarship, humanism, credit given to Science based on man's assumptions).
- They changed the glory of the incorruptible God.
- They changed the truth of God into a lie.
- They worshiped the creature instead of the Creator.

The harvest of this Godless mentality is found in verses 26-32.

IV. The **PROVIDENCE** of God

Divine Providence is God's **EXTRAORDINARY INTERVENTION** in the lives of people. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit saw what man was about to do, so they came down, way down to where man was in order to get involved. Here, we find mankind, on the road of no return, poised to plunge off the high cliff of humanism and self-serving pursuits, when just in time, God intervenes by confounding the languages. When God confounded the languages, it was not a reaction of sabotage, but rather a **RESPONSE OF MERCY**. God's intervention took place because man's imagination was ready to take him beyond the point of reconciliation. They would have soon become a civilization with an unrestrained imagination, but, praise the LORD, *"where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."*

Today, we are no less removed from the wretched condition of the human race. Although we should have the grave historical account of a people under judgment to guide us into better reasoning, we are still, nevertheless, bound to our depraved origins. We should also be reminded that the book of Genesis, and specifically the account of Nimrod in this lesson are stark reflections of our true humanity.

Without the Word of God to guide us into Truth, all our attempts are but frail and futile efforts. The neglect of God's Word leads to a destructive end.

The hope of all nations lies in what those who have the Truth choose to do with it. We must ask ourselves, **"If we, God's people, knowingly possess the Truth of God's Word, then what are we actively pursuing in order for each nation to have that same Truth in their heart language?"**

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NATIONAL BIBLE PUBLISHING MONTH

ADULT TEACHER GUIDE | **LESSON 2**

THE SIN OF THE NATIONS

THE SIN OF THE NATIONS

LESSON TWO DEFINITIONS

Babel – confusion; to make sounds with your mouth that have no meaning
Confound – to confuse or mix up
Curse – to announce misfortune or doom on someone
Intervention – to become involved in something (such as a conflict) in order to have an influence on what happens
Neglect – to fail to take care of or to give attention to (someone or something); to fail to do
Nimrod – Ham's grandson who tried to build a big city that would reach up to God
Scatter – to cause to be spread out

REVIEW

In the first lesson, we learned that creation worshipping the Creator is God's ultimate right and His greatest desire. We saw that God's delight in our worship is seen in Revelation 5:9 providing us with a glimpse of the rather colorful variety of redeemed gathered around the throne. We observed that in the selection of Abraham, God chose a people for His name through which all nations of the world would be blessed. The lesson explained the use of the word "nations" as it is used in the Bible as people groups rather than geographical boundaries as depicted on a map. Finally, we were challenged, yet encouraged by the enormity of the task in the hands of a very capable God.

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this lesson is on sin and its cure. We will observe the path of a son who had equal opportunity to obey God's command, yet chose to withdraw himself from the protection of God-given limitations. In this lesson, we will follow the awful progression of a people who chose to defy God and thus build a city based on pride and wicked imaginations. Ultimately, we will discover the selection of God's chosen people, Israel, in establishing a People for His Name.

Lesson Two – The Sin of the Nations (Genesis 11)

I. The **PROGRESSION** of Sin (Sin of Ham, Genesis 9:22)
A. Ham's **NEGLECT** of God's Commands
1. Ham did not take God's commands seriously. There was evidence that Noah taught his children what the commands of God said. Not only do we read that Noah was a preacher of righteousness, but we also read that two of his sons knew to do right in the same situation. Though Ham may not have been rebellious, his neglect of God's commands caused him to take a playful approach toward sin.
2. His neglect affected himself. When Ham paid little attention to God's Word, he fell out of the protection of God's Word and into the judgment of God.
3. Ham's neglect affected others. God chose not to go into detail on this matter of Ham's violation. What we do know is that Ham's sin not only affected him but others as well. Our sin rarely affects us alone. The old saying, "No man is an island unto himself" is especially true when man sins. Family members, friends, our peers, and often future generations are greatly affected by sinful choices and an on-going lifestyle of reckless living, carnal appetites and assuming a nonchalant and a resulting perilous posture toward sin.
a. Exodus 34:6-7
b. Uzziah, Jotham, and Ahaz. Another applicable demonstration of generational sins is found in II Chronicles 26 in the account of the successful King Uzziah of the Southern Kingdom. His own name meant "Jehovah is Strength." His royal resume was replete with a ruling tenure of 52 years; he was a military victor and tactician; and he improved the state of his kingdom during his monarchy. II Chronicles 26:5 tells us that, *"as long as he sought the LORD, God made him to prosper."* Sadly, King Uzziah was overcome with his own success and sinned against God by offering incense in the temple when he clearly knew it went against the Laws of God. Uzziah's pride and ultimate neglect of the Word of God resulted in leprosy; however, more enduring was the effect on his future generations. For it says of his son Jotham that though he did right in the sight of the LORD, *"…he entered not into the house of the LORD. And the people did yet corruptly"* (II Chronicles 27:2). Furthermore, as the sad genealogy continues, Ahaz, the grandson of Uzziah was so far from truth and neglecting the Laws of God that II Chronicles 28:2-3 tells us, *"He made also molten images for Baalim. Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnon and burnt his children in the fire, after his abominations of the heathen…"*

B. The **REJECTION** of God's Commands
When Ham neglected God's Law, it passed on to his offspring and progressed to a new level of disobedience. We can clearly see the progression of what happened and the problems it caused.
1. Nimrod, descendant of Ham defied the Lord. His name literally meant, "we will revolt." The Bible says that Nimrod was a *"mighty hunter before the Lord."* Being a hunter in that primitive age was important, as the earth was replenishing itself in wild animals as well as humans. The years following the flood would have been times of particular fear and concern, so it is easy to see why one such as Nimrod became a rising star and hero. It is important to understand that the word for "before" in the original language was also translated as "against," meaning that Nimrod's hunting was even an affront to God.
2. The single thread of a darkened land began with self-reliance. Recall that God instructed Noah's family to scatter and multiply the earth. There would be given extra longevity for Noah's family to accomplish that command on the earth. However, when God said, "Spread out!" Man said, "Build up!" So, in addition to a neglect of God's Word/Law, we now see a rejection of God's Word. Throughout the ages, we have observed how God gives commands and man has a better plan. Nimrod not only defiantly chose to stay in one place and grow a big city, he also placed himself at the helm and thus his city is declared a "kingdom." The first mention of a kingdom in the Bible is in connection with Nimrod's defiance and assumption of leadership in Genesis 10:10. The neglect of God's Word became a rejection of God's Word and commands. The digression is sure and can be seen in our society today.

C. The **ABSENCE** of God's Word
Because Ham neglected God's commands, it lead to Nimrod's rejection of God's Word, which resulted in his descendants being void of God's Word. At this point in time, there was no written copy of Scripture; everything had to be passed down orally by the preceding generation.

II. The **POSTURE** of Sin (Genesis 11:1-4)
In Genesis 11, we see a great city; however, this "greatness" is not to be confused with the greatness of Jerusalem (God's city), but with the aptitude of the people in their defiance toward God. Babel was man's city. It was built by man and for his glory. The posture of sin can assume many forms. Following are the origins of what we could call sins of the primitive leader Nimrod and sins of our modern society.
A. A Proud Look
1. Pride distorts our **WORSHIP**.
2. Pride distorts our **VIEW OF LIFE**.
3. Pride distorts our **FEAR OF JUDGMENT**.

B. A Wicked Imagination
We find the word "imagination" fourteen times in Scripture and only one use is in a positive light. The other uses are negative and refer to idolatry, pride, and wickedness. The root of the word "imagination" is the word "image." The Law given to Moses was explicit in its command to abstain from images.

Nimrod and his followers imagined a place where there was no god and all worship was directed toward them. They chose not to place their faith in "thus saith the Lord" and fully have confidence in their thoughts. The rejection of God's Word resulted in the reliance on man's imagination. Every false religion known to man finds its origins in a Godless imagination.

The plight of mankind can be summed up into one of two choices – to worship God, the Creator, by faith, or to worship man, the creation, by imagination. Nimrod's rebellion was based on pride, idolatry, and a wicked imagination.

III. The **PLIGHT** of Sin (Romans 1:21-32)
Babel means "confusion," and the final result of the language being confused was that people were scattered over all the earth. These people forfeited the blessing of God, because they decided they could make a better future for themselves than God could make for them. Lest we think these sins have become extinct, they still exist today in various forms. What we do today is no less foolish than what these nameless rebels did. Somehow we have forgotten that every time we attempt to defy God, we not only see His judgment as a result, but we also rob ourselves of God's blessing.