

Babel and a New Kind of Sin

Genesis 11:1-9

There's crime, and then there's organized crime. Likewise, there's sin, and then there's *organized* sin. Welcome to Babel in Genesis 11, a different kind of evil from what we have seen so far. As the Apostle Paul said in the first century, "They invent new forms of evil." (Romans 1:30) Sin finds a way.

The Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9)

(1) The Particular Sin

- They reject God's command to fill the earth. (Gen 11:4 vs. Gen 1:28, 9:1)

(2) The Sin Under the Sin

- Pride: "Let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves." (Gen 11:4)

(3) The Godlike Power of Sinners

- "Nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them." (Gen 11:6)
 - *Really?* The Lord is using some hyperbole here to be sure, but wow, what a statement about humanity... and how dangerous we are.

(4) How God Has Dealt with Sin

- In various ways in Genesis 1-11, sometimes appearing more merciful, sometimes stricter... but sin finds a way.

Thus ends the beginning of the Bible.

- The problem of sin is clear, but what is the solution? Chapter 12 begins with the calling of Abram...

Pentecost: The reversal of Babel!

Questions for Further Reflection and Application

1. "Sin finds a way."
 - a. Review the very different sins that occurred in Genesis 1-11 (and through the rest of Genesis if you wish). Review also God's response to the sin, if any.
 - b. Have you found yourself giving in to very different sins during different stages of your life? Why does our life context sometimes 'change' the types and patterns of our sins?
 - c. Pride was the "sin under the sin" in the Tower of Babel episode. Think of your typical sins. Have you identified a sin under the sin? And if so, how does the gospel of Christ address it?
2. Even though Genesis 11 ends the beginning of the Bible on a downer note, showing that sin continues to be a very real problem, what were some of the glimmers of hope found in Genesis 1-11? (e.g. Genesis 3:15)