

Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

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The Image of the Invisible God

The first kingdom recorded in the Bible was that of Babel, which was created by the mighty hunter, or warrior, Nimrod. (He was the son of Cush, who was the son of Ham, who was the son of Noah.):

- 8 And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth.
- 9 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD.
- 10 And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. -Genesis 10

The English word, Babel, is written in Hebrew as בבל (bbl). It is also translated through the Greek language into English as “Babylon.” The kingdom of Babel was located on the Euphrates River in the “land of Shinar.” It was located in the land of modern Iraq, some fifty miles south of Baghdad.

It was here that man created his own religion. The people were determined to build a city, or government. They also set out to build a tower by which they might reach heaven through the work of their own hands:

- 4 And they said, Go to, let us build 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. -Genesis 11

They wanted to make a “name” for themselves. They sought to glorify themselves, rather than God.

Seeing that there was nothing that the unified people of Babel could not accomplish, Yahweh (the LORD) intervened. He confused their language and scattered them throughout the earth:

- 7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech.
- 8 So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. -Genesis 11

Yahweh named the place Babel, which means “confusion,” and scattered them throughout the earth:

- 9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth. -Genesis 11

These people of “confusion,” even though they were scattered all over the world, still believed that they had the ability to reach heaven through the work of their own hands. They continued to build towers and images, by which they believed they could create gods on their own terms. As the people of Babel (Babylon) spread throughout the world, they brought their desire to build towers and images with them.

Yahweh took Abram (whom He later renamed Abraham) and removed him from the land of Babel. He promised Abram that all the families of the earth would be blessed through him:

- 1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee:
- 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:
- 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. -Genesis 12

Why did Yahweh remove Abraham from the land of Babel (which was also called Ur of the Chaldees)? Yahweh explained through Joshua that He separated Abraham from a land where the people “served other gods” and led him to the land of Canaan:

- 2 And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, *even* Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods.
- 3 And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed, and gave him Isaac. -Joshua 24

The people who “served other gods” lived on the “other side of the flood,” meaning on the other side of the Euphrates River (The Hebrew word נהר (nahar), means “river” and was sometimes translated as “flood”). He

**So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8**

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removed Abraham from Babel, where the people worshipped “other gods” in the form of images created with their own hands and out of their own imagination.

As He removed Abraham from Babel, many years later Yahweh removed Abraham’s descendents from Egypt. As descendents of Abraham through his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob, the people were called “Israel.” He used Moses, Aaron, and then Joshua to bring Israel back to the land that He had promised Abraham. The land, however, was occupied by image worshippers who had settled there after their dispersion from Babel.

Therefore, Yahweh gave His people strict commandments concerning images and their worship or veneration:

- 3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
- 4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:
- 5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me;
- 6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. -Exodus 20

It is the nature of people to want to “bend the rules” to suit their own desires. Therefore, Moses warned Israel before they entered the promised land:

- 2 Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish *ought* from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. -Deuteronomy 4

Even though Moses warned the people not to try to change the commandments of Yahweh for their own purposes, he knew that they would eventually forget the clear instructions they had received concerning image worship:

- 23 Take heed unto yourselves, lest ye forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which he made with you, and make you a graven image, or the

likeness of any *thing*, which the LORD thy God hath forbidden thee.

- 24 For the LORD thy God *is* a consuming fire, *even* a jealous God. -Deuteronomy 4

When we create an image for worship or veneration, we create a physical object in a likeness to either represent God or to represent something or someone to compete with Him for our affection. He is jealous.

Yahshua (Jesus) explains that God is spiritual and not physical. Therefore, rather than being worshipped as a physical object, He must be worshipped in spirit and in truth:

- 24 God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth. -John 4

While God created man in His image (see Genesis 1:27), Yahshua was not created. Instead, He is the “only begotten:”

- 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. -John 1

The term “only begotten” is translated from the Greek *μονογενής* (monogenes). “Mono” means “one” or “only.” “Genes” comes from the Greek word *γίνομαι* (ginomai), which means “be.” It means “a state of being” or “to exist.” Therefore, we can understand that the “only begotten” is the only One to be or to exist.

Instead of being *in* the image of God, Yahshua *is* the image of God:

- 15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: -Colossians 1

Before anything was, He already existed and created all things:

- 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:
- 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. -Colossians 1

Yahshua is the express image of the person of God:

- 3 Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; -Hebrews 1

Image worship reflects man’s desire to substitute his own imagination and the work of his hands for the true God, who revealed the express image of Himself in Yahshua (Jesus). It shows man’s attempt to continue the work that was started in Babel, which is to reach heaven by his own power and on his own terms.

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