***God's Promise to Abraham  
RO36-02***

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**Abraham**

We are studying Romans 4:13-15. You have no doubt begun to get the feeling, as we have been studying this fourth chapter of Romans, that Abraham is viewed in Scripture as one of the greatest believers of all time. We must constantly remind ourselves of the background of this man, and what he came out of, in order to have that frame of reference for really appreciating the kind of a man; the kind of a godly person; and, just the fantastic human being that he was.

He was born and raised in Ur in the land of the Chaldees on the Euphrates River. It was right down on the south side of the Euphrates River that he was born; grew up; and, was reared. He was part of a culture which was called the Fertile Crescent Culture, because of the fact that the rivers and the Mediterranean Sea actually formed a fertile valley pathway, and all travel in that day followed these river routes coming across the short span from oasis to oasis, and over to the seacoast, so that there was water available all along the route. They couldn't, of course, go directly across, because that was sheer burning desert.

Abraham was surrounded by a very advanced civilization and a very advanced culture – this culture of the Chaldeans. You must remember that Abraham was indoctrinated in all the pagan Chaldean view of the world (the cosmology) – all the explanations that the Chaldeans had for the world; the universe; the sun; the moon; the stars; all of the growing of things; and, all of the dying of things. All of this was a world view. As a matter of fact, the theology was pure human viewpoint, and completely hostile to God.

This is the sort of thing that Abraham grew up in. For 70 years of his life, this is all he knew. This is all his mind was steeped in, and he was completely absorbed in this culture. You must also remember that he had no written Scripture to guide him to the true God. But God, we're told in the Word of God, in a moment of glory, manifested Himself to Abraham. When Abraham met Him, he believed upon Him.

There is no doubt that, as Abraham looked out upon the world, he took the testimony that we have seen earlier in the book of Romans (the testimony of creation), and he came to God-consciousness. In spite of all the paganism around him, there came into the mentality of Abraham, the understanding that there was someone out there. And he went positive, and he out, in effect, for that knowledge of the person who was out there, and God then made Himself known.

So, Abraham stood as a lone figure in a sea of civilized, spiritual darkness. He believed the incredible. So, he rejected every belief of his childhood; he rejected the belief of his pagan family; and, he rejected the total world view that surrounded him of his day.

Abraham, we have seen (in the verses immediately preceding verse 13) was saved by faith long before he received the religious ritual of circumcision. Thus, salvation in the Old Testament was by trust in God. It was by faith. It was not by human works. Religious rituals, therefore today, by the same token, cannot be a means of salvation. They do portray a spiritual reality already in existence, but they do not produce that spiritual reality. Therefore, no religious rituals, such as water baptism or the Lord's Supper, can contribute in any way to a person's salvation, because unbelievers obviously can and do practice these rituals without changing their destiny from hell to heaven.

Abraham, because he was saved by faith, is the spiritual father, the Bible tells us, of both Jews and gentiles who follow him in that pathway of faith. They follow him in single file. They are walking in his steps. Therefore, Abraham is the spiritual father of gentiles who believe in Jesus Christ. He is the spiritual father of Jews who believe in Jesus Christ.

However, after having said that, I must stress to you that Abraham is also the father physically of all Jews. All those who have the genes within their body of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are physically related to Abraham, and he is their father, whether they are saved Jews or whether they are unsaved Jews.

Only the Jews related to Abraham physically and spiritually can inherit the national promises to Abraham. You and I, while we are Abraham's spiritual seed, do not inherit the promises to Abraham – the national promises to the Jewish people. The only people who can inherit that are saved Jews who are of the line of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Now in this age, even saved Jews who have the genes of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob within their bodies, who believe in Jesus Christ as Savior, do not inherit those Jewish promises. They are part of the church. They have been brought together in one new man. The book of Ephesians tells us that that is the body of Christ.

So, you must make these distinctions when we say that Abraham is the spiritual father of a certain group of gentiles ourselves. He is the spiritual father of a certain group of Jews. This does not mean that he is not the father exclusively of a group of people that we look upon racially and nationally as the Jewish people. That is a whole separate ballgame in itself, and we as gentiles have no part in it.

Paul now, beginning at verse 13, is going to take up another evidence of Abraham's justification by faith apart from works. This time he's going to deal with that actual promise. The thing that God actually did, when he gloriously manifested Himself to Abraham, back there in Ur of the Chaldees, and Abraham believed in God, he believed something that God had told him. He believed what we refer to as promise, because it was God saying, "Abraham, I'm going to promise to do something for you if you will believe Me and receive Me as your Savior. So, this promise also is an evidence that Abraham was saved by faith, apart from works.

Verse 13 begins: "For the promise that he should be heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his see through the Law, but through the righteousness of faith." This word "for" that begins the sentence is the Greek word "gar." This word introduces further proof that Abraham was saved by faith apart from his works or from his rituals. In a sentence, you have a series of words: word number one; word number two; and, word number three. This word "gar" always stands number two in the clause in which it is found. It is never word number one. It has a peculiar effect, however, upon the first word, because it stands second, and it has a natural effect upon the first word of emphasizing the word. The reason it stands second is to sort of point back to the word and say, "Look at that word." That's the important word." This word "gar" is, in effect, a finger pointing back at the word that stands before it.

When you read the Greek language, and you see this word "gar," you just automatically know that. That just automatically comes to your mind. Your mind automatically takes a look at that number one word to see what it is that God the Holy Spirit wants to come down with in an emphatic way, and what He wants to stress in some very special way.

You don't see this in your English Bible. The first word in the Greek is the word "not." In Greek, it is this word "ou" that you are acquainted with, which is the strongest negative in the Greek language. So, first of all, the thing that Paul (under the guidance of the Holy Spirit) wants to say to us is something negative. He wants to say very emphatically that something is not so. He does it, first of all, by using the strongest negative that there is in the Greek language. He does it secondly by this little device of using the word "gar" ("for"), thus pointing back to call our attention to, and to zero in emphatically upon the word that stands before it. Furthermore, number three is that in the Greek language, the word that stands first in the sentence is the word that's emphasized. The Greek can put any word first in the sentence, and that's the word that's stressed.

So, on three counts: by the fact that it's a strong negative; by the position relative to "gar;" and, by its position as first in the sentence, this is a very, very strong emphasis upon the negative factor here.

We do this in English (this business of putting the word first in the sentence in order to emphasize it). We might say, "Not that I want you to do this." That's exactly what the Greek is doing. We throw the negative first in the sentence, and we have a reason for doing this. Instead of saying, "I do not want you to do this," we throw it first in order to emphasize it: "Not that I want you to do this." That makes an additional emphasis.

**Promise**

What is it that Paul is really trying to make clear in this triple whammy negative that he has here? Well, what he's trying to make clear is that Abraham was not justified by circumcision or anything else in the form of works. Abraham was not justified by any kind of works. What he is going to stress here is that Abraham was saved (as we have been previously shown) by faith. Now he approaches it from a different direction and says, "Abraham was saved on the basis of promise. Well, what does "promise" mean? Well, promise is something that's going to be done for you. And how do you receive a promise? By faith. That's the only way you can receive a promise.

So, the use of the word "promise" here is equated to the use of the word "faith." Abraham could not have been saved by any kind of works. He could only have been saved by promise. He could only have been saved by faith, because when God gave him the opportunity to be saved, it was a promise that God gave him. It was something that he said, "I'm going to do for you." Then the punchline was, "Do you believe me, Abraham?" Does he believe what? Does he believe God's promise? The only way he could believe it was by an act of faith.

**Blasphemy**

So, this business of getting saved by works, and this business of keeping your salvation by works, is blasphemy against almighty God. Again, I must stress to you that anybody who says, "I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, plus my water baptism" is going to hell. Anybody who says, "I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, plus I take the Lord's Supper for forgiveness of my sins" is going to hell. Anybody who says, "I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, but I can lose my salvation if I sin is going to hell," because the person who says that is not trusting in grace alone, but is trusting partly in what they do in their works to save them and to keep them saved.

We have already gone through this. You can run your own eye over those previous verses to this one where he has come down very, very distinctly in verse 4: "Now to him that works is a reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him, that does not work, but believes on him that justifies the ungodly, h His faith is counted for righteousness." Those verses tell you that it cannot be part works (part what you are, and what you do), and part what God does. It has to be only and entirely what God does.

Now, the verses that follow verse 15 (and we're going to get to this next time) come right back to this. Paul is not satisfied. And you will be amazed on how hard he comes down from verse 16 on again. And what he is saying in those verses is that if you mix it, you're going to hell. And it's coming out clearer and clearer all the time.

So, Paul for good reason makes this strong negative at the beginning of verse 13: "Not (in no way) is the promise that he should be heir of the world, was it given to Abraham and his seed," and so on.

The word promise is the Greek word "epaggelia." "Epaggelia" means "an undertaking to do" or "to give something." Thus, we get the idea of promise. It's an undertaking to do or to give something. The world is very suited to describe something that is given as a gift. This is precisely the word to describe something that a person gets without working for it. This word in the New Testament is always used, interestingly enough, of a promise from God, except on one occasion in Acts 23:21. But in every other place, this word is almost exclusively used by the Holy Spirit to describe something that God does. It is a word of promise, and it is a word of grace. It is a promise (a gift) – something you receive by believing the one who has promised.

**The Abrahamic Covenant**

Paul uses this word to refer to what we call the Abrahamic Covenant. We're going to look in some detail at that. The Abrahamic Covenant is what he means by "the promise." The Abrahamic Covenant was, in effect, God making a deal with Abraham. God made a deal with Abraham for a very specific purpose, because God needed to do something to this planet on which we live. I'm going to show you what that was. He selected Abraham and his spiritual seed descendants to perform that thing that needed to be done here upon the earth.

**The Heir of the World**

"For the promise that he would be." This is a clause now that gives the content of the promise which is given to Abraham. It explains what was in the promise: "That he should be the heir of the world." And the word "heir" looks like this in Greek: "kleronomos." This word literally means "one who obtains a lot or a portion." Here it refers to a possession which is assigned by God to Abraham, which Abraham has not yet received. "Kleronomos" refers to something that he is going to be given. This promise represents the Abrahamic Covenant. The content of that covenant was that he was to be the heir of something. And the thing that he was to be the heir of is called "the world."

**The Kingdom of God on Earth**

This is the Greek word "kosmos." This word means different things in the New Testament, and we'll not go into that in detail. But the word "kosmos" here refers to the dominion over the earth which has been delegated to mankind. Again, I must take you back in your mind to the very beginning. When God created Adam and Eve, having set them up in that perfect environment of the garden, He then told them to subdue the earth – to take charge, and to proceed to establish a culture on this earth which represented the thinking of God, and was thus, in effect, the kingdom of God. What Adam and Eve were told to do was to set up the kingdom of God upon this earth. And that's exactly what they proceeded to do, and, for a while, they were doing that. This kingdom of God upon the earth, of course, came to a dead-end when Adam and Eve sinned. The whole plan of God relative to them in establishing His kingdom rule upon this earth was then brought to a halt.

Now, the kingdom of God on earth is going to be achieved (Paul is telling us here, in effect, in verse 13) by Abraham and his spiritual seed. All human viewpoint attempts to establish God's righteousness upon this earth, and all human attempts to provide a world situation that is a blessing to man is doomed to failure. That's what the Kingdom of God was supposed to do. It was to create a situation on the earth that was a blessing to mankind: where man would be prospered; where man would enjoy God's creation; where man would be happy; and, where people were related to one another in the proper way.

Well, the ultimate fulfillment, of course, of this promise is the dominion in the millennium of Jesus Christ over the whole earth. That is the time when God will ultimately fulfill His plan, which he delivered to Adam, and which Adam blew, to dominate creation under God's authority, and on the principles of divine viewpoint.

Now, what happened way back in Ur of the Chaldees was that God came to Abraham and said, "Abraham, we still have not brought together My rule upon this earth. Satan is still the dominant power. He is the prince of the power of the air. And I'm going to tell you what I'm going to do. Here you are, sitting in this fantastic culture here on the Euphrates River, in this magnificent civilization – tremendously advanced technologically. And you're surrounded by nothing but pagan darkness, but I have chosen you. It is my pleasure to take you. And through you, I'm going to bring about my rule upon this earth." Ultimately, that meant bringing a Savior through the line of Abraham. Ultimately, that means bringing Jesus Christ back in full authority to rule as king of Kings and Lord of Lords over this earth. That's what Paul means by this reference in verse 13 to Abraham becoming the heir of the world. It is the promise that he and his spiritual seed would be the channel that God would use to restore God's authority, and the rule of God upon this earth.

Daniel 7:27 refers to this very thing that Paul speaking of here in Romans 4:13. Daniel 7:27 says, "And the Kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven (referring to this kingdom of God) shall be given to the people of the saints of the most high, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey them. Here, way back in the Old Testament, in the book of Daniel, the prophet was talking exactly about what God had promised Abraham. He was putting in different words the very promise that God had made to Abraham – "That all the nations of the world would be under your dominion and authority and under that of your descendants, Abraham. You will inherit the earth. You will inherit dominion over the world. You will achieve what Adam failed to do."

Now, as we read the Abrahamic Covenant (and it is repeated and reiterated in several places in the book of Genesis), we don't have a specific statement of this nature that Abraham is going to rule the nations of the world through his descendants. But as you study the Abrahamic covenant, you see that that's exactly the inevitable result of the promises that God made to this man. So, Abraham has been selected to produce a counter-culture to the human viewpoint culture which has dominated mankind since the fall under Adam. In other words, Abraham is going to be the agent to bring about the Kingdom of God.

In order to help you to get a frame of reference, I want to review for you the kind of a world that existed after the flood. From the time that those people came off that ark and came down from that 14,000-foot level on Mount Ararat, the postdiluvian world was a totally different world than the one before the flood. Postdiluvian means "after the flood." Mankind, as we said, was originally created to subdue the earth – to rule it on divine viewpoints principles.

Let's read that for a moment (to refresh your thinking on that). Genesis 1:26: "And God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, after Our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowl of the earth, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps up upon the earth.' So, God created man in His own image. In the image of God created He him, male and female created He them." One of the qualities of the image of God is that he is the king. He has dominion over all creation. God said, "I'm going to create a man and a woman in My image, and one of the qualities I'm going to pass on to them in a finite way is that they are going to be rulers; they are going to be authorities; they are going to be kings; and, they are going to have control over My creation, under My authority, on My divine viewpoint principles."

Verse 28 says, "And God blessed them. And God said unto them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth." So, here again, we have the original statement of God's declaration: "Take charge; subdue; dominate; create a culture; and, produce a civilization.

**The Flood**

Well, the fall into sin made all this impossible. Man now could no longer dominate the earth because the dominion had passed from man to Satan. Satan was now in charge. Man rebelled against God's authority, and against divine viewpoint principles. And what civilization did arise, originally under Cain's leadership (the son of Adam) quickly degenerated into a total evil culture. It became so vile, and it became so degenerate, that God finally wiped the whole thing out in the flood. He preserved just these eight people: Noah; his wife; his three sons; and, their wives.

**Government and Capital Punishment**

After the Noahic flood, God introduced something brand new into human relationships. God introduced the idea that man would have dominion over the earth by a new principle that God was going to introduce now, and that is civil government. We call that divine institution number four. Here is man's authority now to rule the earth. He is to set up legal processes. And these legal processes would include the right to take a person's life – to execute a person who had willfully taken the life of another person.

So, after the flood, man is going to dominate creation and bring about the Kingdom of God under God's authority. And one of the things given to help man to do that was to establish a control over evil. Remember that that's what government is for. Government is to control evil. The books in the Bible make it very clear to us that God has given the sword. God has given the power of punishment to legitimately constituted civil authority, in order to keep (in a world that's filled with old sin natures) a condition of peace and control so that man can bring about prosperity on this earth, and can bring about a society under the principles of the kingdom of God through the other three divine institutions.

Divine institution number one is the exercise of his personal responsibility (his volition). Divine institution number two is the marriage relationship. Divine institution number three is the family. It is man exercising his free will; it is a man with a wife to help him; and, it is a man producing a posterity in the family unit that prepares them to take over after he is gone, that creates a culture and a society under the authority of God.

So, now here is a whole new situation. The divine plan is to enable mankind to inherit the earth for his blessing. Now man steps out of the ark, and he looks at a world that is totally different than the one that he left before the rains began falling. Look at the physical changes. The whole earth has been warped and twisted and churned up. There are mountains that were there before. There are valleys that never were before. The climate is now one of seasons, where all over the earth there was a mild, moist climate everywhere (we're told in Genesis 8:22), there's no longer a uniform climate. In some places it's hot; in some places it's cold; and, in some places it's just great. The forests were all gone (completely destroyed). As they looked out upon that countryside, all they saw was mud that had dried. And here and there, there was a little bit of scrub brush vegetation beginning to take hold and a little bit of grass beginning to grow.

When they went out of the ark, they had to build themselves something to live in. Naturally, they could not have built themselves anything out of wood, for there weren't any trees. So, they had to build adobe haciendas. They had to build houses out of the mud, and out of the earth that they had. Thus, they were adobe dwellers. They were in the pattern of many later primitive Indian tribes. The houses were not very stable. Any rain that came was destructive to them. So, they were constantly having to rebuild their shelters. Sometimes they solved that by simply going and living in caves.

They had new dietary rules. Now they were permitted to eat meat (Genesis 9:3). They could not take certain animals; kill them; and, eat them. Animals had changed. Genesis 9:2 tells us that now animals became ferocious. The whole result of the physical changes was that man was forced to a primitive level of life on earth as the earth began to reconstitute itself, and to restructure itself, and to grow back again all the things that had been destroyed in the flood.

The spiritual condition was good. When they came off the ark, they had divine viewpoint in considerable degree. Noah had passed on his knowledge of doctrine to his family. Humanity was monotheistic. You really have to laugh at the liberal and the human viewpoint scholars, and students of history, and professors who teach that man began with many, many gods, and then gradually evolved into a single God, as he went up the evolutionary scale. The truth of the matter is that he went just the opposite direction. We've already learned that in the opening chapters of Romans – that man began with one God. And that place he began with one God was very distinctly after the flood. There was no doubt in their minds as to who was God. And all the multiplicity of gods developed after that. It was man as he degenerated downward, not as he evolved upward.

**Melchizedek**

Worship was exemplified in this era by such a person as the king priest from Salem, Melchizedek, that you're acquainted with. Melchizedek was actually representative of many priests of God that existed, and that guided worship, and that guided, no doubt, some instruction, again, apart from it in Scriptures, but by the revelation from God passed down by word-of-mouth – instruction in God's divine viewpoint. As a matter of fact, when Melchizedek himself came on the scene, he came on at the point of Abraham's own existence. They were contemporaries. And Abraham met him and recognized him as God's representative. Thus he bowed down in respect before him, and he gave tithes to him, recognizing him as God's servant, and therefore contributing rightfully by God's order to the support of the ministry of Melchizedek. Melchizedek may have been the last of the king priests who still functioned on divine viewpoints in a world which, by that time, had again gone totally mad with human viewpoint, and out of which God then said, "I'm going to take you, Abraham, and I'm going to bring My kingdom upon this earth through you alone." And Melchizedek was the dying embers of what began in a high point of spiritual enlightenment when they walked off the ark.

Relative to the mentality of people, this again was good. Man was no idiot. His IQ was very good. He did not lack intellectual capacity. The archaeologists are amazed at the technology possessed by the ancient world. That's easily demonstrated by just the pyramids. Some of you may have had occasion to visit Egypt, and to walk up to one of those pyramids. You would be appalled at the size of the blocks that make up the pyramids. Some of those are 135 tons in weight – one block. Today, the best of our technology sits and scratches its head and says, "How in the world did they do that? How did they put those things there? What in the world kind of machines did they have such that they could put those things in there and fit them so closely? And what kind of knowledge did they have such that they could put an opening in one of the pyramids that went directly to the North Star? It's not there now because the North Star has moved since. But in its day, it was right on the beam. Now what kind of minds must these people have had? What kind of information had they developed such that they knew that much about astronomy?"

Well, they knew a great deal about it, and they had a greatly advanced culture relative to technology. I don't think most people really appreciate how advanced the culture was in which Abraham lived, and what he turned his back on. It was perhaps, in many respects, not only equal to ours, but even more advanced than we have become.

I have here a list compiled by a man called Arthur Custance in some papers that he wrote called "The Doorway Papers." This is "Doorway Paper Number 28" entitled "Shem, Ham, and Japheth in World History," on pages 25 through 30 of that publication. Also another "Doorway Paper Number 40" called "The Technology of the Hamitic People." Here's a list which has been compiled by this man on the basis of what archeology has discovered that tells us what the people were like in Abraham's day; what they were able to do; and, what kind of life went on down here in the Mesopotamian Valley.

They had numerous categories that represented their advanced culture and technology, such as travel conveyances; cosmetics; mathematics; trade; games; warfare; musical instruments; mechanical principles and applications; the materials that they worked with; building techniques; tools and materials; fabric and weaving; food gathering methods; writing; painting; etc. Now get this: medical and surgical practices and instruments. They had inhalators; enemas; fumigators; suppositories; insecticides; truth serums; cocaine; anesthetics; soaps; splints; quinine; poultices; decoctions; infusions; pills; lotions; ointments; plasters; bandages; tourniquets; adhesive tapes; surgical stitching; Caesarean operation; animal stupefying drugs; vaccine for smallpox; tranquilizing drugs; surgical instruments; knives; forceps; tweezers; and, identification and treatment of hundreds of common diseases and injuries, including brain and eye operations, and surgery in general.

These were people in Abraham's day. This is the culture that had gone against God. This is the culture that was moving away from God, and that rejected God's kingdom and His principles upon this earth. But look where man had gone after he came off that ark.

By the way, these things that I read you, representing the technology and the civilization of the ancient world, were by and large produced by the Hamitic people. That's what's interesting. It is the Hamitic people (the descendants of Ham – the cursed one) that had brought the inventions and the technology to the world. It is the Japhetic people who took what the Hamites built, and then prospered with it and used it. And it is the Semitic people that have given us the spiritual guidelines to be able to take the advancement technologically of the Hamitics, and the productivity of the Japhetics, and to guide it in directions that were a blessing to mankind instead of a curse. When the information from the Shemites (the spiritual enlightenment) has been rejected, the result has always been disaster for civilization.

So, here is Nimrod, a descendant of Ham, creating again a civilization. So, when it came to these people in their intellectual capacities, they were just great. And they took right off from the ark, trying to reproduce what that ancient civilization once had (what they remembered), even in their primitive state, again, restructured. All of this, God was delighted to see them do, and would have assisted them in doing if they had been willing to function to fulfill His plan of the Kingdom of God on this earth.

Obviously, what happened is that man so degenerated that these things were lost. These things that sound to us like modern inventions, and like modern developments, and like something that has only come about in modern times, in effect, we're catching up to what was once known by the ancient people, and extensively practiced.

Well, the response to the new order was something less than happy. Man was given the promise of God that He would preserve mankind from future worldwide destruction. This we refer to as the Noahic Covenant in Genesis 9:8-17. You can read it at your leisure. There God say, "Now, I am going to protect you. I will protect humanity. I will give you the security that you need. There will never be a worldwide catastrophe that will destroy all of mankind.

Then man was given the authority of civil government to build God's kingdom upon this earth. We have this in Genesis 9:5-6. Man was faced indeed with surviving in a very hostile environment. There's no doubt about that. When he came out of that ark, it was a hostile and a hard environment. His living conditions were very primitive. Man responded to God's promise of God's kingdom upon this earth, after a little while, in a negative way. At first, they went along with God. At first, they functioned upon God's promise to give them protection and provision and care.

However, it was not long before (Genesis 10:10 tells us) that they decided to build their own kingdom on earth to provide the security they wanted. So, they proceeded under Satan's direction to produce a counterfeit kingdom again, built upon human viewpoint principles. Man sought security on his own terms, apart from God's authority. Cain had done the same thing. Cain had sought to find his security, so he built a city, and he built a civilization. And the postdiluvian man is doing exactly the same thing.

**The Tower of Babel**

Well, you know what the result was. The result of this rebellion against God's promise to lead them now to establishing His kingdom upon this earth, was the building of the Tower of Babel.

**Nimrod**

Here was a civilization under dictatorial rule under the leadership of Nimrod, who was a descendant of one of Noah's sons, Ham. You can read about Nimrod in Genesis 10:8-10 and Genesis 11:1-4. He built a civilization. He built a city, and it was cultured; it was learned; it had advanced technology; and, it was wealthy.

**Babylon**

That was the city of Babel, which later became Babylon. Man's human viewpoint wisdom and knowledge arrogantly defied and rejected all of God's divine viewpoints, and all of God's plan to bring His kingdom upon this earth. They wanted nothing to do with God's authority.

So, true doctrine from Noah was very quickly perverted into religious myths. In Romans 1:18-32, we found how man began after the flood with the knowledge of God, and how gradually he descended to where he was worshiping snakes and four-footed creatures. Mankind turned from the rule of God over them to the rule of gods of their own creation. These gods were in control of the various forces of nature, and so there was nothing but chance and conflict out there. These gods were fighting each other. Man was in a world that was absolutely a nightmare to him because he had refused God's authority and His kingdom on this earth.

**Creativity**

Man had a dilemma in rejecting God's kingdom on this earth. Man is made in the image of God with the built-in destiny to control the world; to dominate; to use it; and, to subdue it. That's part of our image. God is the great Creator. One of the most significant evidences of the image of God in each of you is your creativeness – when you come up, and you just create something. You are faced with a problem, and you just come up with a solution. And somebody says, "My, how creative you are." They're telling you, "My, how the image of God is showing in you today." It is your creative capacity that reflects that most of all. It is that creative drive within us that calls for every man to produce; to gain wealth; to create a culture; and, to provide a civilization.

However, but man at the same time needed some protection in a very hostile environment. The climate was radically new. Therefore, it required new ways of growing food. And animals were rapidly multiplying, and they were now ferocious. And what do you think the animals were going to do for the little food that had been restocked and regrown on the earth? They were going to fight anybody, including man, for it.

So, here was a man in this hostile environment, needing somehow to protect himself and to produce some security against the animals who were fighting for the same food supply he was fighting for, and trying to rebuild the civilization that had been destroyed in the flood. Man needed security, and that is indeed a legitimate need.

God had promised to do all this for man in grace. But man had rejected God's rule, and said that he was going to find his own solution. So, man had a problem. He had a dilemma on his hands, because the only way he was going to face this kind of a hostile environment was to get united; to get people together; and, to get a culture organized. You might say, "Well, that certainly makes sense, and they should do that. They knew it. That's why, in Genesis 11:4, we are told that the reason they built the Tower of Babel was that they feared being scattered abroad. They knew that they needed unity. They knew that they needed to stand together to try to survive as a group against this hostile environment in which they found themselves after the flood.

At the same time, man is driven to this destiny of bringing about an orderly society on this earth. That's what God told them to do. This is innate in him. So, on the one hand, he is being driven to unite for security reasons. But there is another problem, and that is that, because he has an old sin nature, instead of being inclined to unite with people, he is inclined to separate from people. People are not drawn to one another. People are antagonistic to one another. People are only draw to others who have compatible old sin nature. From others, they are driven away, and they are rejecters of each other.

So, here's a man with a real impossible situation. Put yourself in Nimrod's place. He has to get these people together so that he can produce security for them, and also so he can start building a culture. But these people are all fragmented. They won't come together.

So, what does mankind do? Again he takes what God has given, and he perverts it. God has just given divine institution number four: civil government. And what happens is that mankind takes government, and makes government god. He makes the state god. He makes the state the final authority, and forces people together. The finest expressions of that today are in socialism and communism, where human government is misappropriated for the purpose of providing man with security, and for the purpose of fulfilling his destiny to dominate the world.

So, human viewpoint created an external unity, as it does today, by destroying personal freedom. The need for dominion and the need for security were legitimate, but how they did it was wrong. When Adam and Eve found themselves (after they sinned) and were aware of their nakedness, they needed clothes, and they were right. But the way they proceeded to supply those clothes with the fig leaves was wrong. It was a human viewpoint solution, and God had to give them the divine viewpoint solution. Man needs security in this world, and man needs to subdue his world. But how he is going about it, by using government to force people into unities that God has not drawn them into, is wrong. We're right back there to the Tower of Babel and Nimrod's mistake of trying to bring about an orderly society while rejecting the only way that can be done, and that is through God Himself and His principles of doing that.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1977

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