
Creation Answers

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Who does this newsletter?

This newsletter is produced by Wayne Spencer on a Quarterly basis. Its purpose is to bring creation research within the reach of Christians and provide up-to-date reliable information on creation issues. Wayne Spencer is a creation author and former teacher who has presented papers at the International Conference on Creationism and has published in various creation publications, such as the Creation Research Society Quarterly, Creation magazine, the Journal of Creation (TJ), and Origins (from the Biblical Creation Society, UK).

This newsletter is meant to help people plug into creation resources and get informed about creation and evolution. It is provided free of charge on request. Using the free Adobe Acrobat Reader is necessary for viewing the newsletter. There are no restrictions in copying this newsletter or passing it on to others. To request to be placed on the e-mail list, send a request to wspencer@creationanswers.net.

More information on Wayne Spencer's education and publications can be found on the creationanswers.net web site. You'll also find many other resources. <http://creationanswers.net>

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A Personal Note from Wayne Spencer

Greetings,

I'd like to thank everyone who has asked for this newsletter and thank those of you who've visited my website. It has been encouraging to hear occasionally how God has used these resources. I would appreciate any comments that any of you have about any of my materials.

Please also note that my email address has changed. The old email address, wayne@creationanswers.net has been shut down.

In this issue I'm including an article that is an excerpt from my book, "Our Genesis." This article addresses the interesting story from Genesis about the Tower of Babel and its significance in history.

I also tell about some important new resources related to creation. May 26 the creation museum in Cincinnati was opened by the Answers in Genesis organization. I have a short segment in this newsletter about the museum and the new website where you can get information about visiting it. Also, Creation Ministries International, the publishers of Creation magazine, now have a new TV program available over their website. There are more and more great resources on creation coming available all the time. I hope you and your family take advantage of these resources.

Wayne Spencer, M.S., Physics

The Origin of Languages, Races, and Nations

(An excerpt from the book, *Our Genesis*)

Imagine yourself as one of Noah's family. You have survived a year living in the Ark, and now after finally being able to leave the Ark, it is time to start a new life. There are no humans except your family in the whole world. There would be much work to build a new life. The world was a different place after the Flood. For several generations there would have been uncomfortable changes in weather and climate that would have been a difficult adjustment for Noah and his family, since they knew the perfect environment of the pre-flood world. Each of Noah's sons and their wives had children, and their children had children. We know that Noah had only three children; Genesis 10 may list all the sons that Noah's sons had. Ham, Japheth, and Shem's sons became leaders of people groups that became nations. Japheth's descendants are generally believed to have gone North and West of Palestine, though they may have spread out broader than this. Ham's descendants went throughout Palestine and into what is now North Africa. Shem's descendants mostly spread out throughout the Mid-East. (Abraham's family, who were descendants of Shem was East of Palestine in the vicinity of Haran, before Abraham left to go to Canaan.) So, in the post-Flood Earth, families became nations. It is significant that the nations of the world came from families. The origin of the races and the world's languages is tied up in the origin of nations as well.

Genesis 11:1 seems to imply that at one time some time after the Flood that there was one common culture and all people spoke the same language. Whether this means there was only one written form of language is another

question, but Genesis seems to make clear that at least the spoken language was the same among all people. There was apparently a great degree of unity of the people at that time since Gen. 11:2 describes them moving east, possibly as a group. Unfortunately their unity became a unified rebellion against God. Pride and an attitude of independence from God seemed to rule. If sinful man had begun to work together on a project like this tower, fallen mankind may have accomplished much technologically much faster than we have seen through history. What would the human race and human technology and culture be like today if people had stayed together as one unified common culture through history? God apparently deliberately slowed down technological development, perhaps because mankind was too sinful to be able to deal with knowledge properly before God.

God's objective in the new covenant in Christ is to reach the point in history where many peoples from different cultures, nations, and languages all know and worship Him together (see Revelation 7:9). If mankind had not been judged at Babel, the cultural barriers between people would likely have been greatly lessened. Fallen mankind can have a kind of sinful unity which is centered around a sinful pride about human accomplishment apart from God. This seems to be what happened at Babel. At the end of the Flood, God told Noah to fill the Earth. God wanted people to spread out and fill the Earth, not build empires for themselves.

In Genesis 10:1-31 there are a total of 70 individuals or people groups listed. The implication is that the language groups in the world today arose from these 70 original groups and others. The list in Genesis 10 does not include all the descendants of Noah's sons, but only certain groups that were pertinent to the Hebrews as they were about to encounter the people of Canaan. Linguists today suggest that there were about 100 different language "families" that led to all the 6,000 or so languages that now

exist in the world. This is arrived at purely from linguistic analysis of languages today, but it is very consistent with the Genesis story of the Tower of Babel.

God's intervention changed the languages of the people. This required miraculous intervention certainly, and it had some important consequences. It means God split or allocated the people into groups with each group having a new language. It also means God must have somehow imprinted knowledge into the speech centers of their brains! One consequence of this is that it hindered mankind's ability to work together on technological projects. Mankind could not advance technologically nearly as quickly now because there was now a language barrier between peoples. Judging from the Lord's statements in Genesis 11:6 this could be a major reason for this Judgement (or Curse). Another consequence of God's intervention in the languages was that it made it a practical necessity for the people groups to separate and spread out. Now there would be separate smaller people groups rather than one larger people and since they spoke different languages, it would lead to different cultures. Thus God's command to Noah to multiply and fill the Earth (Gen. 9:7) would be worked out, though to some extent God had to force mankind to do it.

The most ancient written languages are described as logographic by linguists. This means they used symbols to represent things, they did not use an alphabet in the way we do with English. As a written language, English is alphabetic and phonetic. This means that when we write in English, the individual characters represent sounds, and combining them into words and sentences creates meaning. The first written languages were apparently not like this. Moses was educated in ancient Egypt. The Egyptians used a form of hieroglyphics; this form of writing did not have a phonetic alphabet. It is not known

exactly when the first alphabetic phonetic language was developed. It is possible that it was the changing of the languages at Babel that led to the development of a phonetic alphabetic approach to written language. Prior to Babel, there would have been no need for written languages to be sound-based since everyone used the same sounds. But, after Babel, written languages had to be designed differently because using symbols to represent places, things, or people would not tell someone how to pronounce anything unless the written language was phonetic. This is one difficulty linguists have had with deciphering some ancient logographic languages.

The history of ancient languages and nations, prior to written records, is difficult to determine, but in some respects the study of ancient languages confirms Genesis in interesting ways. The above difference between logographic languages and alphabetic languages makes it impossible to know based on the sounds of words whether certain ancient names and words are related because since some of the ancient languages are logographic there is no information in those writings about how things were pronounced. Dr. Charles Taylor, a linguist, states that prior to about 1450 B.C. written languages were all logographic and therefore tell us nothing about pronunciation. This implies it is important not to try to argue for various words or names being related just because they sound alike, if they come from languages that are that ancient. On the other hand, from archeological and historical information some relationships are clear between various languages. It is generally believed by Bible scholars that Ham's descendants moved south and west to Egypt and Africa, Japheth's descendants moved either Northwest or Northeast, and Shem's descendants remained in the Mesopotamia region. There are a number of major language groups, as linguists refer to them. These are languages that have enough similar qualities that they seem to have a

common origin from being variants of another earlier language. No language is unchanging. Prior to the printing press, languages changed more than they tend to today. Some languages are very unique and are not like any other known languages, so they are not classified into any of the major language groups (such as ancient Sumerian). There is a tendency for very ancient languages to be more complex than languages that originated later in history as well.

Some scholars have attempted to find evidence from history and archeology of one prototype or "source" language that spawned all other language groups. This was justified by some on the basis of evolution. But there is no way to trace ALL language groups back to one master language. However, there are some common characteristics present in almost all language groups. God's intervention in the languages of people at that time could make it harder for us today to trace relationships between languages. It can also be demonstrated that languages can essentially lose information and complexity over time. Often scholars suggest that languages evolved from simple to complex, but this is not the case as a rule. In the years after the Babel incident, as the separate language groups grew in numbers they would organize into nations. These separate groups could also have led to the world's races.

Origin of the Races

Viewing this splitting up of the large population into smaller separate groups biologically could explain how the races came about. This is another consequence of God's intervention into history at Babel. When you have small isolated groups having children over generations, this sets in motion certain selection and adaptation effects that would cause the different people groups to become specialized in their physical characteristics. A simple

example might be that dark skinned individuals would find it easier to live in very hot climates than light skinned individuals since they would have less problems with sunburn, fewer skin problems, etc. On the other hand, dark skinned people would have more difficulty living in colder climates where there was much less sunshine, due to problems with Vitamin D deficiency. These kinds of effects could lead people to move to areas where they could survive more easily and where they could live in a more comfortable manner. On the other hand, it is not really known for certain that considerations such as Vitamin D deficiency were that significant. It may be simply various social preferences that determined how people separated. In any case, the limited genetic variation available in a small population of individuals would make the various people groups develop physical characteristics unique to their group in their area. So the development of the races is a natural consequence of the genetics of small groups, the isolation of those groups from each other, and other influences on where they lived.

The Divine intervention of changing the languages of the people drove the large population into separate smaller groups that spoke different languages. This led to the origin of different races, cultures, and nations giving us the great diversity we have today in the world. Much linguistic, historical, and archeological information, discovered often by secular scholars, confirms the Biblical record of history. For ancient prehistory, the most accurate and reliable record is still the Bible. Thus Genesis 1-11 describes our own origin and provides the basis for understanding many details in the remainder of the Bible.

Answers in Genesis Creation Museum

In the Cincinnati area on May 26, 2007 the Answers In Genesis ministry opened their 60,000 square foot, 27 million dollar creation museum. The opening ribbon cutting ceremony included several local elected officials from Boone county and state of Kentucky. Many supporters who donated to the museum toured the facility prior to its official opening. Approximately 1,000 people attended the ribbon cutting event.

A new website specifically for the museum has been set up, which is <http://creationmuseum.org>.

This site has all the information anyone would need to plan a visit to the museum. Christians visiting the museum have put their comments about it on this website. Some media have made critical statements of AIG and there were anti-creationist groups that demonstrated outside the museum on opening day. Yet, AIG has pressed ahead undaunted and it is clear that the museum makes a powerful impression on visitors.

The museum is open Monday through Saturday 10 AM to 6 PM and Sundays from Noon to 6 PM. Regular admission for adults is \$19.95, \$14.95 for seniors. Admission for children aged 5-12 is \$9.95. Children under 5 are free. The planetarium admission is \$5 in addition to the regular admission. Discounts are available for groups of 15 and more. I very much hope I can visit the museum and I would like to encourage every Christian family to make a trip to see this museum if possible.

Following is a paragraph taken from the creation museum website above that describes the museum:

“A fully engaging, sensory experience for guests. Murals and realistic scenery, computer-generated visual effects, over

fifty exotic animals, life-sized people and dinosaur animatronics, and a special-effects theater complete with misty sea breezes and rumbling seats. These are just some of the impressive exhibits that everyone in your family will enjoy.”

Creation Magazine Live - Video Programs

Creation Ministries International (CMI) in Australia has launched a new media outreach on its website. Creation Magazine Live is a video program made available through Windows streaming Media. Thus far there is just one program available. I'm sure this will be a good resource for Christians. The hour long program is well done and it answers many common questions Christians have about origins and the Bible.

CMI has an excellent staff with good academic qualifications and years of experience in creation ministry and publishing. These videos can be viewed for free from the CMI website. If you have a high speed internet connection, it is worth a visit to their website. Creationanswers.net has a link to the CMI website. The CMI site is <http://creationontheweb.org>