

KINGS NORTON BAPTIST CHURCH

Sunday 26th June 2022 10 am

Babel – shaking the fist

Welcome to all

Opening Scripture Deuteronomy 32:3,4

Hymn MP 367 Jesus is Lord

Scripture Psalm 47 (page 570)

Prayer

Children's talk Reaching for heaven

Chorus MP 454 Majesty

Notices

Elder appointing See end of main document for details

Prayer time

Reading Psalm 2 (page 543), Genesis 11:1-9 (page 12)

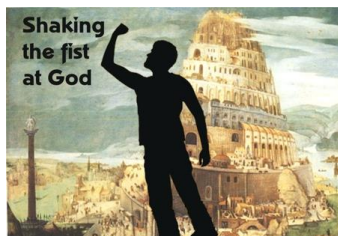
Hymn MP 1024 All of my days

Sermon Shaking the fist

Hymn MP 473 My hope is built on nothing less

Closing Prayer:

Close



Prayer (psalm 119:33f)

Exordium

God is good, we read about it, we sing about it, we experience it. To be good is to hate evil. As His creation you and I are to likewise love good and hate evil, Psalm 97:10 **Let those who love the LORD hate evil, To fear the LORD is to hate evil**; Prov 8:13 **Hate evil, love good**; Amos 5:15 **Hate what is evil; cling to what is good**. Says Paul to the church in Rome Rom 12:9

1a

See how one goes with the other? So rightly the foolish sin of Adam and Eve thrust them out of God's presence. It then went from bad to worse. The increasing wickedness of man was so dreadful that finally God's patience ran out and judgment came in the form of the worldwide flood.

The result was a new family from the line of Noah and his three sons... God had the pressed the reset button, a hard reset, a restart.

God had commanded Adam and Eve: **be fruitful, and increase in number and— and fill the earth.** Gen 1:28. In the same way when the Ark landed God commanded Noah and his family: **“Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth.”** Gen 9:1 - repeated in 9:7

They multiply and start to spread out over the earth. One might have thought that was the matter well settled, but about a hundred years after the flood, about the time of Peleg's birth, mankind became loth to disperse into distant places. They knew the command to **fill the earth** but they decided not to. “Here we will stay” and promptly started to dig in and to build a city as their permanent home. Here they will make a stand – it is a shaking of the fist at God. Dangerous!

So we come to lesson 1

“Partial obedience is no obedience, Partial obedience is disobedience”

- Children dig ther heals in, “no further, no further.” Have you ever said something like that? Adults do to.

- So it is with the things of God, Felix said “this far and no further”

Jesus said unless we are willing to give up all - we cannot be his disciple.

2 **As men moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there.**

The had been moving but deciding to stop, Their obedience was actually only as far as it suited them. Their obedience only appeared to be obedience.

The moment it didn't make sense to them – they stopped. It was not obedience at all. Only a pretense.

- There are some who jump at the thought of coming to join in with the things of the Lord. They lap up the kidnesses shown them. But as soon as the time of trouble is over, as soon as things start to go better for them - then that is the end of it. That apparent desire for the things of God quickly evaporates.

So too when following the Lord becomes costly. Jesus said there would be those whose hearts are like shallow ground, love and worship to God spring

1b

up but when trouble comes, when it clashes with other things then it quickly falls away. They appear to travel along the Christian path with you but as soon as a difficulty comes, an inconvenience, or it doesn't suit them that it is it. No more, no further. And they are off. They are away from the Lord's will - and despite their words - are heading for due Judgment.

To know the truth and reject it is serious. Listening to sermons here will either drive you to the Saviour and Heaven - if you obey - or to Judgment and Hell if you hear the words but reject them. I bring you God's word - It is Him you are rejecting.

So they arrive at **Shinar** an extended level region at the junction of the Euphrates and Tigris, hence the name sheniy "two" and 'ar or nahar "rivers." The place we are told was called Babel v9 So what of Babel? The Jews considered it came from the ' root, balal, "to confound" And thus called because God confounded their languages. Ge 11:9

However, ba'-bel, bab'-i-lon, (Babylon) was the Greek name of the city and written in the cuneiform script of the Babylonians, bab-ili, means in Semitic, "the gate of god." It is found only here and the page before Gen 10:10. Maybe this was the name given to the city by Nimrod and it is said monuments have been found bearing the name 'The gate of God.' One ancient studier of word meanings said it is the "place of the seat of life"

They saw this **plain in Shinar** as a good spacious place to settle, convenient. They thought the more the merrier and the more the safer, "We will keep together", and they stopped spreading out. "Here is fine, Here we will stay, here we will settle - and make a name for ourselves. My way - not His way"

They knew God had command that they '**fill the earth**'. And although it was years ago they knew it still applied to them for they said "no we will stay put so as **not (to) be scattered over the face of the whole earth.**"

Old commands - are still commands. [we march to the last order \(as the army says\)](#)

Although they knew it - they said to themselves "this makes more sense".. Do you produce practical reasons 'I think' to nullify God's commands? x2

✚ **Do you rationalise your 'obedience?' making it subject to you? to you?**

✚ **True obedience means full obedience. Abraham fully obeyed. Partial obedience = disobedience.**

"1 Now the whole world had one language and a common speech.

With one language they could work together

■ **A friend, Jean-Louis works in a German company that maintains the electronics in the Frankfurt stock exchange. In this German company the official language is English.**

Isn't it so convenient to have one language? Especially when it is yours!

■ **Esperanto, 1887 Polish linguist a conglomeration of languages**

3 They said to each other, x2

✚ **This is not an individual rebellion but corporate rebellion**

Man joining man, nation with nation, the whole world in one grand alliance – against God, in defiance of God to thwart the plan of God "we x2 will **not be scattered over the face of the whole earth.**"

"No," say they, "we will not, we will live and die together."

3 They said to each other, "Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They used brick instead of stone, and bitumen for mortar. 4 Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the face of the whole earth."

Did you see the "**Come, let us**" v3 There's a determination to combine efforts v4 "**Come, let us**" they excited and encouraged each another: let us be daring - let us be resolute - let us together *build ourselves a city.*

That's right great things can be achieved when we are all together in the task, that works both ways... for the kingdom

[Commonwealth Games, all serving the same King / sharing resources.](#)

The Lord says **Let us learn to provoke one another to love and to good works** But so also the ungodly stir and encourage each other to wicked works. See Ps 122:1; Isa 2:3,5; Jer 50:5. Their aim is not for - but against the kingdom of God.

There is an evil kingdom with and evil usurper king, Satan. The god of this age is restless in his aim to persuade the ungodly to unite into one world empire. This city and tower is to be the metropolis of their kingdom and the centre of their unity. Did they have a leader? Was it the ambitious Nimrod?

Did he aim to be their universal monarch under the pretence of uniting them for their common prosperity and safety? It's a bold competition with God.

Woe unto him that thus strives with his maker. x2 Isaiah. Are you a fighter??
If you take a stand against God you will lose. If you fight God you will lose.

God is the universal monarch, Lord of all, and King of kings. Woe to him to aims to step into the throne of God, for He **will not give his glory to another!**

They are determined, let us use bricks not stones, and use mortar so that it is strong and long lasting. So all the kingdoms of the world try to be. The world is full of buildings of grandeur, strong fronted banks to present feeling of security. Grand schemes that shout “we will be here for ever”.

Did not God say that one day all will be destroyed! *He did, & it will!*

They said we will: **“build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens.** - Nothing is now left x2. When the age of exploration came much was discovered about ancient Babylon the size of the city and its buildings.

Nebuchadrezzar (and his father Nabopolassar) did much to extend the city which became famous for its grandeur and its hanging gardens. Did not king Nebuchadrezzar say with great pride when walking on the roof of his palace **“Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?”** Dan 4:30

Why a tower? It was no protection against the waters of another flood? Would they not be making boats or at least build the tower on a mountain?

As for the exact whereabouts of this tower there is some debate. On the south of the plain of Shinar there is a depression nearly 100m square. In the middle rises a platform of sun-dried brick 4m high and about 60m each way.

Jewish and Arabian tradition identifies it with the great Temple of Nebo in the city of Borsippa, now called the Birs-Nimroud. We are told Nabopolassar rebuilt the temple and raised the tower, which had according to many building inscriptions, “its head was in the heavens.”

Nebuchadrezzar enlarged and embellished the sanctuary called “the temple of Belus.” That is Marduk or Merodach as in the OT, the patron deity of the city. Marduk is the Assyrian and Babylonian god Bel. Is Marduk the Hindu deity ‘Maluk’ is aMalik’?

✚ **So central to this city is a temple/tower. How different to City of Cain.**

Religion is often the rallying point. It is a strong unifier. It has been used by many throughout history and so today noticeably with Islam and it’s umma, brotherhood, its Ka’bah in the centre. Islam unifies social life, state and religion as a united one.

In Poland during the communist days the RC church became the rallying point. Large crowds gathered outside churches and the *Solidarity* movement started that eventually led to the downfall of the Berlin wall.

Religion is used for political purposes. To be Indian is to be Hindu, to be a national of Myanmar is to be Buddhist, so with Nepal, etc. etc.

The spirit of this world is constantly trying to unify people against God. The sexual liberation ‘movements’ a kind of collective individualism. This is possible with modern media but has been there through the power and influence of radio, from the *war of the worlds* to the Rwandan genocide.

The god of this world is constantly trying to train people to unify. What better than benign causes? whether Black Lives Matter, Respect, the unifying efforts against Covid and Global warming, etc.

Man is doing his best, the kingdom of the world uniting against God. These events in the world are dry runs so it can learn to work together - against the real enemy - the people of God.

At Babel they will make a stand – and set up an alternative to the true God.

Satan’s most convincing ploy is to make it look like the real thing.

That is why there is so much ‘variety’ in the Christian church. There are so many similar but false beliefs, the WCC, The Ecumenical movement, the Roman Catholics trying to make One visible church - all anti Gospel.

■ Like to Rolex watch you really have to be very sure you have a genuine one, don’t check and it will most likely be a shame!

This tower reaching to heaven is an affront to God himself.

✚ **Religion is used - not to honour *the Most High God* – but take his place!**

so that we may make a name for ourselves. Philo Judaeus says, each one engraved his name upon a brick *as a perpetual memorial*; yet none survived

5 But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower that the men were building. God is watching, he sees everything, **nothing is hidden from his sight.**

They had ganged up against the Lord but they have met their match.

See how the Lord uses the same language **7 Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.”**

“Come, let us” Who is God talking to? This is an exchange between the father Son and Holy Spirit, **“let us”**

God will defeat them, confounding their language and thwarting their plans. This world is here for his Glory, You and I are created for his Glory.

To disobey the Lord's is sin, to misuse what he has given you is sin.

- This world is not a playground, it is not a theme park, garden centre, adventure park etc.

You and I as image bearers of God are to honour the God who made the universe, the world and you – all for his Glory. That is it. You are not here for you, it is not for you to carve out a life for yourself, NO

An Est. 1.1 billion people will watch the CW Games. But that is not how to treat life, life is not a game, don't treat your life like a game!

Your life is to be lived for Him. x2 Don't think that because nothing has happened to me that all is well, God is patient, but the Judgment is coming. That is why the first thing Jesus preached was that all people must repent.

Rom 2:4 says: **God's kindness - is meant to lead you to repentance.** (ESV)

Repentance is seldom preached. Church historian J. Edwin Orr says: The appeal of modern preachers is "not for repentance but for enlistment."

A watered-down message leaves Christ with no cross, a Christianity at no cost, or "cheap grace" as the German martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer aptly labeled it. Grace in which no repentance is required, still less any real desire to be delivered from sin . . . is no grace at all and will save no-one.

The gospel must be the bad news of sin - before it can be the good news of salvation. Do you say "we are just good people in a bad world"

Are you unwilling to accept the reality of personal sin? If so then no repentance will mean no salvation and only the fearful prospect of judgment to come. Be warned The Lord God says: "**In due time your foot will slip; the day of disaster is near and your doom rushes upon you.**" Dt 32:35 **CROSS**

No-one gets away with it!

s So the LORD scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. The building work was stopped.

He did not say "Let us go down now in thunder and lightning, and consume those rebels in a moment" No; only, "Let us go down, and scatter them."

They deserved death, but are only banished or transported; for the patience of God is very great towards a provoking world. Punishments are chiefly reserved for the future state.

In the Babylonian tablets we are told the building work restarted as Babylon become a capitol city — "The tower was exceedingly tall. But the third part of it sank down into the ground, a second third was burned down, and the remaining third was standing until the time of the destruction of Babylon" Rabbi Yehanan, Sanhedhrin, 109, 1

Babylon occurs over 250 times in the Bible and symbolises the ungodly kingdom of the world standing opposed to the Kingdom of God.

Satan is pictured as a woman full of evil abominations, she is Babylon the great, **the great City that rules over the Kings of the earth** Rev 17:18 not vice versa

Today **Satan** is still **deceiving the nations** — he **gathers them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves.**

But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulphur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. There the god of this age, the unholy trinity will be tormented day and night for ever and ever." Rev 20:7-10

✚ **Man at his best – is at best a man, for man's number is 666, it never reaches 7, God's number.**

Paul warns "**Don't let anyone deceive you in any way, The secret power of lawlessness is already at work; ... then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendour of his coming.**" 2 Thess 2:3-8

It says **God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath.**" Rev 16:19

God's eternal kingdom will prevail

The Lord said: **See I have installed my King on Zion my holy hill,** x2,

Now is the time to bow before that King. After Christ's victory at the cross we see at Pentecost the new and eternal kingdom busting into life. As the confounding of tongues divided the peoples of the world and scattered them abroad, - so the gift of tongues, bestowed upon the apostles is the gathering together of the scattered children of God, and the uniting of them in Christ, that with one mind and one mouth we might glorify God.

Make sure that is you x2 – for the day will come when "**The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever.**" Rev 11:15 _____END