



Regarding the Tower of Babel and Genesis 11:6 "The LORD said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other."

**QUESTION:** If God knows all, and is aware of what the future holds, why would he spread man out around the world and keep them apart knowing that with different languages, it would bring about different understandings and beliefs. This makes the case for other religions to rise. Given the state of the world today, and the troubles that are caused based on these differences, why would this be allowed to happen?

**ANSWER:** Good question. I think we can assume that the "curse" of our diversity that came on us in the distant past had to be less of a curse than our continued unity would have been, under the conditions that they were living in. I assume this because a Loving God knows what might have happened if we hadn't gone our separate ways and diversified. I'm sure that humans spreading out in terms of culture and language and also, as you say, in religion has been bad in many ways, but we should ask what might have happened if we had stayed on the course we were on.

In truth, the Babel Community was unified and their culture was advanced, but their unity was probably turning into a horrible anti-community because it was built with man at the center. Think about the dreams of Marxism. In many ways, on paper, that was a great dream. Everyone together, sharing power and resources in a wonderful community. But it was built specifically with MAN as the idol in the center that was worshipped, God was specifically denied and look at what happened! Not just in the USSR, but in Cambodia, Vietnam, North Korea and in China, 10's of MILLIONS were killed on the altar of this utopist dream of oneness. The irony and hard truth is this: From all of human history until 1907, you can count up all the people killed in the fighting between nation states over DISUNITY (culture/religion/economics) and they say it doesn't equal the number killed in the last 100 years in the name of UNITY. What irony! That in the name of "kindness" and ending strife we humans take God's spot and start to decide who lives or dies based on our own short sighted, prideful, man centered ideas of who is "good for society" and who is not. The purgings of Mao and Stalin, Hitler and the Holocaust are vivid examples.

So maybe God was choosing the lesser of two evils in splitting us up. Maybe he was keeping us alive by splitting us up. Maybe it slowed down our technological progress but it kept us from the pride that kicks God out of the picture. So he was keeping us humble, dependant. The possibility of other religions was opened up, yes, but all religions at least kept moral law in place (instead of making Man the standard of law), and with that moral law in operation around the globe, we could at least stay open to His convicting work and need for Redemption. He kept a strong desire in ALL humanity around the globe in all religions to fix that breach of relationship with the Law Giver.



We all know an arrogant man who has all his physical needs met may turn hard towards God and start acting like a god himself, making up his own rules. At Babel, God was keeping us from that situation on a global scale.

God pronounced that there was "nothing they couldn't do"... I take that be a reference to the amazing achievements of ancient man that still baffle us. But advanced technology can really numb us to our REAL need for God and can lead to the horrors of the last century. Maybe God was sparing us that greater problem by giving us a different problem... that of scattering us, breaking up our powerful unity and advanced culture - so that his REAL Community dream could one day take hold.

Speaking of God's Community Dream: read Acts 2-4 and you get a wonderful reversal of Babel. On the first day of the church, God brings us together under one Head: Christ, the One we were made for and who tears down the walls of hostility between us (Ephesians 2:14) because he forgives us. Now the ground is level, we all need grace and we all equally can be accepted by God, so we can therefore all be one people under Him. And notice that when the church started, God miraculously poured out this gift of tongues so that people separated by culture and language and religion could understand each other, and understand God's love and realize that God was making a new family and establishing a new Kingdom, with Jesus as the King.

That's the only kind of community that can last, because it's built on God and his promises, not on us and our power to unify ourselves. When we try on our own, we always seem to muck it up. A community that worships God, brought together by his Christ who forgives us and gives us his Spirit to love each other as one - that's the anti-Babel the world's been looking for.