

STUDY PACK 5

THE DIFFUSION: RE-POPULATING THE EARTH

“Observe the hand of God in the wise and beneficent timing of events in the dawn of our history. The events of history are not accidents. There are no accidents in the lives of men or nations. We may go back to the underlying cause of every event, and discover in each God’s overruling and intervening wisdom. It has been said that history is a biography of communities; in another, and profounder sense, it is the autobiography of Him ‘who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will,’ Ephesians 1:11, and who is graciously timing all events in the interests of his Christ, and the kingdom of God on earth.”

~~ Reverend S.W. Foljambe, January 5, 1876 ~~

I. ISOLATIONISM VERSUS DIFFUSIONISM

A. Isolationism.

The isolationist theory of world history states that mankind _____, gradually advancing, improving, developing, and spreading out, until finally meeting each other in the modern era.

B. Diffusionism.

The diffusionist theory of world history states _____. Usually, diffusionists believe that this is the result of divine creation. This early civilization spread out so far that sometimes contact with other regions was lost for periods of time. Diffusionists believe that the European exploration and colonization of the modern era reunited _____.

C. The Bible Teaches Diffusionism!

“And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout _____,” Acts 2:5.

“But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth,

Romans 10:18.

Until the Twentieth Century, diffusionism was normally taught in American schools. When blind faith in evolution became common around the turn of the century, the theory of isolationism became much more popular. This theory fit easily with the theory of evolution but was contrary to Bible teaching. By the 1920’s, the theory of diffusionism was almost unheard of in the United States.

By the year 2000, however, diffusionism was making a comeback. Faith in evolution was not nearly as constant, more people were studying the Bible for

truth about science and history, and the evidence for early European contact in the Western Hemisphere was becoming more widely known.

D. The Flood and Diffusionism!

Bible-believers believe that mankind centered in one place after the worldwide flood of Noah's day. The Lord confounded the languages of men who then spread throughout the earth. (_____.)

Accepting that the various groups of men maintained contact with each other over the centuries is easy for Bible-believers. This is consistent with Biblical statements about the spread of the Gospel and, of course, Bible-believers feel no need to twist history to protect the theory of evolution!

II. POST FLOOD CIVILIZATION

Noah's family was given a commission to replenish the earth (Genesis 9:1). The Jewish historian Josephus describes how the descendants of Noah responded to this challenge:

“Now the sons of Noah was [sic] three, — Shem, Japheth, and Ham, born one hundred years before the Deluge. These first of all descended from the mountains into the plains, and fixed their habitation there; and persuaded others who were greatly afraid of the lower grounds on account of the flood, and so were very loath to come down from the higher places, to venture to follow their examples. Now the plain in which they first dwelt was called Shinar. God also commanded them to send colonies abroad, _____, — that they might not raise seditions among themselves, but might cultivate a great part of the earth, and enjoy its fruits after a plentiful manner: but they were so ill instructed, that they did not obey God; for which reason they fell into calamities, and were made sensible, by experience, of what sin they had been guilty; for when they flourished with a numerous youth, God admonished them again to send out colonies; but they, imagining the prosperity they enjoyed was not derived from the favour of God, but supposing that their own power was the proper cause of the plentiful condition they were in did not obey him. Nay, they added to this their disobedience to the Divine will, the suspicion that they were therefore ordered to send out separate colonies, that, being divided asunder, they might the more easily be oppressed.”

III. NIMROD AND THE TOWER OF BABEL

Josephus also describes how Nimrod founded Babylon and led the people in rebellion toward God and establishing the tower of Babel:

“Now it was Nimrod who elicited them to such an affront and contempt of God. He was the grandson of Ham, the son of Noah—a bold man, and of great strength of hand. He persuaded them not to ascribe it to God, as if it was through his means they were happy,

but to believe that it was their own courage which procured that happiness. He also gradually changed _____, — seeing no other way of turning men from the fear of God, but to bring them _____. He also said he would be revenged on God, if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to be able to reach! And that he would avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers!

Now the multitude were very ready to follow the determination of Nimrod, and to esteem it a piece of cowardice to submit to God; and they built a tower, neither sparing any pains, nor being in any degree negligent about the work; and, by reason of the multitude of hands employed in it, it grew very high, sooner than anyone could expect; but the thickness of it was so great, and it was so strongly built, that there by its great height seemed upon the view to be less than it really was. It was built of burnt brick, cemented together with mortar. Made of bitumen, that it might not be liable to admit water. When God saw that they acted so madly, he did not resolve to destroy them utterly, since they were not grown wiser by the destruction of the former sinners; but he caused a tumult among them, by divers languages; and causing that through the multitude of those languages, they should not be able to understand one another. The place wherein they built the tower is now called Babylon; because of the confusion of that language which they readily understood before; for the Hebrews mean by the word Babel, _____. The Sibyl also makes mention of this tower, and of the confusion of the language, when she says thus: —“When all men were of one language, some of them built a high tower, as if they would thereby ascend up to heaven; but the gods sent storms of wind and overthrew the tower, and gave everyone his peculiar language; and for this reason it was that the city was called Babylon.” But as to the plain of Shinar, in the country of Babylonia, Hestiaeus mentions it, when he says thus: —“Such of the priests as were saved, took the sacred vessels of Jupiter Enyalius, and came to Shinar of Babylonia.”

IV. GOD DIVIDES THE WORLD INTO NATIONS

God’s judgment upon man for the Tower of Babel is described in Genesis 11:1-10.

By confusing the languages of man, God clearly determined that _____. A nation is a group of people who think as one and who function under a common civil government. Every nation must be united by some common denominator. The early nations were bound by a common language — one supernaturally imposed by God.

V. THE DISPERSAL _____

Josephus describes the dispersal of the people after the Tower of Babel:

“After this they were dispersed abroad, on account of their languages, and went out by colonies everywhere; and each colony took possession of that land which they light upon, and unto which God led them; so that the whole continent was filled with them, both the inland and maritime countries. There were some also who passed over the sea in ships,

and inhabited the islands; and some of those nations do still retain the denominations which were given them by their first founders; but some have lost them also. And some have only admitted certain changes in them, that they might be the more intelligible to the inhabitants; and they were the Greeks who became the authors of such mutations; for when in after ages, they grew potent, they claimed to themselves the glory of antiquity, giving names to the nations that sounded well (in Greek) that they might be better understood among themselves; and setting agreeable forms of government over them, as if they were a people derived from themselves.”