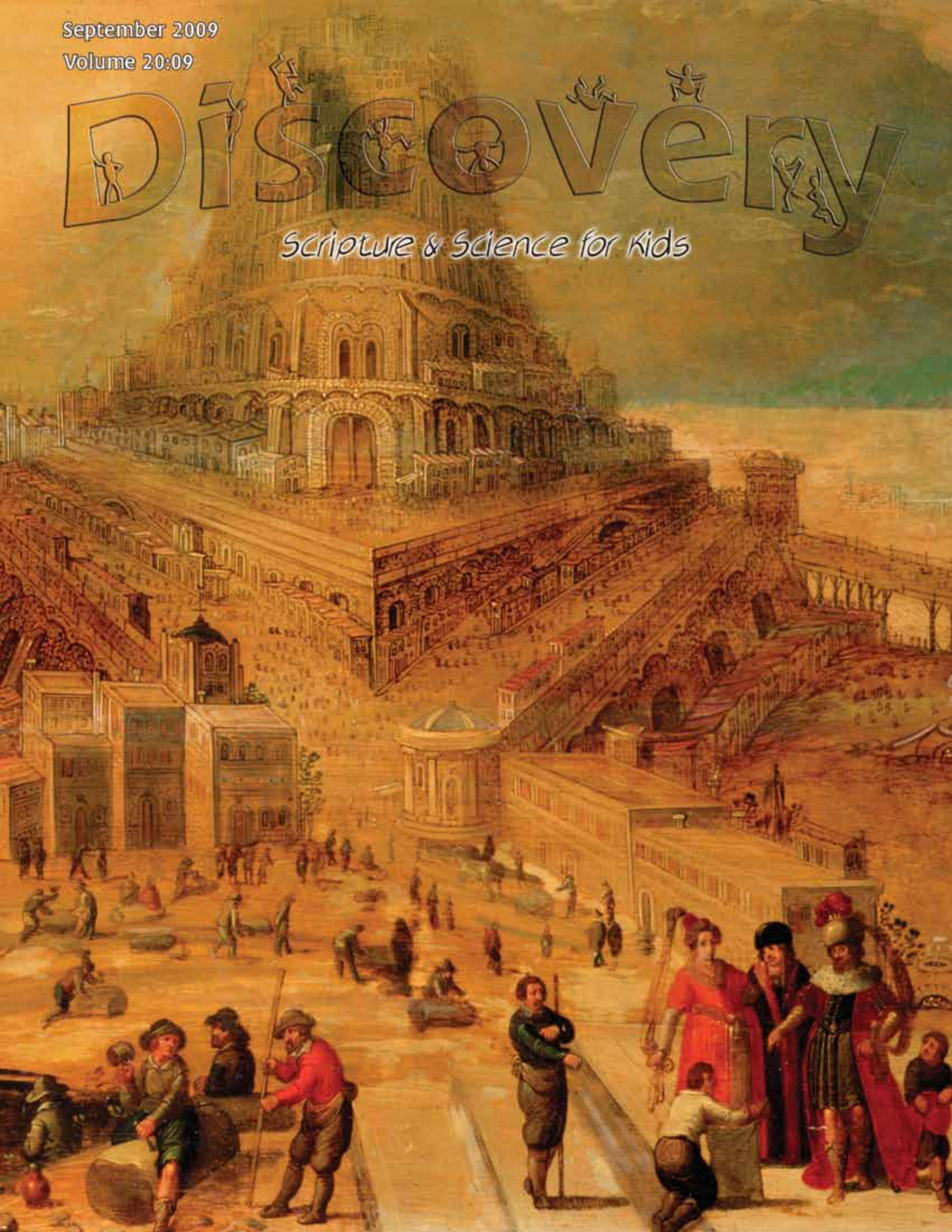


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Discovery

Scripture & Science for Kids



THE FIRST SKYSCRAPER

After the Flood, during the days of Noah, God told Noah and his family that they should have many children; God wanted them to fill the Earth with people again. Noah's growing family moved away from the mountains of Ararat where the ark had come to rest. They decided to settle in the plains of Shinar—an area between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers that later would become the home of the great Babylonian Empire. Under the direction of Nimrod (great-grandson of Noah), the people decided to build a large city and a huge tower that would reach high into the heavens.

What were their reasons for this great building project? First, they wanted to make a name for themselves; they wanted to be known throughout the ages as **the** family that built **the** tower into heaven. Second, they wanted to stay together and not scatter all over the Earth, as God had commanded them. And third, they wanted to show their self-reliance and independence from God; they were full of pride and self-confidence.

God knew what the people were doing, and He did not like it. He was angry about the building of the great tower, and angry that people had decided, on their own, to stay in one place. He was angry that they had such an arrogant, self-sufficient attitude, thinking more and more about their own work, and less and less about their Creator Who had given them their strength and knowledge. He knew that eventually they would forget about Him entirely, and begin to worship the things they made.

They were very proud of themselves, and pride is a sin against God. What does "pride" mean? It means to be pleased with yourself, especially because of something you own or something you have done; it means to be conceited, arrogant, or haughty.

God decided to stop the building of the Tower of Babel. Until this time in history, all men spoke the same language. This made it easier for them to work together, and sin together. So, God confused them by making them speak many different languages. Because they could not work together or communicate very well, the people moved away from each other and scattered all over the Earth, just as God had wanted them to do in the first place.



WHY ARE THERE SO MANY "COLORS" OF PEOPLE?

Do you remember the song, "Jesus loves the little children—all the children of the world. Red and yellow, black, and white, they are precious in His sight"? It's true, of course. Jesus **does** love **all** the children. In fact, He and God, His father, love all the adults, too (read John 3:16). They don't care what color a person's skin is. And neither should we.

The Bible recognizes only one "race" of people—the **human** race. In Acts 17:26, the apostle Paul wrote that God "made **of one every nation of**

In humans, skin color is caused by a pigment called melanin (MEL-uh-nin). The color of a person's skin depends on how much melanin he or she has. If a person has a lot of melanin, he or she will be dark skinned. If a person has very little melanin, he or she will be light skinned. The amount of melanin is controlled by genes that are found inside the cells of our bodies. Genes control lots of things, including hair color, eye color, and the amount of melanin in our skin. Melanin is helpful to us as humans because it soaks up harmful ultraviolet rays from the Sun that can harm our bodies.

God designed our bodies so that melanin could be produced to protect us. In climates where there is a great deal of sunshine, people with lots of melanin can survive better than those without much melanin. Those people who live in climates with less sunshine do not need as much melanin. It is very likely that Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, possessed a built-in variety of genes that allowed them to produce in their children some of the same varieties of skin colors we observe today. In fact, scientists today who study genetics tell us that

men to dwell on all the face of the earth." His point was that people are basically all alike, regardless of whether they have a different skin color, language, or cultural heritage. **Every** human is made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27). But there's nothing wrong with asking about how all the "red, yellow, black, and white" colors of humans came to be.

it is even possible to get very light, very dark, and medium-skinned children—all from a single pair of parents. [It's not at all odd for us to see parents who have two or more biologically related children with noticeable differences in their skin colors.]

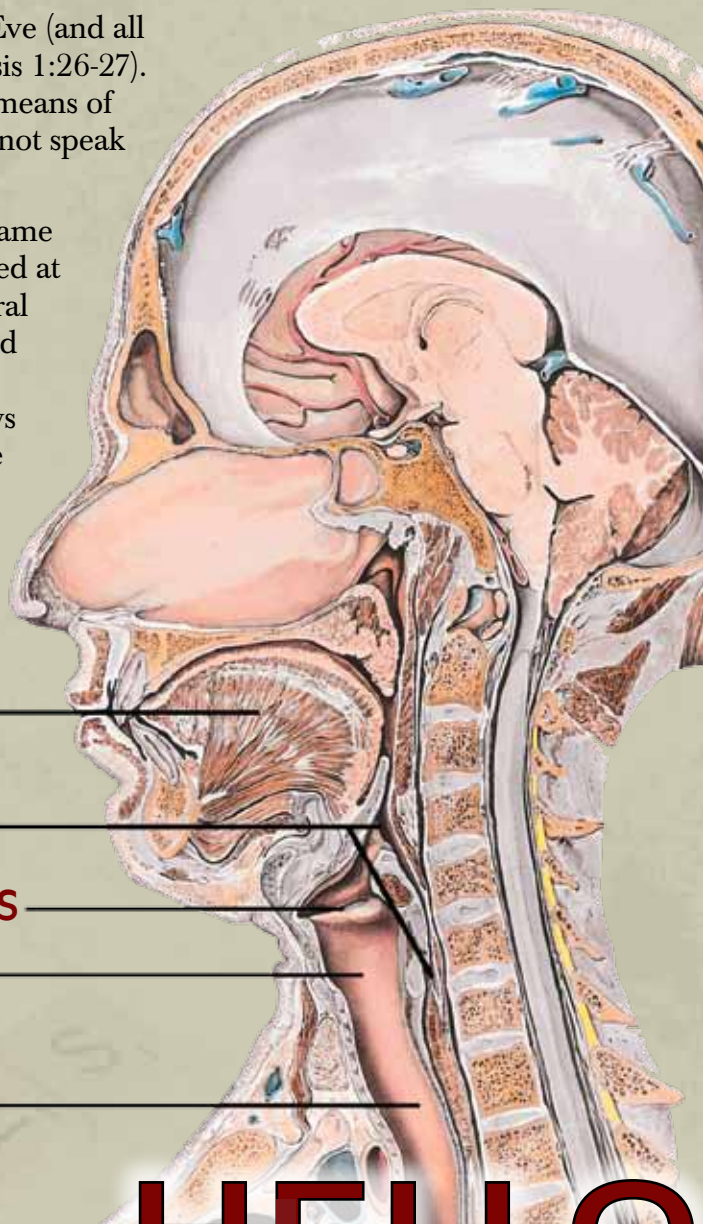
God knew that people eventually would want to live all over the Earth, and He gave us skin colors as "built-in" protection. Skin colors are just another piece of evidence about how wise God is!

HUMAN LANGUAGES

Our ability to speak in words came from God. Adam and Eve (and all human beings since) were created in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27). Among other things, that means we were created to speak by means of language. Animals were not created in God's image. They cannot speak like people can speak.

Adam and Eve, and all people up to Noah's day, spoke the same language. But sometime after the Flood, God directly intervened at the Tower of Babel, and caused people to begin speaking several different languages. Since that time, thousands of languages and dialects have developed from the original languages that God brought into existence at Babel. Archaeological evidence shows that humans have had the ability to speak (and write) language from the very beginning of human history.

If evolution were true, all human languages should have evolved from an original primitive language (which itself came from the grunts and noises of lower animals). But the evidence does not support this idea. The evidence suggests that all languages have developed from a few (perhaps less than twenty) languages. These "proto-languages" were distinct within themselves. They did not come from a previous ancestral language. These few "mother" languages came from God Himself when He brought them into existence at the Tower of Babel. God's action forced the people to cluster together with others who spoke their own distinct language. Just as we must talk to each other in words to communicate, so God talks to us through His Word (1 Corinthians 2:4-14).



Tongue

Pharynx

Vocal cords

Larynx

Trachea

HELLO

ΓΕΙΑ ΣΟΥ
GEIA SOU HOLA

שלום
BONJOUR SHALOM

NĪ HĀO

HEJ HALLO

Ham in Turkey?

If you look in the back of your Bible, you may see a map that shows where some of the people and nations mentioned in the Old Testament were located. This map also shows from which one of Noah's sons many different people descended. We read in Genesis 11 where, after the Flood and the confusion caused at the Tower of Babel, God scattered the descendants of Noah and his three sons all over the Earth (Genesis 11:9). In Genesis 10, we can read where all these people went, and what nations they became.

The descendants of Japheth lived in what is modern-day Turkey, Iran, and many of the islands in the Mediterranean Sea. They became the nations of the Medes, Scythians, Greeks, and other various peoples of the Mediterranean Sea.

Ham's descendants moved to modern-day Turkey, Egypt, and to the land where the Israelites eventually settled. They eventually became the Hittites, Egyptians, Babylonians, Philistines, Amorites, Canaanites, and most of the other "ites" in the Old Testament.

The descendants of Shem moved to what is now modern-day Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Saudi Arabia, becoming the nations of Arabia, Syria, Persia, Lydia, Israel, and Assyria.

Eventually, all these people spread out to fill the Earth as God had commanded them in Genesis 1:28, but it took God's hand at the Tower of Babel to cause them to do it (Genesis 11:5-9).



JUST ONE LANGUAGE BEFORE BABEL?

When you read Genesis 10 verses 5, 20, and 31, and then read Genesis 11:1, it may sound at first as if these verses disagree. Since Moses wrote in Genesis 10 that the ancestors of Shem, Ham, and Japheth spoke **different** languages, and yet he indicated that "the whole earth had **one language**" in Genesis 11:1, some have a hard time understanding how both of these passages can be right. Obviously, before the scattering of people at Babel, the whole Earth could not have **different** languages and **only one** language at the same time. That is like telling one person, "I can only speak one language." And then saying to someone else, "I can speak many languages." Both statements cannot be true.

The explanation to the question about the number of languages that existed before the Tower of

Babel was built, is that the events recorded in Genesis 10-11 were not all written in the exact order the events occurred. Some of the things recorded in Genesis 10 occurred before the scattering at the Tower of Babel, while other events in chapter 10 occurred sometime later. The simple fact is, just like we do not always tell things in the same order in which they happened, Bible writers did not always record information in a strict, chronological sequence.

We can be sure that **before** the world's speech was confused at the Tower of Babel, people spoke **only one language**, not many different languages (Genesis 11:1).

ACTIVITY PAGES

MATCHING



- _____ The name of the first skyscraper
- _____ The number of human races that exist
- _____ The name of the pigment that gives color to skin
- _____ Japheth's descendants included these people.
- _____ Ham's descendants included these people.
- _____ Shem's descendants included these people.

- | | |
|--------------|-------------------|
| A. Greeks | D. Arabians |
| B. Melanin | E. Tower of Babel |
| C. Egyptians | F. One |

FILL IN THE BLANKS

- Those who built the first skyscraper were filled with _____.
- God does not care what _____ a person's skin is.
- All humans, regardless of skin color, are made in the _____ of God.
- The more melanin a person has, the _____ his skin will be.
- The phrase "in his days the earth was divided" in Genesis 10:25 most likely refers to the Earth's _____.
- If all the land was originally connected at the very beginning, the _____ could have been responsible for breaking the land up into continents.

TRUE OR FALSE

- _____ God was unhappy with the builders of the skyscraper because He did not like new buildings.
- _____ God was unhappy with the builders of the skyscraper because He wanted them to scatter all over the Earth.
- _____ Prior to the Flood, all humans spoke the same language.
- _____ God directly intervened at the Tower of Babel, and caused people to begin speaking several different languages.
- _____ The phrase "in his days the earth was divided" in Genesis 10:25 most likely refers to the Earth's continents dividing.
- _____ Animals are created in the image of God.

HELLO
BONJOUR
NĪ HĀO
HALLO
בָּרוּךְ הוּא

Guten Tag!
Wie geht's?
(Hello! How are you?)



Dear Digger Doug,

Is Hebrew the oldest language? And did Adam and Eve speak Hebrew?
— Fransisca of Oberwunsch, Germany

Dear Fransisca,

The answer to both questions is probably "No," but no one can know for sure. Remember that in the beginning everyone spoke the same language (Genesis 11:1), but God made different languages at the Tower of Babel. In Genesis 11:7, God said, "Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other."

When God confused the original language (which was the oldest language and the one Adam and Eve would have spoken), then the first language might have been lost. Hebrew probably was created after the confusion at the Tower of Babel. We really cannot know for sure what Adam and Eve spoke, but we do know that through the wonderful gift of language, God allows us to communicate His will to people all over the world.





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Pangea, Peleg, and a Divided World

If you were to look at a map of the world, and especially look closely at the shape of the seven continents, you might see something quite interesting. You may notice that the continents look similar to puzzle pieces. When you visualize piecing them together, they seem to fit together well. The continent of Africa seems like it could fit on the east edge of South America and just south of North America. The northeast border of Antarctica looks like it would fit almost perfectly with the southwest edge of Australia. In fact, many of these continents have similar rock formations on the borders that seem to fit together.

Because of this pattern, and because the continents are moving slowly apart today, some people think that the continents in the past were all one big mass of land. They call this huge landmass Pangea [pan-JEE-uh]. No one has proven that this is true, but it does seem possible. If it is true, it did not take millions of years as some evolutionists suggests. Something huge must have happened in the past that could have separated all the land. One great explanation would be the Flood of Noah's day. When all the Earth was flooded by water, and the fountains of the deep broke open (Genesis 7:11), that would have changed the land drastically. Furthermore, such a huge Flood would have

caused things to happen much more quickly than they are happening now.

Because of the idea of Pangea, some have read Genesis 10:25, and used it as proof of the concept. That verse says: "To Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg, for in his days the earth was divided." Could it be that the division of the Earth in Peleg's time is talking about the separating of the continents? That is possible, but it is probably not the case.

In Genesis 11:1 we read that "the whole earth" had one language. When the text says the "whole earth," it is talking about all the people on Earth. As you read the rest of Genesis 11, you learn that the people became wicked, disobeyed God, and built the Tower of Babel. Because the people disobeyed God, He confused their languages so that they could no longer work together to rebel against Him. When God caused the people to speak different languages, they were scattered "over the face of all the earth." They were all divided. This is most likely what Genesis 10:25 is talking about.

The Bible is the only perfect set of books in the world. Whether it is talking about how the different languages originated, or how the world was flooded, it is always right. We should all make up our minds to study the Bible diligently and teach it to others.



ANSWERS

MATCHING: 1. E (Tower of Babel); 2. F (One); 3. B (Melanin); 4. A (Greeks); 5. C (Egyptians); 6. D (Arabs).
 TRUE OR FALSE: 1. F; 2. T; 3. T; 4. T; 5. F; 6. F.
 FILL IN THE BLANKS: 1. pride; 2. color; 3. image; 4. darker; 5. human population; 6. Flood.

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