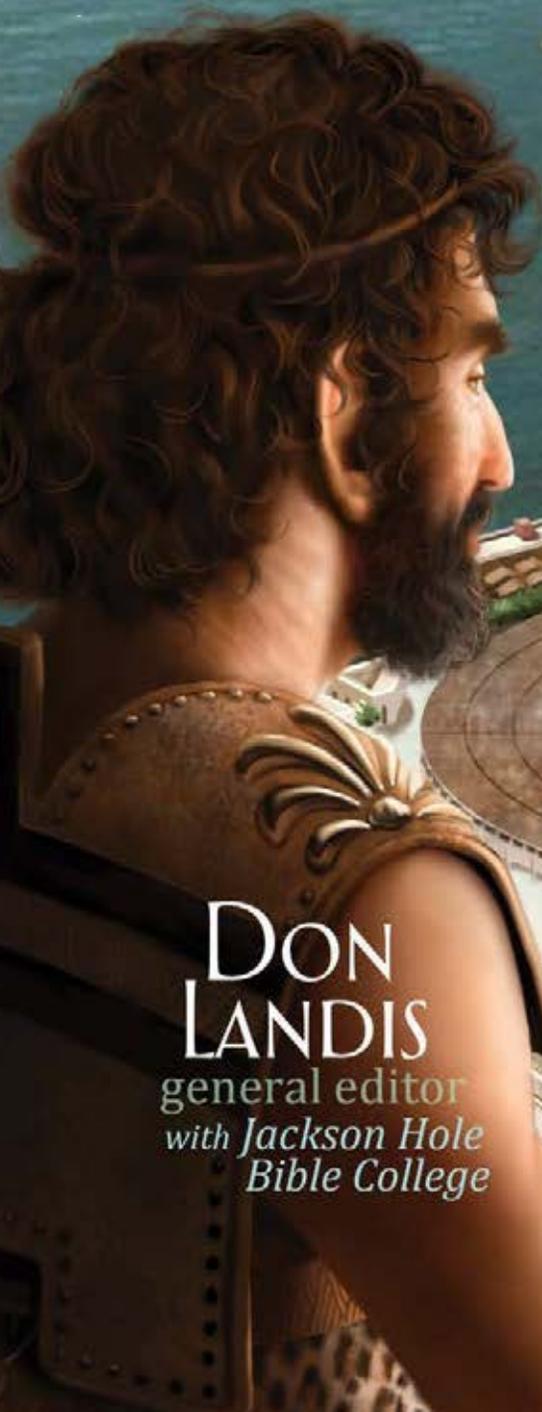


The Secrets of **ANCIENT MAN**

Revelations from the Ruins



**DON
LANDIS**

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with Jackson Hole
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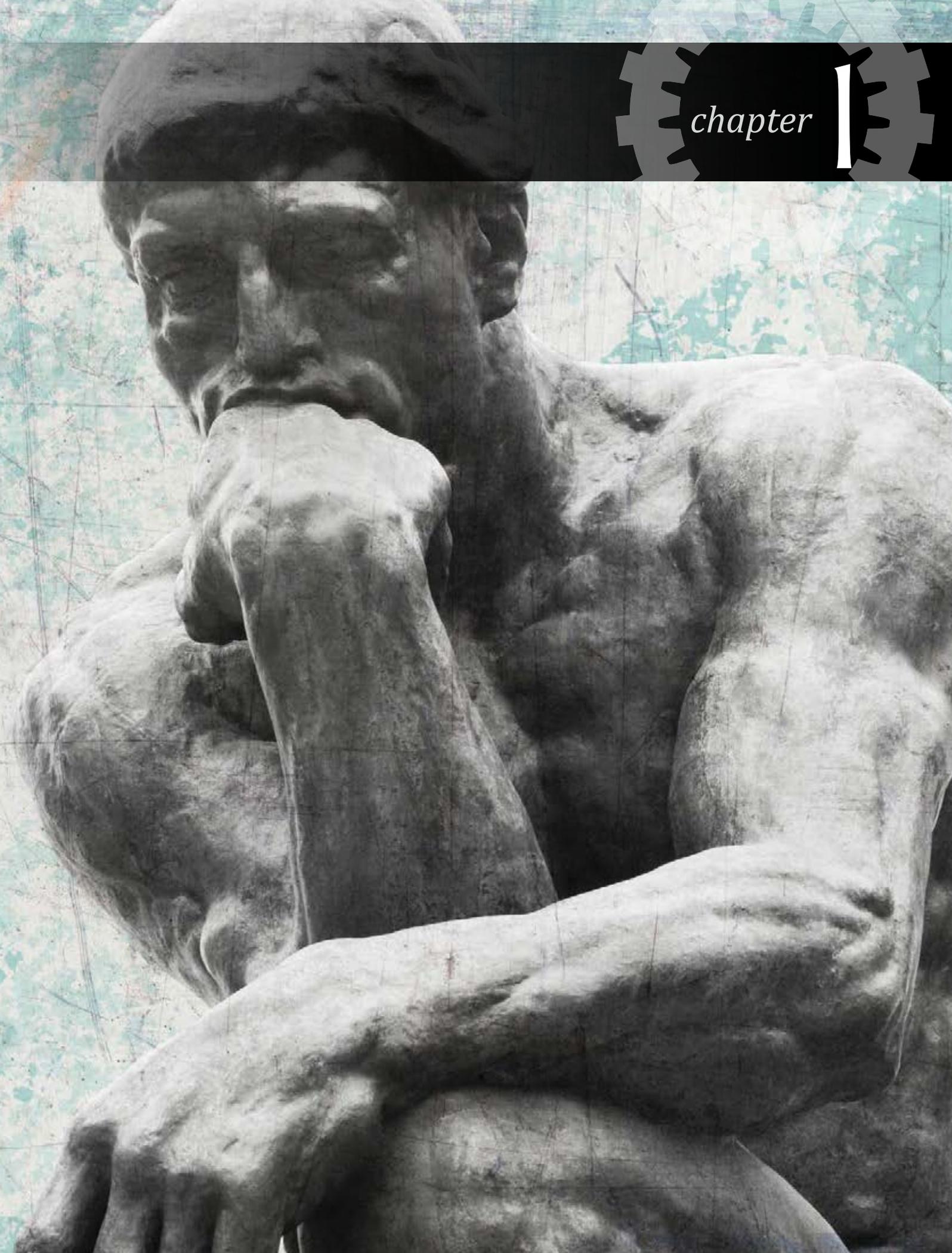
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chapter **1**



THE NAME

Knowledge. Wisdom. Understanding. Mankind yearns for these. We find ourselves enthralled with secrets, mysteries, and riddles. Man is seduced by the unknown and enticed by the offer of revelation. Perhaps this is why we pursue science so passionately and we seek desperately to unearth the remnants of our ancestors. It is seen in our religions, literature, philosophy, and art, and evidenced by our exploration of earth, the moon, and deep space. We have this innate impression that there is something we don't know, something important that we must discover, something more to life than this.

KNOWLEDGE

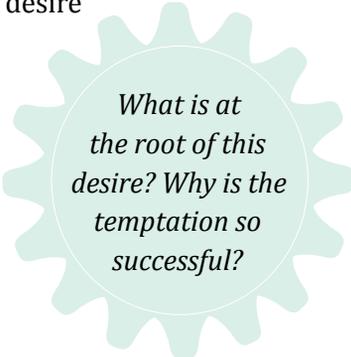
God created mankind as finite beings, but Adam and Eve originally had a close relationship with the *infinite* Creator. He was the source of all the knowledge that they had, He was the lawgiver and provider of their needs. Yet an unavoidable characteristic of finite beings is ignorance. To be finite is to lack understanding and information that the infinite, by definition, must have. And to be finite is to be always learning more and adding to what knowledge has been acquired. God created mankind to desire knowledge and with the capability to obtain it, but He also created us to trust Him, and to trust that He has provided us with all we need to know.

For Adam and Eve, even while living in the splendor of God's undefiled creation, even with the opportunity to talk to the infinite God, Satan was able use their finiteness to tempt them with knowledge that they didn't have. Satan offered god-like status simply through acquiring knowledge — they would be *like* their Creator if only they *knew* more.

Adam and Eve were confronted with the reality of their own limited knowledge, in contrast to the all-knowing mind of God. Perhaps they were offended that God was withholding something from them.

Perhaps their pride told them that they deserved to be equal with God. Perhaps it was just the human fascination with the mysterious unknown, the “what ifs” and the “why nots” that we all ache to answer. For whatever the reason, Satan made them the offer, a way to get beyond their mere humanity; the opportunity was right there in front of them. Reach out, taste, and know. . . .

Ever since, Satan has been offering, tempting, and luring mankind to fulfill their desire to know. Yet the result of his offer never satisfies. It leaves us feeling even emptier than ever and more desperate to find the answers.



What is at the root of this desire? Why is the temptation so successful?

POWER

It is our human pride that entices us (James 1:14). It is Satan's lie that on our own, we can achieve something. By offering man knowledge, he is offering power and authority.

In *The Genius of Ancient Man* we introduced you to the idea of “two kingdoms”: there are only two religions, two kingdoms, and two authorities in the world. It is the two authorities that we want to draw your attention to in this book. The battle for authority has been raging since the Garden of Eden, between God's authority and man's perceived authority, offered by Satan. At the core of our sinful beings, in our pride, we believe that we have the right to authority over ourselves and even in many cases, over others.

It is interesting to note how often authority and power are connected to knowledge. Our pride provokes us to know more, to have understanding and wisdom. Our quest for knowledge is often self-centered and usually rebellious against God. This is not to say that knowledge is evil, or that it



View from the top of Borobudur Temple Compound located in Central Java in Indonesia.

is inherently wrong to search for knowledge and to yearn for discovery. God wants us to seek wisdom (Proverbs 2:1–6) and to eagerly learn about His creation! But when the search for knowledge does not lead us to worship God and further His glory, then it is wrong.

We are sinful beings, eagerly pursuing our own desires. We choose to reject God and pursue knowledge on our own, for our own purposes. We choose to establish our own authority and trust in man rather than our Maker. As Isaiah proclaimed, “All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way” (53:6). We have exchanged the truth of God for a lie; we worship and serve the creation instead of the Creator (Romans 1:25). It has been the tale of human history for thousands of years.

PURPOSE

These characteristics make up the man-centered philosophy that was established as a collective mindset at the Tower of Babel. The goal to “make a name” was rooted in human pride and

accomplishment. It was the epitome of rejecting God, very similar to Adam and Eve’s sin. Just as in the Garden, at Babel mankind decided that they could rely on themselves. They rejected the authority of God, His kingship, His protection, and His standards. In their attempt to make a name for themselves, they rebelled against God and His provision. Mankind has been searching and grasping in darkness ever since.

And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them (Romans 1:28–32).

When man rebels against God and makes himself the authority, he is left trying to find meaning, purpose, and value starting from himself. But because man is finite and frail, unstable, and sinful, the conclusion of all his searching will be unsure, insecure, and will always come up empty.



Silver tetradachm owl coin — symbol of Athena, Greek goddess of wisdom

that His perfect, infallible Word, the Bible, is complete truth and speaks authoritatively over our lives. We believe the Bible takes priority over all other historical accounts, sciences, and persons.

Because of this, we know that history began “in the beginning” with the creation of the whole world in six days. Adam and Eve were the very first human beings, created on the sixth day in the very image of God: intelligent, creative, and without sin.

A HISTORY OF REBELLION

As we study history in this book, we will be looking for the motivating factors that influenced the ancient world. We will find ourselves questioning and wondering about the unknowns and mysteries that time has hidden. Speculating about the past can be enticing and intriguing, but it can also be dangerous. We may find ourselves stumbling into areas of fiction without even realizing it. History is an intricate web of cultures, persons, influences, and events that intersect, disrupt, and intrude upon each other in confusing patterns. Interpretations of the web vary depending on which thread you are following. It can be easy for speculation to become fact in our own minds and in our presentation of it, even if we don't have definitive evidence. We must be wary of this.

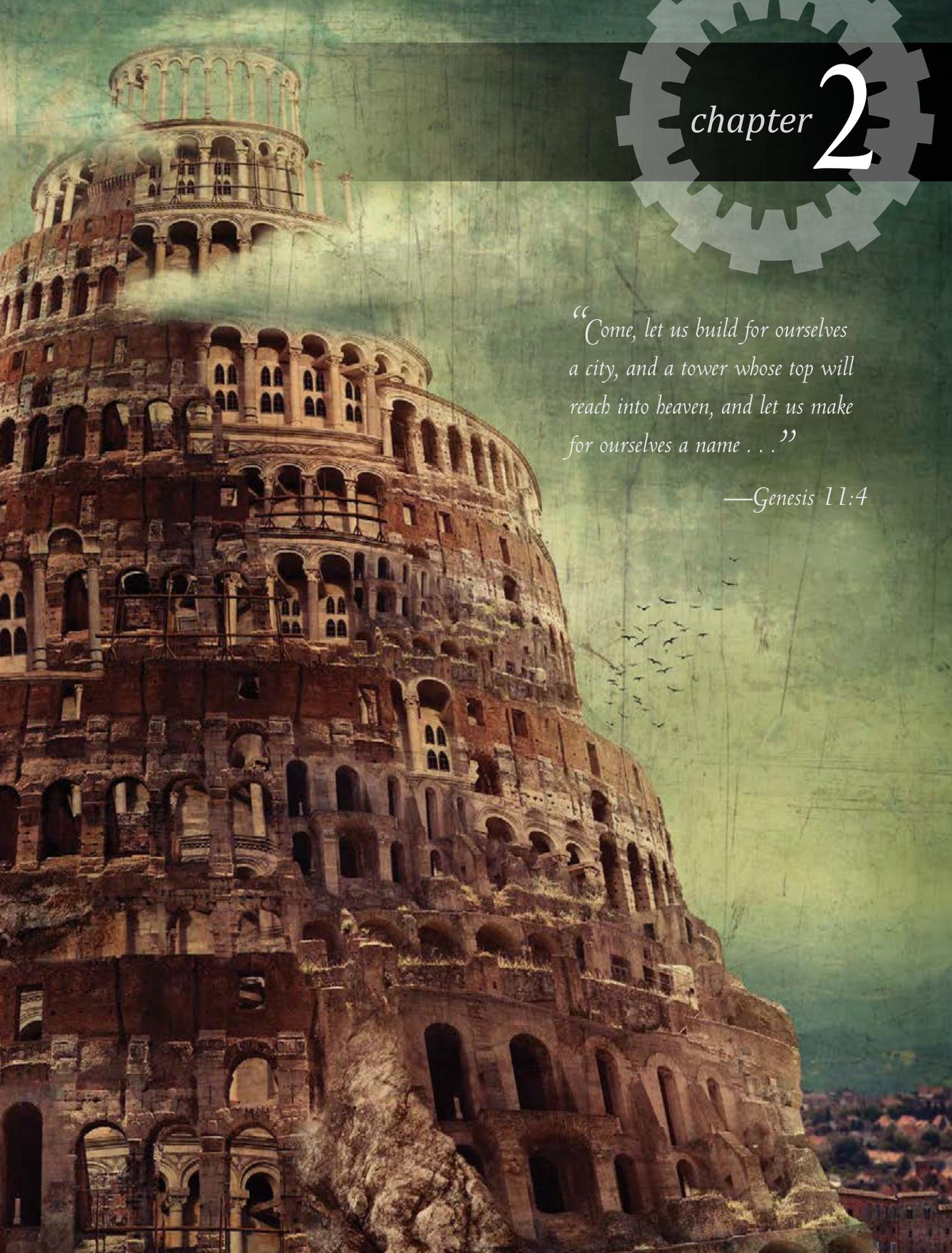
All of our interpretations are also influenced by our **presuppositions**, the predetermined set of beliefs that we all have and that we assume to be true. These presuppositions are closely tied to our worldview and therefore influence everything we think and do. Presuppositions aren't necessarily wrong, but it is important to acknowledge their existence and to make sure that our presuppositions are indeed true.

When we (the authors of this book) study history and ancient man, we presuppose the existence of God. He is our starting point. We also believe

UNTIL THE FALL

When Adam and Eve chose to trust Satan and their own reason instead of submitting to God's authority, they set the course of history into the downward spiral that we have found ourselves in today. Sin has wreaked havoc on the world, its cultures and civilizations, practices and philosophies. We cannot ignore the presence of sinful rebellion when we study history. Mankind's rejection of God has been a motivating influence for thousands of years, and identifying that rebellion will help us to untangle some of the events and beliefs of the past.

There is so much insight and value to be gained from looking at the big picture of history, from start to present. Though this book won't touch on every nation, we have made every effort to study each of the major civilizations and to track what we believe is the most powerful motivator of mankind — his self-centered rebellion against God.



chapter 2

*“Come, let us build for ourselves
a city, and a tower whose top will
reach into heaven, and let us make
for ourselves a name . . .”*

—Genesis 11:4

REBELLION AND RETRIBUTION

BABEL

[2402 B.C.]

For the purposes of this book we will be starting our record of human history at the civilization that came together at Babel. Though we acknowledge that history truly began much earlier at the creation of the world, since we have very little information about this time period due to the Flood, we will jump forward to roughly 2400 B.C. and the gathering at Babel. What began at this city was the first post-Flood blatant display of man's universal anti-God rebellion. As you will see, it was only the beginning of a world movement.

BUILDING A COUNTERFEIT

In the years after the Flood, Noah's descendants journeyed to and settled in the land of Shinar, literally meaning "between two rivers."¹ From the biblical account (Genesis 11:1-9) we know that it was in Shinar that the people came together and organized their rebellion against God. Their efforts and goals to build a city, tower, and name were initiated by a desire to defy God and His will. God had commanded the people to scatter and fill the earth, but they deliberately disobeyed this command, uniting under a new set of goals, in order to thwart God's purpose.

BABEL'S CALL

There are three aspects of the counterfeit that stand out as the chief elements of rebellion. The text of Genesis 11 defines them as *a city*, *a tower*, and *a name*.

From further study we can identify those elements as *political*, *religious*, and *philosophical* — the basis of the three-fold mission of Satan.

"COME, LET US" The goal of Babel was *unity*. It brought mankind together, against God's direct command to fill the earth, and gave them a sense of security and authority. They were united with one language and one purpose (Genesis 11:6), and this gave them immense strength and ability.

"BUILD A CITY" The city signifies that the people had political goals. They were organized, and the concept of unity carries the idea of one-world government. This concept has driven countless world powers throughout history to attempt world domination.

"A TOWER INTO HEAVEN" At Babel, the goal was to use their tower to reach into the heavens. It seems to have had very religious purposes because heaven is seen as the dwelling place of God (later, pyramids, monuments, and towers were usually built for religious reasons as well). Satan's counterfeit kingdom offers man the ability to be "like God," so the tower was probably their effort to design and manifest their own ability to be god — to enter the heavens themselves.

"A NAME FOR OURSELVES" The concept of "making a name" was the builders' approach to starting a new way of thinking. It was a system of belief in man, founded in mankind's abilities, his wisdom, his inventions, his discovery, and his reason.

¹ Bodie Hodge, *Tower of Babel* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2012), p. 46.

Through this philosophy, founded in pride, they would propose to find purpose, value, and meaning in life. It effectively removed the need for God and defined their worldview in entirely humanistic ideals.

The significance of this specific goal is often missed because it is not common knowledge that God gave names a great deal of importance. A name usually carried a lot more meaning and purpose in ancient times than we would expect in our Western culture.



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Consider the Ten Commandments; when God gave Moses the law. The third commandment concerned the honor due His name. There is glorious weight and meaning instilled in the name of God. God introduced Himself to mankind through revelation of truth, by giving us first one, then two, then a whole sequence of names for Himself.

Each of God's names gives us more understanding of His nature, character, and attributes, and more information about Him — they are descriptions and unique characteristics. His names tell us who He is and what He is like. Thus, to take His name in vain, to misuse it or dishonor it, is to attack that quality of Himself conveyed by the name — it attacks His very character.

Moreover, in the Bible, the giving of names signifies dominion; for instance, God named the stars and He also named Adam. God allocated some authority and responsibility to man: Adam named Eve, as well as all the animals. But Adam's was only delegated authority, since all authority is ultimately God's.

When man decided to “make a name” for himself at Babel, he was really declaring self-authority and self-dominion. To make a name would be to decide for themselves who they would be — to decide their own meaning and purpose. And of course, they hoped to make it a lasting name — to outlive their own lives by the power of their influence and legacy.

We believe this man-centered concept, what philosophers would call “humanism,” is visible throughout the civilizations of mankind's history even before Babel. But Babel is a great illustration because this way of thinking was inherent in Babel's initiator (Satan), builders, and followers. If man could attain his own spiritual enlightenment and become “like God,” then other philosophical concepts follow — concepts that raise man up as the measure of all things and the authority over himself. Because we can track the evidence of Babel throughout historical civilizations (in religion, monument-building, astrology, etc.) we can study this worldview as well.

WAS NIMROD THE LEADER OF BABEL?

<p>The name Nimrod literally means “we will revolt.”</p>	<p>The mission at Babel was to come together against God’s commands. Nimrod could be named (by God’s sovereignty) for his personal involvement in the rebellion at Babel.</p>
<p>Nimrod was a mighty hunter before/ against the LORD (Genesis 10:8-9)</p>	<p>“Mighty” means “manly, vigorous; hero, champion; angel.” The Arabic equivalent means “one who magnifies himself, behaves proudly, a tyrant, who is bold, audacious.”</p> <p>This phrase “mighty hunter” is grammatically connected with the beginning of his kingdom in verse ten, meaning his kingdom is a result of his “hunting.” Thus, he was a hunter of men, perhaps a successful tyrant, trapping men by force into his new imperial kingdom.</p>
<p>Babel is part of Nimrod’s kingdom.</p>	<p>Genesis 10:10 — “The beginning of [Nimrod’s] kingdom was Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.”</p> <p><i>Kingdom</i> means “dominion, kingdom; kingship, royal sovereignty; king.”</p>
<p>Evidence from legends all around the world</p>	<p>“Nimrod” is known all around the world by different names (because of the different languages that spread out from Babel). These names point to a false man-god trinity of Nimrod, Tammuz, and Semiramis.</p> <p>Accounts of men like Gilgamesh and Sargon are surprisingly similar to the biblical account of Nimrod and his kingdom.</p>

also grant, like to cities, not be joyed with of arrived who entire not he, but their men destroy not to mited, and he, me to ve off s, the ions, if I ordi- of the and the dding from such living lead both of in the air on But I er, by they God.) went fifty ly, he nity of the which om is ent an long a God, their might e, God their omical have of the or the have t have Barba-

rians: for even Menelto, who wrote the Egyptian history, and Berosus, who collected the Chaldean monuments, and Mochus, and Hestiaeus, and besides these, Hieronymus the Egyptian, and those who composed the Phenician history, agree to what I here say: Hesiod also, and Hecataeus, and Hellanicus, and Acusilaus; and besides these, Ephorus and Nicolaus relate, that the ancients lived a thousand years. But as to these matters, let every one look upon them as they think fit.

CHAP. IV.

Concerning the Tower of Babylon, and the Confusion of Tongues.

Now the sons of Noah were three; Shem, Japhet, 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, for the thorough peopling of the earth, 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 that 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.

Now it was Nimrod who excited 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 the government into tyranny, seeing no other way of turning men from the fear of God, but to bring them into a constant dependence on his power. 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 water 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