

## **#889 Benjamin Franklin and America as Babel – Franklin’s Speech of June 28, 1787, and the United States as a Second Babel**

***Genesis 11:1-7 (KJV) And THE WHOLE EARTH WAS OF ONE LANGUAGE, and ONE SPEECH.***

*2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.*

*3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.*

*4 And they said, Go to, **let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.***

*5 And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.*

*6 And the LORD said, Behold, **THE PEOPLE IS ONE,** and they have all **ONE LANGUAGE;** and this they begin to do: and now **NOTHING WILL BE RESTRAINED FROM THEM,** which they have **IMAGINED** to do.*

*7 Go to, **LET US GO DOWN, AND THERE CONFOUND THEIR LANGUAGE,** that they may not understand one another’s speech.*



**Franklin’s ‘Babel’ speeches.** During the course of the U.S. Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin wrote/delivered two speeches – the one of June 28, 1787, and another on September 17, 1787, the day the U.S. Constitution was signed – in which he offered the comparison of (a) the “builders of Babel” in Genesis 11 to (b) the constitutional efforts to combine the thirteen colonies into the government of the United States.

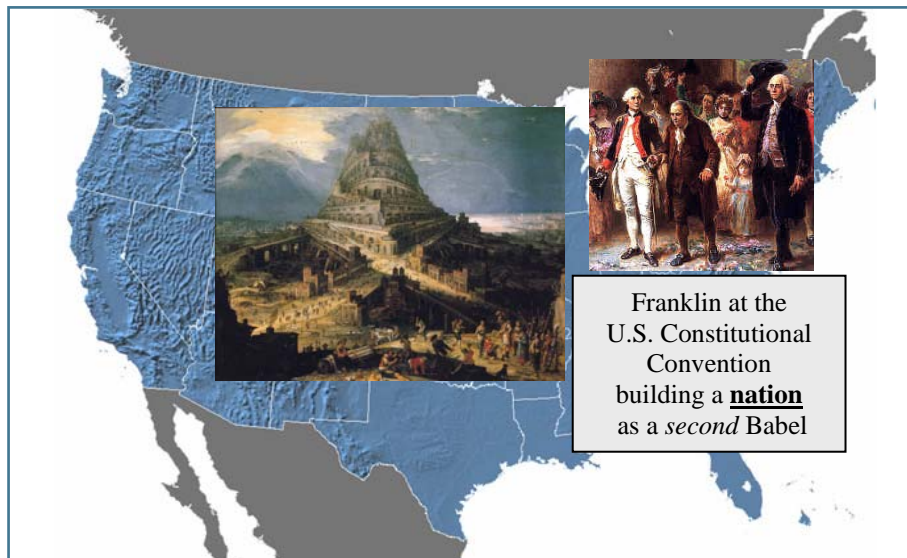
**Franklin’s June 28, 1787, ‘let’s not be Babel’ speech.** Here is a portion of the speech of June 28, 1787, some of which we have already covered.



I have lived, Sir, a long time and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth – **that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid?** We have been assured, Sir, in the sacred writings that “except the Lord build they labor in vain that build it.” I firmly believe this; **and I also believe that without his concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the Builders of Babel:** We shall be divided by our little partial local interests; our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a bye word down to future age(s). **And what is worse, mankind may hereafter from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing Governments by Human Wisdom, and leave it to chance, war, and conquest.**

Benjamin Franklin was referring to the Genesis 11 building of Babel and comparing it to the attempted building and uniting of the 13 colonies/states into the “United States.” The issue at the Constitutional Convention was how to structure the government, and there had been difficulties, confusion, and division. He implores the convention that if they do not include God they will succeed no better than the builders of Babel. The idea is that if the venture of forming a “United States” proved unsuccessful, those of future ages would liken the effort to that of building Babel, and they would do so because it was confounded by God.

**Key Understanding: *Franklin’s speech of June 28, 1787, and the United States as a second Babel.* Benjamin Franklin was likening the efforts of uniting the former colonies into “united states” to the builders of Babel, *if* the efforts were confounded by the Lord and resulted in failure, since that is what occurred at the building of the *first* Babel. However, the Lord did *not* confound the uniting of the former colonies into “united states,” but instead ordained Benjamin Franklin’s analogy to show that the success of the U.S. Constitutional Convention in completing the uniting of the former colonies into “united states” of the United States was indeed the successful building of a *second* Babel of Genesis 11.**



The colonies/states were of “one language” and “one speech,” and we will explain what that one language/one speech was as we continue forward.

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