

West Tennessee News Briefs

Is God Dead? The Science of Babel

By Ty Kerley



Kerley

Christians hold that the eight survivors of The Great Flood (Noah and his wife, their three sons, and their wives) disembarked the Ark on Mount Ararat and then migrated to the Plains of Shinar in ancient Mesopotamia. There, rather than multiply and spread throughout the entire earth as God had commanded, this remnant of humanity collectively built a city and a great tower that "reached up to the heavens" and attempted to compete with God. It was there and then that the entire human race was gathered as one race, one people, speaking one language, all the while disobeying God's command to disperse. "Then God said, 'Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech.' So, the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. Therefore, its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth. And from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of all the earth" (Gen 11:7-9).

What an incredible story! But is it true? *Can it be true?* Today there are some 6,000 languages spoken around the world. Can it be that all of these languages came from a common single language, a first language? Linguists (scholars who study languages) tell us that languages evolve and change over time due to migration, mixing, and cultural considerations. These language changes can act as a road map leading back to the language family from which it evolved. Linguist John McWhorter writes, "Typically, speakers leave footprints from their old language in their version of the new one." Here is an example. If we look at the word father, we begin to understand that some words in various languages have striking similarities. The English word *father*, is *vater* in German, *padre* in Spanish, and *padre* in Italian. From this simple comparison, it is easy to see that English and German are very similar to each other, as are the Spanish and Italian. Similarities between English and German are seen not only in the word "father" but also in many other words. For these reasons, linguists classify both English and German as members of the *Germanic* family. Likewise, Italian and Spanish are considered members of the Latin family. Based upon these and other comparison criteria, the 6,000 languages spoken around the world are grouped into approximately 400 language families. Much like a family tree, the world language tree becomes more condensed and compacted, moving from the leaves to the branches to the main trunk. Similarly, linguists further classify and group these 400 language families into proto-languages. For example, English falls into the Germanic family, and the Germanic family falls into the Indo-European proto-language family. Other proto-language families include *Afro-Asiatic*, *Mia-Yao*, *Turkic*, and *Semetic*, among many others. Using the analogy of a language tree, we could say that 6,000 languages (leaves) condense into 400 language families (branches), which further condense into 50 or so proto-language families (major branches).

From this perspective, looking at the world's languages raises the ultimate question: "Is there evidence that the 50 or so proto-languages are further condensed into a single language? Looking at it from the other direction: "Is there evidence that a single language (trunk) later further branches to 50 or so proto languages which later further branch into 400 language families, which eventually branch into the 6,000 languages spoken today? It is an important question because, according to Christianity, all languages should go back to a single language, the Noachic language spoken by the eight survivors of The Great Flood. In other words, the Noachic language is the singular trunk of the language tree.

The problem is that linguists do not see a linkage between the proto-languages, which indicates they all derive from one singular ancient language. McWhorter argues that those attempts at reconstructing the Noachic proto-language are not considered valid in the field of linguistics and that these reconstructions are horribly biased and, in the end, are "hopelessly untenable." But why would this be the case? Why do linguists find it impossible to back-track along the language family tree from the major branches to the main trunk? Christianity holds that there was only one language after The Great Flood: the Noachic language. If true, there should be a clear path back to Noah's language, but there isn't.

Why? While there are currently 50 proto-language families that linguists have discovered, there is the expectation that more families will be discovered. Perhaps it is that when all is said and done, linguists will discover and recognize approximately 78 proto-language families, one language family for each of the families that were given new languages and dispersed from Babel (cf Gen 10-11). Perhaps this is why linguists can only trace language families back so far and then run into a roadblock. If all the people on earth were gathered after The Flood, and all shared one common language, then each of the approximate 78 families were dispersed in different directions, each with a new language, then what we see is exactly what we would expect. At one point in ancient history, the language of Noah suddenly ceased, and perhaps some 70 new proto-languages suddenly appeared.

Once again, we see "all things merge into one." Join us next week as we look at the bottlenecks of human history after The Great Flood. Until then, *is God really dead?*

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Ty B. Kerley, DMin., is an ordained minister who teaches Christian apologetics, and relief preaches in Southern Oklahoma. Dr. Kerley and his wife Vicki are members of the Waurika church of Christ, and live in Ardmore. You can contact him at: dr.kerley@isGoddead.com.

Downtown Milan Building Could Be Demolished

A historic downtown building could soon be demolished after owners of the property failed to attend a hearing about the condition of the building.

The old barber shop located next to the Ritz Theater at 1115 South Main Street was the subject of the hearing. The City of Milan contends the building violates section 13-201 involving the slum clearance.

Present at the hearing were building inspector Byron Burns, and codes consultant Jim Pillow on behalf of the city. The property owner, Georgia Community Investments, LLC was not present at the hearing.

The hearing officer, Richard W. Vaughn, agreed that proper notice had been given and the city had carried its burden of proof that the building is unfit for business use.

Georgia Community Investments, LLC now has 60 days from May 12 to demolish the structure and remove all related debris or appeal the city's decision.

Man dead following collision with train

An Obion County man died early May 3 after a car and a train collided on Ed Moffatt Road, south of the Pleasant Hill community in rural Obion County.

Joshua Hairston, 41, succumbed to injuries sustained in a crash that occurred about 2:45 a.m., according to a preliminary report from the Tennessee Highway Patrol.

The THP reported Hairston was driving a 2012 Chevrolet Impala west on Ed Moffatt Road, approaching the railroad crossing. A train heading south was also approaching the railroad crossing, and a crash subsequently occurred between the car and the train.

No specific details were provided by the THP in its official preliminary report, provided by a THP public information officer in its Jackson District.

Neither the type of train nor the engineer's name were listed on the report from the state law enforcement agency. It did indicate there were no injuries to those involved on the train.

Numerous local law enforcement and fire/rescue agencies were on the scene for several hours early May 3 as it was cleared and investigation was under way.

WTRAC hosts 20th Invitational Art Exhibition to kick off Strawberry Week

On Sunday afternoon, the Strawberry Festival kicked off in high class with the 20th Invitational

Art Exhibition. A friendly competition between carefully selected visual art creatives, the event took place upstairs at the West Tennessee Regional Art Center in downtown Humboldt for an afternoon of appreciation and celebration for these local artists.

"We're excited," executive director for the West Tennessee Regional Art Center Bill Hickerson said, "This is the 20th year we've posted these exhibitions. It's an opportunity to showcase the works by talented artists of the West Tennessee Regional Arts Center."

Each year a committee selects candidates to partake in the yearly art event where each artist's work is judged to a high standard. There can only be one winner; one artist to take home The Brand Award, a beautiful ribbon alongside a \$500 cash prize.

"It's the appreciation of the quality of the work," juror Brian Bundren said. "Everything here is high standard. It's beautiful work."

Bundren explained that being the judge of an art competition of any kind is never easy, especially when there can only be one winner. The best thing about this particular competition is that by being selected to showcase work, the artists are already being declared an excellent artist. An art professor at Freed-Hardeman University, Brian Bundren explained the process by which he judges high-end artwork.

"What attracts me first and foremost is the skill that I see that's being drawn into the subject matter," he said. "that can be done in a variety of ways. You can do it in color, through technique, through composition, and a lot of other things."

This year's Strawberry queens and their courts were invited to observe as distinguished guests. Following a word from Humboldt Mayor Boykin, Mr. Bill Wickerson introduced the five candidates and their artwork. Abstract artist Stormie Steele, abstract artist Mary Spellings, watercolor artist Malanie Anderson, wire crochet artist Jennifer Harris, and subject artist Susan Highback.

Juror Brian Bundren went around the exhibits praising all five of the selected artists and offering insight that the non-artist may not pick up on so easily. By the end of the showcase, he communicated the difficulty of being tasked to choose only one winner out of such a pool of inexasutable talent. By the end of it, watercolor artist Melanie Anderson was awarded the Brand Award.

Melanie's watercolor showcases an explosion of vibrancy. Heavily leaning into flowers as her subject matter, Melanie expertly paints details of each petal while playing with the effects of sunlight she created, which gives her flowers a glow of masterfully curated translucency. Her whimsical style didn't hinder the skill required to paint such a complex subject.

"Flowers possess so many intricate layers which we take for granted, until you stop to look at one," Bundren said. "We see them on the side of the road, in the florist shop window, but when you actually stop and begin to look and dissect a flower, they become incredibly complex... you can tell the (color palate) is intentional. It's just a super saturation of color that rolls right off the surface and interacts with your eyes in a way that brings the subject to life."

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

State of Tennessee
Gibson County
Chancery Court at
Trenton, Tennessee

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
T.C.A. 30-2-306

Estate of Sandra
Farley, Deceased
Docket: #25983P

Notice is hereby given that on April 30th of 2026, Letters Administration in respect of the estate of Sandra Farley, who died 09/26/2025, were issued to the undersigned by the Chancery Court of Gibson County, Tennessee. All persons, resident and non-resident, having claims, matured or unmatured, against the estate are required to file the same with the Clerk of the above named court on or before the earlier of the dates prescribed in (1) or (2) otherwise their claims will be forever barred:

(1) (a) Four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting, as the case may be) of this notice if the creditor received an actual copy

of this notice to creditors at least sixty (60) days before date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting); or

(b) Sixty (60) days from the date the creditor received an actual copy of the notice to creditors, if the creditor received the copy of the notice less than sixty (60) days prior to the date that is four (4) months from the date of the first publication (or posting) as described in (1) (a); or (2) Twelve (12) months from the decedent's date of death.

This 30th day of
April, 2026

Signed: Matthew
West, Executor
Estate of Sandra
Farley

Katelyn Orgain,
Clerk and Master
By: Marcie Denton,
DCM

Attorney for the
Estate: W. Derek
Green

New Beginnings
United Pentecostal Church
1233 S. Lexington Street
Trenton, TN 38382

Thursday, May 14, 2026
7:00pm
Worship and Reminiscing

Saturday, May 16, 2026
1:00pm
Old Fashioned Gospel Singing/
Open House

Sunday, May 17, 2026
10:00 am
Dedication with Speaker Bro. Doug
Ellingsworth,
UPCI TN District Superintendent.

Various ministers, community supporters,
local contractors, and church leaders
will be recognized.

Come Celebrate with us!
Pastor John M. Singleton

NB NEW BEGINNINGS
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THE MIRROR EXCHANGE | HUMBOLDT CHRONICLE | The Tri-City Reporter | The Messenger | Weakley County Press

For more information contact Kim Forbes - phone: 731-420-0076 or email: gibsoncountypublishing@gmail.com