

CURRENT TEACHING SERIES

EPIC TALES

A dramatic scene featuring a whale's tail fluke rising from the churning blue ocean. The sky is dark and filled with rain, creating a sense of intensity and awe. The overall composition is dynamic, with the whale's tail as the central focus against the backdrop of a storm.

**RELEARNING THE ANCIENT BIBLE
STORIES IN A BRAND-NEW WAY**

Tower of Babel

מִגְדַּל בָּבֶל Migdal Bavel

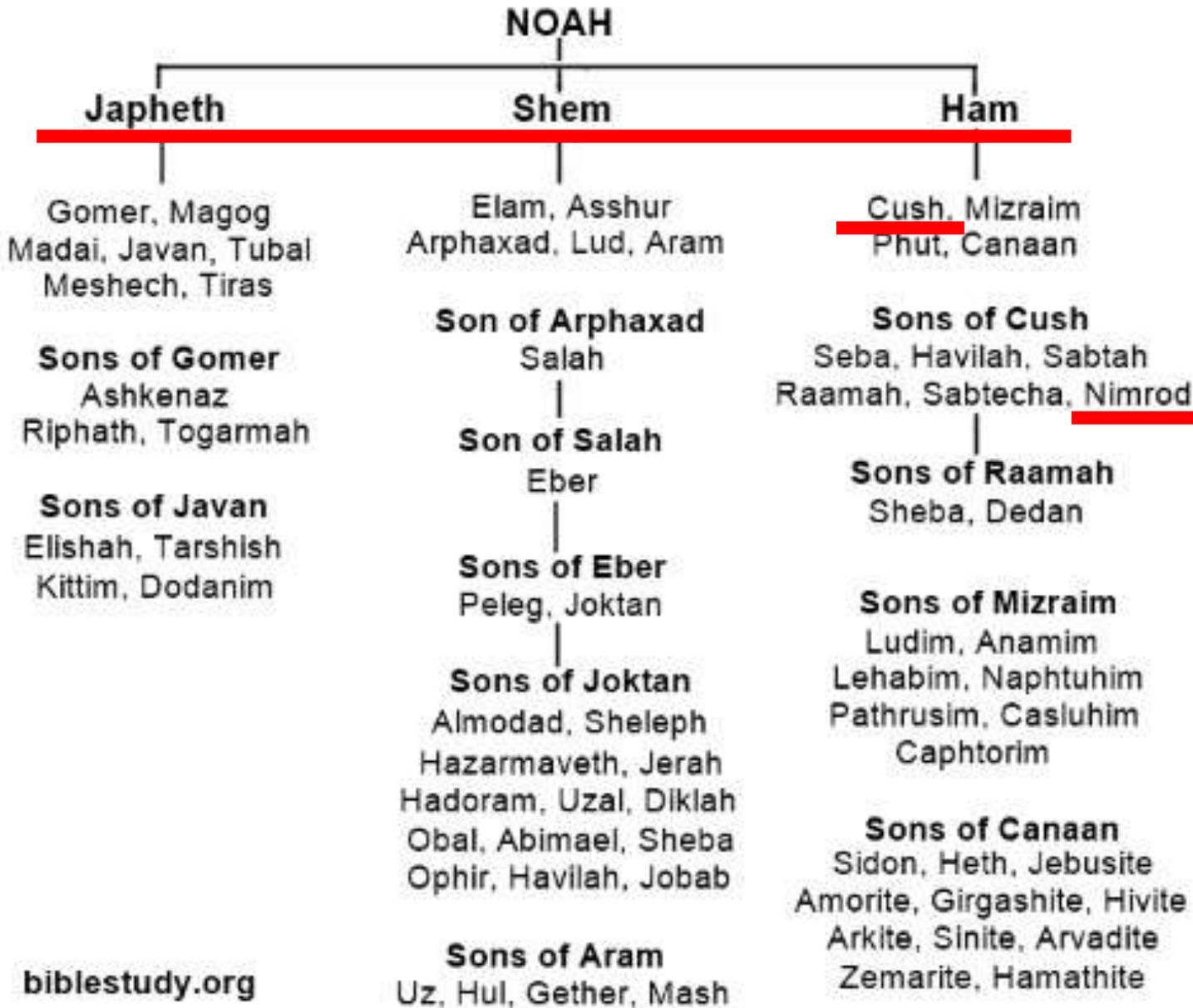
The phrase "Tower of Babel" does not appear in the Bible;
it is always "the city and the tower."

EPIC TALES

Genesis chapter 10

EPIC TALES

Noah's descendants (Table of Nations)



Now Cush became the father of Nimrod; he became a mighty one on the earth. He was a mighty hunter before the Lord; therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the Lord." The beginning of his kingdom was Babel and Erech and Accad and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Genesis 10:8-10



Plain of Shinar - a district of Babylonia in southern Iraq which included Babel (Babylon), Erech (Warka), and Accad or in central Mesopotamia close to modern Baghdad.

Jewish historian Josephus wrote about the efforts of Babel's founder, Nimrod, in *Antiquities of the Jews*:

Now it was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God. ... 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!

EPIC TALES

Genesis chapter 11



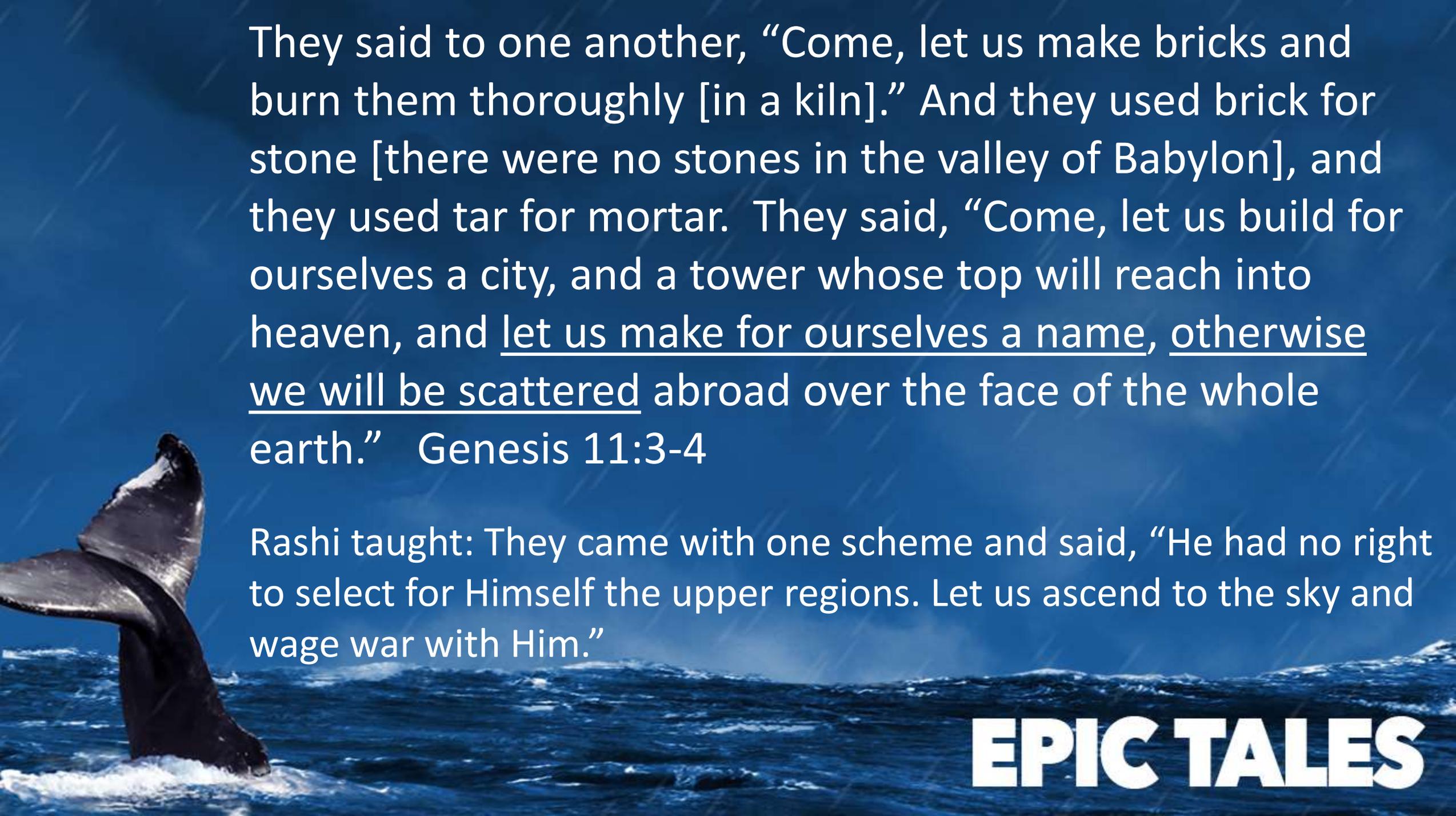
EPIC TALES

A photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the blue ocean, set against a background of a blue sky with light rain or mist. The whale's tail is dark and has a white patch near the tip. The water is a deep blue with white foam from the tail's movement.

Now the whole earth used the same language [שָׁפָה saphah] and the same words [דְּבָרִים אֶחָדִים debarim ahadim]. It came about as they journeyed east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.

Genesis 11:1-2

EPIC TALES

A photograph of a whale's tail breaching the surface of the ocean. The tail is dark and curved, with white foam at the point of exit. The water is a deep blue, and the sky above is a lighter blue. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

They said to one another, “Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly [in a kiln].” And they used brick for stone [there were no stones in the valley of Babylon], and they used tar for mortar. They said, “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, otherwise we will be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.” Genesis 11:3-4

Rashi taught: They came with one scheme and said, “He had no right to select for Himself the upper regions. Let us ascend to the sky and wage war with Him.”

EPIC TALES

This was open rebellion against God, an independence of God. Humility is often equated with trust and obedience, and conversely pride is related to independence and disobedience. Here the people came together to strengthen themselves and in pride to make a reputation for themselves lest they be scattered over the face of the whole earth. This appears to be in direct opposition to God's command to spread out and fill up the whole earth. – Bible Knowledge Commentary

And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.” Genesis 9:1

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A ziggurat, a pyramid-like structure made of mudbrick (Genesis 11:3), often had ties with pagan religions such as those of the Babylonians and Marduk. The construction of the Tower of Babel likely occurred in 2200s BC, but ziggurat structures started around 3,000 BC.



The Tower
of Babel by
Pieter
Bruegel
the Elder
(1563)



Did You Know?

Variations on the idea of a tower of Babel and/or confusion of languages can be found in such far-flung places as Korea, Mexico, Kenya, Estonia, Guatemala, Greece, Myanmar, Armenia, Polynesia and Alaska, just to name a few. These cultures join with those ancient Middle Eastern traditions held by the Sumerians, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syro-Phoenicians and Hebrews.

<https://www.thetrumpet.com/16106-just-a-bible-story-the-tower-of-babel>

EPIC TALES



Proverbs Speaks Often About Pride

- When pride comes, then comes dishonor, but with the humble is wisdom. Proverbs 11:2
- Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling. It is better to be humble in spirit with the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud. Proverbs 16:18-19
- Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, but humility goes before honor. Proverbs 18:12



EPIC TALES

Proverbs Speaks Often About Pride

- Haughty eyes and a proud heart, the lamp of the wicked, is sin. Proverbs 21:4
- The reward of humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honor and life. Proverbs 22:4
- Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him. Proverbs 26:12
- A man's pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honor. Proverbs 29:23



EPIC TALES

First Sin in all of Creation

Pride

Isaiah chapter 14

“Throughout Scripture, the essence of sin is to put human judgment above divine command.”

– New Bible Commentary

EPIC TALES



The rebellion of an angel called Lucifer, who becomes known as Satan

“How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, You who have weakened the nations! But you said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, to the recesses of the pit.” Isaiah 14:12-15

EPIC TALES

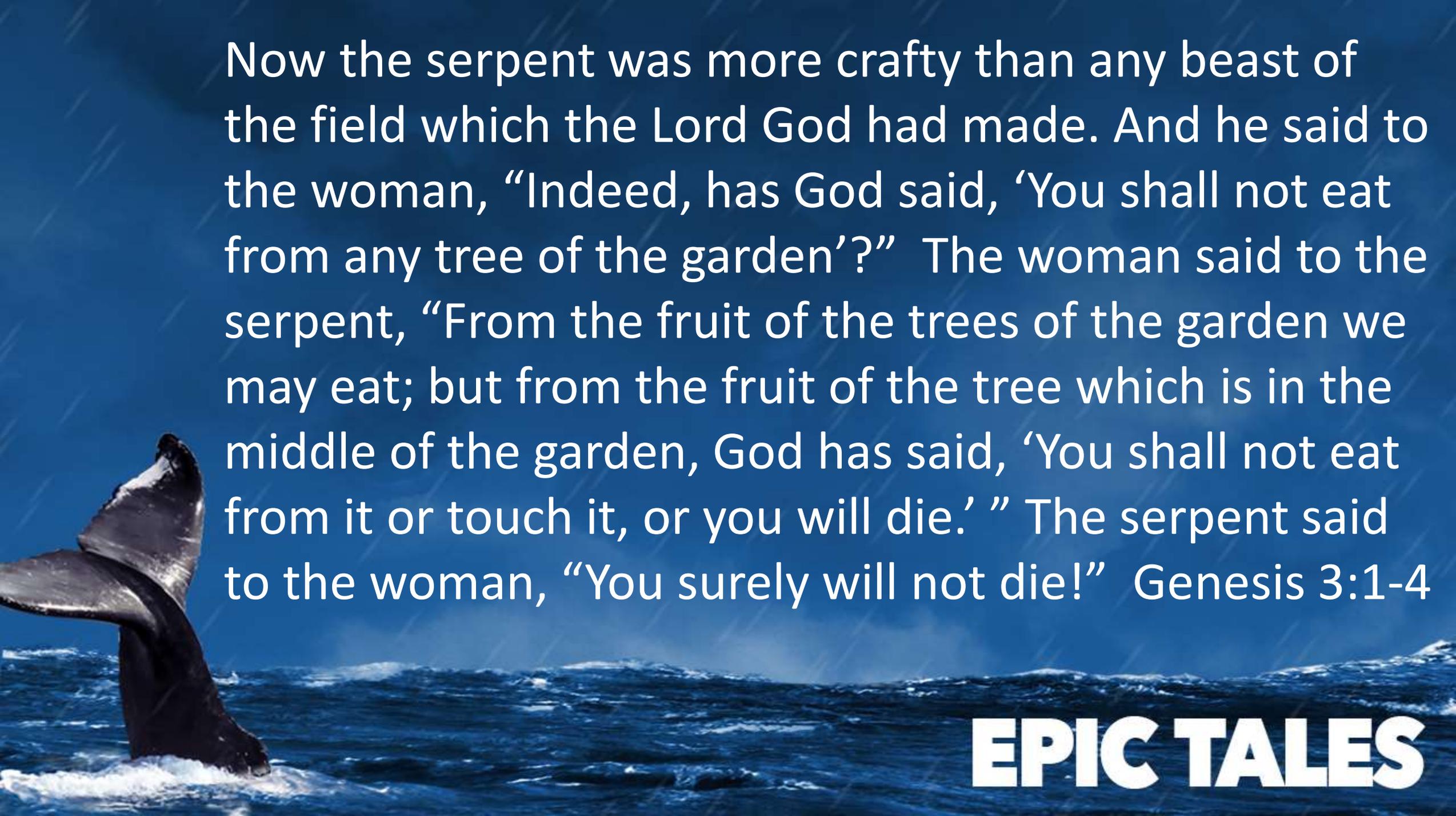
First Sin in Human History

Pride

Genesis chapter 3

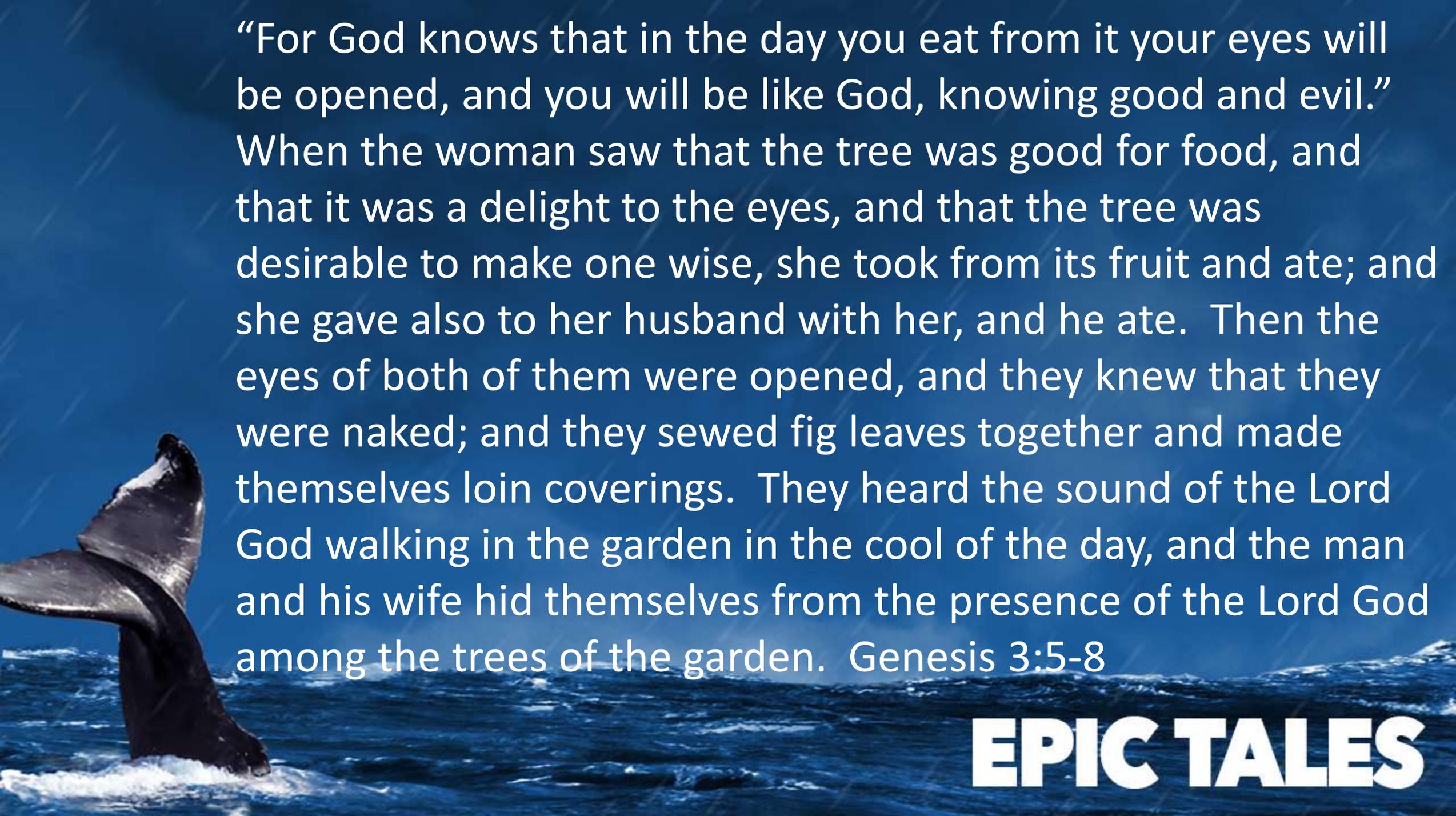
EPIC TALES



A whale tail is seen breaching the surface of the ocean on the left side of the image. The water is a deep blue with white foam from the splash. The sky is a clear, bright blue. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden’?” The woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.’ ” The serpent said to the woman, “You surely will not die!” Genesis 3:1-4

EPIC TALES

A photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the blue ocean, set against a background of a blue sky with light rays. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

“For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. Genesis 3:5-8

EPIC TALES

Beware of Pride

2 Chronicles 26

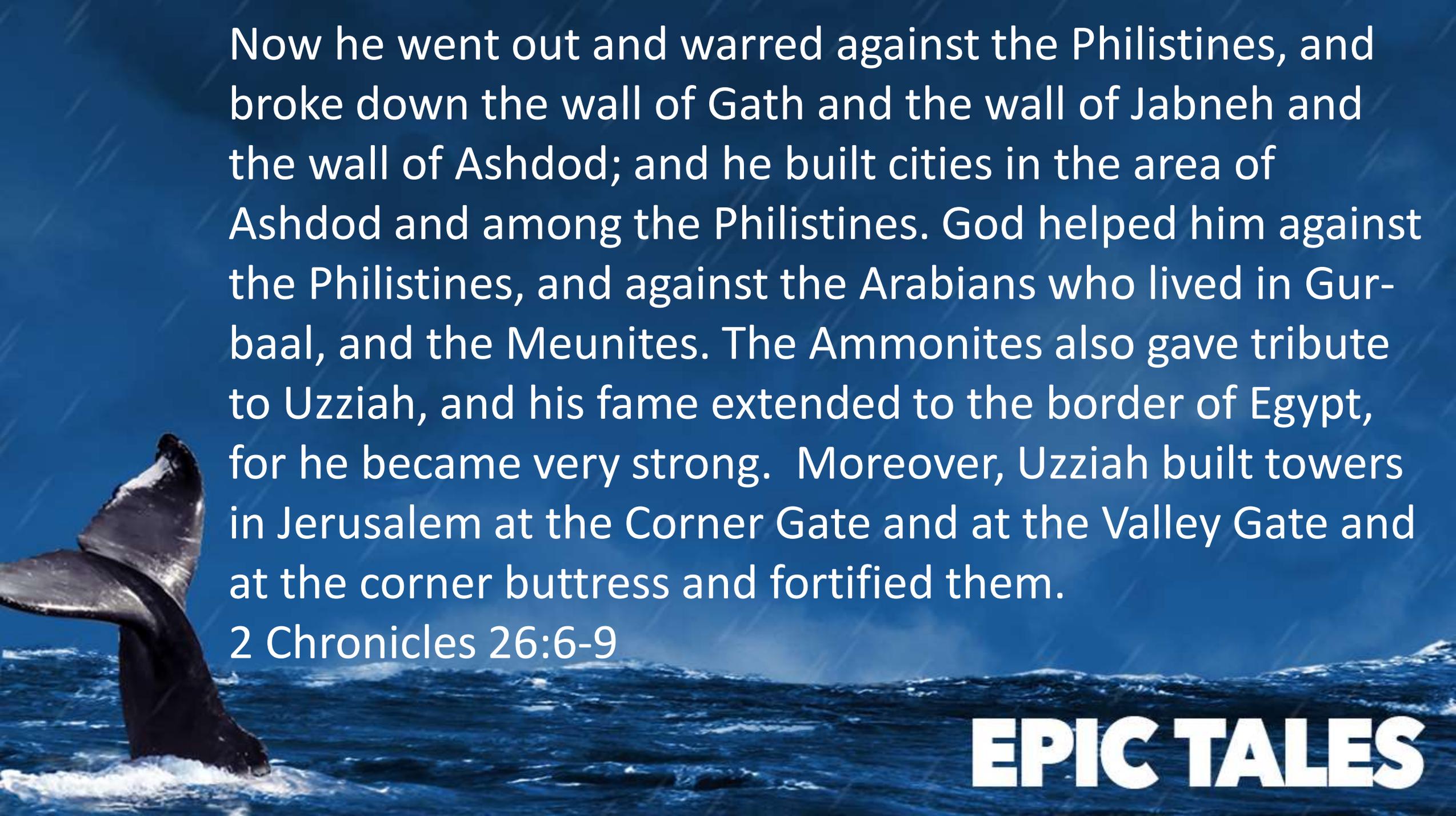
EPIC TALES



A photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the ocean, set against a blue sky and sea background. The tail is dark and curved, with white foam at the base where it meets the water.

Uzziah was sixteen years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Jechiliah of Jerusalem. He did right in the sight of the Lord according to all that his father Amaziah had done. He continued to seek God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding through the vision of God; and as long as he sought the Lord, God prospered him. 2 Chronicles 26:3-5

EPIC TALES



Now he went out and warred against the Philistines, and broke down the wall of Gath and the wall of Jabneh and the wall of Ashdod; and he built cities in the area of Ashdod and among the Philistines. God helped him against the Philistines, and against the Arabians who lived in Gurbaal, and the Meunites. The Ammonites also gave tribute to Uzziah, and his fame extended to the border of Egypt, for he became very strong. Moreover, Uzziah built towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate and at the Valley Gate and at the corner buttress and fortified them.

2 Chronicles 26:6-9

EPIC TALES

But when he became strong, his heart was so proud that he acted corruptly, and he was unfaithful to the Lord his God, for he entered the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense. Then Azariah the priest entered after him and with him eighty priests of the Lord, valiant men. They opposed Uzziah the king and said to him, “It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the Lord, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron who are consecrated to burn incense. Get out of the sanctuary, for you have been unfaithful and will have no honor from the Lord God.”

2 Chronicles 26:16-18

EPIC TALES

Genesis chapter 11



EPIC TALES

A close-up photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the dark blue ocean, with white foam from the water splashing around the base of the tail. The background is a deep blue sky with some light clouds.

The Lord came down [they had not reached heaven] to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. The Lord said, “Behold, they are one people, and they all have the same language [שָׁפָה saphah]. And this is what they began to do, and now nothing which they purpose to do will be impossible for them. Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language [שָׁפָה saphah], so that they will not understand one another’s speech.” Genesis 11:5-7

*The Power of Unity to do Wrong

EPIC TALES

The Power of Unity to do Right

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds.”

Hebrews 10:23-24

EPIC TALES



The Penalty for Pride

“So the Lord scattered them abroad [what they tried to prevent] from there over the face of the whole earth; and they stopped building the city.” Genesis 11:8

“What the wicked fears will come upon him, but the desire of the righteous will be granted.” Proverbs 10:24

EPIC TALES



Therefore its name was called Babel
[בָּבֶל meaning “confusion”], because there
the Lord confused the language of the
whole earth; and from there the Lord
scattered them abroad over the face of
the whole earth. Genesis 11:9

A photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the ocean, set against a blue sky and sea background.

EPIC TALES

“Pride is your greatest enemy, humility is your greatest friend.” - John R.W. Stott

“Pride leads to every other vice: it is the complete anti-God state of mind... it is pride which has been the chief cause of misery in every nation and every family since the world began.” – C.S. Lewis

EPIC TALES



Questions For Us

- Have you ever told God you would not leave your comfort zone to do His will?
- Do you think you can achieve your goals without God's help or guidance?
- Is your ultimate priority to “make a name for yourself”?
- Has God ever called you to change your priorities and goals in order to accomplish His plans?
- Should you thank God for preventing you from making bad decisions in the past?

A photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the ocean, set against a blue sky and sea background.

EPIC TALES

What is
coming
in the
future?

“For then [in the millennial kingdom of Messiah] I will give to the peoples purified lips [speech or language שִׁפְהָהּ saphah], that all of them may call on the name of the Lord, to serve Him shoulder to shoulder. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My worshipers, My dispersed ones, will bring My offerings. In that day you will feel no shame because of all your deeds by which you have rebelled against Me; for then I will remove from your midst Your proud, exulting ones, and you will never again be haughty on My holy mountain.” Zephaniah 3:9-11

EPIC TALES

Day of Pentecost... Opposite of Babel

A brief
glimpse
of the
future

They were amazed and astonished, saying, “Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God.” Acts 2:7-11

EPIC TALES

The Tower of Babel In Our Day?

Rabbi Naphtali Tzvi Yehuda Berlin (1816-1893) explained that they were the first social engineers—hoping to create a utopian society where all lived and thought as one. They feared that if some people would settle their own colonies and towns, they would develop their own cultures and unique modes of living. They wanted everyone to live in one controlled environment where they would be able to make sure that all remain culturally homogenous. The tower served as a base around which all people of their planned colony would settle—no one leaving its immediate environs. The problem with their plan was that it was the first step toward a tyrannical state where no individual expression would be tolerated, and God split them into separate nations.

Source: Rabbi Menachem Posner

EPIC TALES

The Power of Unity for Followers of Jesus

“Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 15:5-6

A photograph of a whale's tail fluke emerging from the ocean, set against a blue sky and sea background.

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CURRENT TEACHING SERIES

EPIC TALES

A dramatic scene of a whale's tail fluke breaching the surface of a turbulent, dark blue ocean under a stormy sky with rain falling. The whale's tail is dark and glistening with water, creating a powerful focal point on the left side of the frame.

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