

THE TOWER OF BABEL
SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: GENESIS 11:1-9



When man exalts himself, God will humbel him

The STORY

Pray with children to start class.

Teaching Points for Class Discussion:

The sinfulness of man will cause him to exalt himself over God – Notice how the ambitions of men in building the tower neither included God nor gave Him glory. The pursuits of man, apart from the saving grace of God, will always lead man to exalt himself and will never lead to a discovery of God. Apart from God, man is hopelessly lost. Even a noble pursuit such as building a tower became idolatrous and entangled in self-exaltation.

God exalts the humble but opposes the proud – God is fully aware of the deeds of man. He makes it clear in His word that He will frustrate the labors of the proud man but will lift up the lives of the humble.

What sin has scattered grace will gather – In Babel God divides the people with His judgment, but by the cross He unites divided people in His grace. In the end, He will assemble a people from every tribe, language, and nation to worship in heaven around the throne.

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Where Is Jesus?

Please use the following comments connecting today's lesson to the Gospel to help inform your understanding and serve you by aiding your preparation for class. Remember, we want to do more than present disconnected Bible stories and lessons to our young children. We want them to understand how each story in the Bible plays a part in God's greater plan of redemption.

God scattered the sinful people of the earth by confusing their language. Ever since, people have been divided from each other into separate tribes and tongues and nations. Jesus' redeeming sacrifice tears down the dividing wall between people and God and also the dividing wall between people and people.

All those who believe in Christ are, right now, citizens of one holy nation. Persons of all tongues and tribes will worship Him together in heaven when the curse of our sin is broken and our unity in Him is made complete. The book of Revelation tells us that the multitude of believers in heaven will cry out together with the same words. Now we speak in hundreds of languages; in heaven we will all sing with one voice.

After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

(Revelation 7:9-10)



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ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

Read the following Bible passage from the Old Testament. Use the following questions to help the children understand how this passage points to Christ in the New Testament.

Bible Passage: Isaiah 1:18

Connecting the passage to Christ:

In the book of Revelation John reports a group of saints who have come out of the great tribulation with white robes. He said the robes were washed "white in the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 7:14). Isaiah 1:8 also refers to this washing. The blood of Christ washes away the stain of our sin, which is represented by the robes being made white or pure.

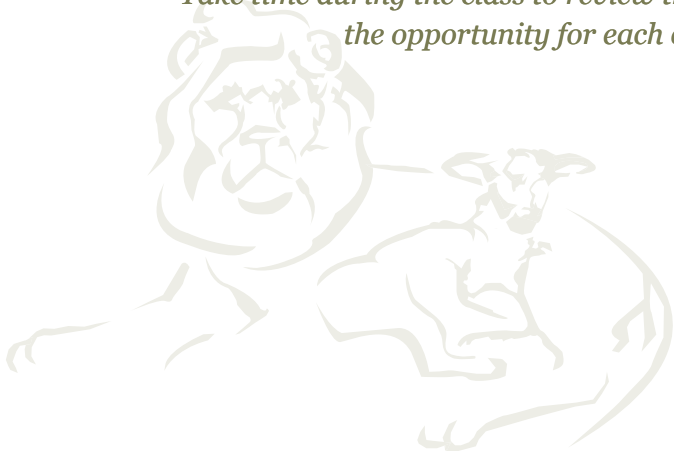
Questions for reflection:

- What does the passage say are red, like crimson and like scarlet? (The passage is referring to our sins.)
- What can make our scarlet sins white as snow? (The passage does not tell us specifically what can make them white as snow but it is the Lord speaking in the passage and He says definitively that "they shall be as white as snow." God was confident that the sins of man could be wiped clean. The reason for God's confidence in being able to declare this is because of the future sacrifice made by Jesus. The Father knew His son would die; the Father knew the penalty for sin would be paid; and the Father knew the stain of sin would be wiped away. This passage, which brought hope to the people of Israel, brought them hope because of the future declared work of Christ.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.



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ACTIVITIES & OBJECT LESSONS

Use the following activities for practical application and discovery of this lesson. For the younger children, review the preschool questions and use them to help the children relate to the passage. For older children, ask them why they think this passage is in the Bible for us today. How is it supposed to affect our lives?

CONFUSION OF LANGUAGE

Supplies:

photocopy the Genesis Bible Quiz (last page of this lesson)

The object of this exercise is to give the children an experience of the confusion of languages at the tower of Babel. (The last three questions of the quiz are in another language which the children will not be able to answer.) Explain to the children that you are going to give them a quiz. Pass out the quiz face down (do not make double sided copies of the two pages.) Explain to the children they may not speak during the test, but they can raise their hands if they have a question. Start the exam. When they get to the second page, a host of hands will raise and some may comment, saying they cannot understand the questions. Have them do their best to answer the questions anyway. (Some may give answers that might prove to be humorous to review if time allows later.)

After the exercise, draw them out as to what it was like to suddenly have their language confused. What must it have been like for the men building the tower to suddenly not understand one another?

- Why do they think God confused the language of the men? (Accept any answer.)

Answer to the questions that were translated:

8. Why did God judge the earth with a flood?
9. How many days and nights did it rain?
10. What did God place in the sky as His promise never to judge the earth by flood again?



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COMPARING PRIDE

Have someone from the class read Daniel 4:28-37 about Nebuchadnezzar's pride. Ask the class what was similar in the two stories. Ask them where they are tempted to give in to the sin of pride.

CONFUSION

Divide the class up into groups of 5 or 6. Have each group act out two scenes from the tower of Babel. First, have them act out two workers pridefully declaring their own praise for how well the tower construction is going. Then have half of them start speaking in another language. (This could be humorous as the two groups of workers react toward one another not understanding why their coworkers are babbling.)

Ask the following questions of the class:

- What kind of name might the men have given their own tower? (They might have called it The Mighty Tower or The Mighty Man's Tower or the Sears Tower, or the Empire State Building, or the World Trade Center...)
- Who did the men building the tower worship? (They worshipped themselves.)
- What kind of title is Babel for a tower? (It is a silly or perhaps even embarrassing name.)

Ask the children to look up Proverbs 15:25, 1 Peter 5:5-6, and James 4:6. Have the children describe how the verses relate to this passage.



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PRAYER

Pick several children to pray based on the day's scripture passages.

IN CLASS PROJECT

The first and second grade children can use the preschool coloring sheet and questions. Have the older children do a sculpture project with clay or toothpicks and white glue.

FOR OLDER GRADES

Supplies:

- paper and pencils

Have the children read Revelation 7:9-10 and then give them 15 minutes to write out a 50-100 word essay on how God's actions at the tower of Babel are reversed through the proclamation of the Gospel. Monitor their progress and pick three or four of the children to read their papers in front of the class.

Help the children with a simple paragraph outline: introductory sentence which introduces the topic, their discussion, and a concluding sentence which summarizes their opinion or conclusion.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

The "Us" of God – In Genesis 11:7 we read, "Come, let us go down and there confuse their language." Since we do not find angels or foreign powers at work in the passage, the plural "us" can be safely interpreted as a foreshadowing of the multiple persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) of the Godhead. Then in verse 8 we read, "So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth." Now we see that the Lord is one, not many. The mystery of three persons in one God is in many ways beyond our comprehension but not beyond mention in the Word of God. (Although this verse does not clearly reference three persons, it does suggest the mystery of more than one person in the Godhead).

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GENESIS BIBLE QUIZ

1. What were the names of the first two people God created?

2. What did God use to create the first woman?

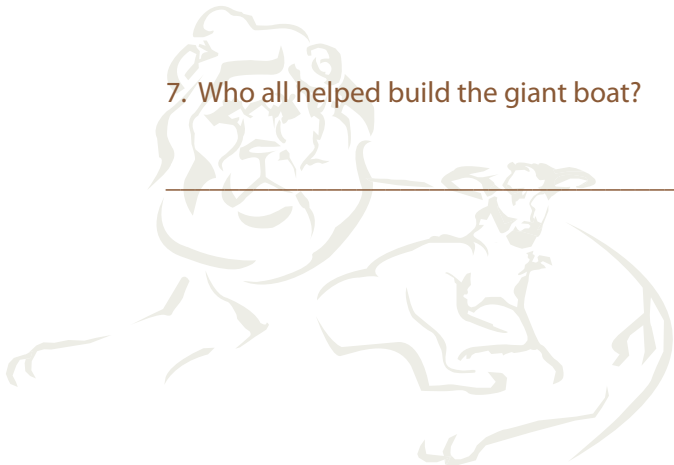
3. What was the name of the garden He placed them in?

4. What was the name of the tree that grew the forbidden fruit?

5. Who was the first man to kill his brother?

6. What did Noah build?

7. Who all helped build the giant boat?



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GENESIS BIBLE QUIZ

8. Waarom beoordeelde de God de aarde met een vloed?

9. Hoeveel dagen en nachten regende het?

10. Wat plaatste de God in de hemel als Zijn belofte om de aarde doorvloed opnieuw nooit te beoordelen?

