

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

Genesis

THE TOWER OF BABEL

Genesis 11:1-9

Elementary Lesson

Year One, Quarter One, Lesson Seven

[0070]

AIM: to use the story of the tower of Babel to teach my class that the one thing that we all share is that Jesus died for all of us.

OBJECTS TO HAVE: A picture of your family
 A picture of your house
 A map of your town
 A picture of a tower
 Your Bible

POINT OF CONTACT: I want to show you a picture of my **family**. (Pass picture around). Do you have a picture of your whole family at your house?

Now let me show you a picture of my **house**, where my family lives. (Pass the picture around). Somebody tell me what your house looks like.

I have one more thing that I want to show you. This is a map of the town where I live. Right here is where my house is.

Now let me ask you a question: How come you weren't in my family picture? Because you have your own family picture, don't you? And I'm not in your family picture, am I? Of course not.

And how come I don't have the same house that you have? Because my family has its own house, and your family has its own house, that's why.

And how come we all live in different towns? Why don't we all live in one big town?

The reason that we all have different families, and live in different houses, and live in different towns is because God made it that way. God knew that it would be best for everybody in the world to have their own family, live in their own house, and to live in many separate towns.

Today I am going to tell you about some people who thought God was wrong about that. They thought that they had an idea that was better than the way God said to do it. Let me tell you about them.

STORY: Last week I told you about how God sent the Flood to destroy the world. I told you how God chose one man named Noah to build an ark and save his family from the Flood. I told you that after the Flood there was nobody left in the whole world except for Noah and his family. It was up to Noah and his sons to have families and raise children and start the human race over.

God gave instructions to Noah and his three sons about how this was to be done. They were not supposed to live together as one big family. They were to have their own families, and build their own houses and start their own towns. Then as each son and daughter grew up and had families, they were to move out to a different spot and build their own house. God wanted people to spread out and fill the earth.

At first, they did exactly as God had commanded. Noah's three sons raised their children and taught them that they were to move out of the house, start a new home, and spread out across the world. They were doing exactly what God had told them to do.

But after about 100 years, Noah had a grandson named *Nimrod*. Nimrod had what he thought was a great idea. He got all of the people around him together and said, "Let's have a meeting. I have a big important idea that I want to tell you about." So all of the people in the town where Nimrod lived got together and Nimrod told them about his idea.

"I was thinking: instead of spreading out like we've been doing, why don't we all live together in one place and work together? Since we all speak the same language, and we all live on the same earth, we could all work together to

build one big city. In that big city we could build a great big tower. And if we all worked together, that tower could reach all the way up to heaven. What do you think?"

One man may have raised his hand and said, "I thought God said we were all supposed to spread out on the earth." Nimrod said, "If we work together and build a tower that reaches up to heaven, we would make the rules instead of God making the rules for us."

Everybody at that meeting thought that sounded like a good idea. So all of the people living on the earth got together and started making their plans. Nimrod put different people in charge of different jobs. He had one group of men make bricks to build with. He had another group of men mix cement to hold the bricks in place. He had another group of men cut down trees to make boards. He had another group of men cut the boards to the right size. He had another group of men dig a hole for the foundation. He had another group of men build the foundation. Many different jobs had to be done, and Nimrod put different men in charge of each job. They were all going to work together to build a tower that reached up to heaven. They would be in charge of the world. They would make their own decisions.

Of course, God knows everything that we do on the earth. God knew about Nimrod's meeting. God knew about Nimrod's big plan to build a city and a tower. God knew the pride of their hearts that made them want to do things their own way. And God knew the great problems that their plan would create.

God went down to see how the big project was working out. God came down to the earth and saw thousands of people living together in one place. God said, "That's not the way I told them to live. I told them to spread out and fill the earth." God saw one big city, while all the rest of the world sat empty. God knew that if they did not spread out they would run out of food, run out of water, and waste all of the valuable resources that He had provided for them around the world. God knew that He must stop this big tower from being built, or man would just get himself into more trouble.

But how would God stop them? God decided that the best way to stop them was to make it impossible for them to get any work done. To do this He would make these men all speak different languages. If they did not speak the same language, they would not be able to communicate. If they could not communicate, they would not be able to work together any more.

God changed their languages immediately, without any warning. While one man was asking another man to go get some more bricks, suddenly he was speaking in Italian, so that the other man could not understand him. While someone was telling another man how a certain wall was to be built, all of a sudden he started speaking in Chinese, so that the two men could not understand each other. Everybody working on this great tower began to speak in different languages. Imagine how confusing that must have been! Nobody could understand anyone else. There was no way they could work together. There was no way they could finish their tower or their city. So with the tower only partially built, everyone packed up their tools and began to move away to different parts of the earth, like God had first told them to do. They called the city *Babel*. The name Babel means confusion, and they named it that because their failed project ended in confusion.

Kids, the reason that there are different countries, different languages, different customs, and different races in the world is that God knew that that is what would be best for all of us. God always knows what is best.

But now, there is **one** thing that God made the same for everybody. **Everybody** gets to heaven the very same way. Those men were working on a tower that they thought would take them to heaven, but they were wrong. There is only one way to heaven, and it is the way that God has planned for all of the people of the world. That way to heaven is by trusting Jesus to wash our sins away and take us to heaven. Jesus died on the cross to be punished for our sins, and everybody who believes on Him will go to heaven.

So we may live in different places, but Jesus died for all of us. We may have different families, but Jesus died for all of us. We may even speak different languages, but Jesus died for all of us. There is only one way to heaven. Have you received Jesus as **your** Saviour?

Let's learn our memory verse: **Romans 10:10** – *For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

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THE TOWER OF BABEL

Genesis 11:1-9

Teen and Adult Lesson

Year One, Quarter One, Lesson Seven

[0070]

Teacher, choose one of the following truths to expand upon in teaching this portion of Scripture to your teen/adult class. Teach and apply the truth that you choose using statements and illustrations that are most helpful and applicable to your students.

- I. FOOLISH PLANS ARE BORN WHEN WE LOSE SIGHT OF OUR GOD-GIVEN PURPOSE. God had instructed Noah and his sons to fill the earth after the Flood. This was their great purpose. Genesis 9:1, 7. This was their charge from God. It was their duty to make that their great focus; and God allowed Noah and his sons to live many years after the Flood to see to it that this charge was fulfilled. But Nimrod, Noah's great-grandson, lost sight of God's great purpose for man. This is why he came up with the idea of gathering in one place, instead of filling the earth.
- II. IT IS POSSIBLE FOR A GOOD MAN TO HAVE A BAD IDEA. *Great men are not always wise.* Job 32:9. Nimrod was a man of great character. He was a strong leader. He was a provider. To some extent he pleased God in these things. Genesis 10:8-9. It was still imperative that Nimrod seek the Lord before he introduced his new idea to those who were under his influence. Those who were under his influence should have also sought the Lord for themselves, and not simply accepted his idea because he was a good man.
- III. IT DOES NOT TAKE MANKIND LONG TO FORGET THE LESSONS OF THE PAST. Nimrod was the founder of the city of Babel. Genesis 10:10. His grandfather was Ham, and his great-grandfather was Noah, both of whom saw the world destroyed for ignoring God's way. Both Ham and Noah were still living when Nimrod introduced his plan regarding Babel, and though they may not have been present to see the organizing of the city and the building of the tower, Nimrod should have gone to whatever lengths necessary to consult them before pursuing such a plan as this. Instead, just two generations away from the Flood, Nimrod introduces a plan that is a complete departure from God's plan. Many people were guilty of this same thing, for they worked together to create this plan. Genesis 11:3.
- IV. THEY THOUGHT THAT BY WORKING TOGETHER, THEY COULD COME TO THE PLACE WHERE THEY NO LONGER NEEDED GOD. Genesis 11:4. Man has always had this fantasy that with manpower and organization, he can make God irrelevant and unnecessary. Satan is the author of this lie, and prophecy reveals that he believes it himself.
- V. GOD'S MERCY PREVENTS US FROM GETTING OURSELVES INTO MORE TROUBLE. Genesis 11:6-8. God did not destroy them in judgment. He did not physically pick them up and move them to different locations. He simply introduced a circumstance that made it very easy for them to make the decision to give up on their own plans. This was an act of mercy on God's part. When God brings circumstances into your life to make it easy to make the right decision, He is showing you His great love!

The Tower of Babel

Genesis 11:1-9

[0070]

God Protects People from Their Own Bad Idea

I. GENESIS 11:1-4 Man's Clever Confederation

11:1 All people spoke the same language

11:2-3 A large group of people began to settle and build in one place

11:4 They developed a plan to make themselves safe and powerful

II. GENESIS 11:5-6 God's Concerned Observation

11:5 God went down to see what they were doing

11:6 God wisely knew that their plan would cause pain and destruction

III. GENESIS 11:7-9 God's Merciful Solution

11:7 God instantly divided them by changing their languages

11:8 Their inability to communicate forced them to abandon their plan

11:9 The plan and the event are forever known as "Babel"

Romans 10:10

*For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness;
and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

The Tower of Babel

GENESIS 11:1-9

[0070]

Match the answer from the right column that best fits the clue in the left column. Write the LETTER of the correct answer in the SPACE beside the matching clue.

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| _____ <i>Men who had to start the human race over again</i> | A NIMROD |
| _____ <i>God's instructions to Noah and his sons after the Flood</i> | B PRIDE |
| _____ <i>Convinced the people to build one big city</i> | C BABEL |
| _____ <i>Would reach up to heaven</i> | D "SPREAD OUT!" |
| _____ <i>Made these people want to do things their way instead of God's way</i> | E EVERYBODY |
| _____ <i>Came down to see what they were doing</i> | F NOAH AND HIS SONS |
| _____ <i>God changed these so the people could not work together any more</i> | G GOD |
| _____ <i>The name of the city</i> | H CONFUSION |
| _____ <i>The meaning of the name "Babel"</i> | I THE TOWER |
| _____ <i>Can go to heaven by trusting Jesus</i> | J LANGUAGES |

***For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness;
and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.***

ROMANS 10:10

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The answers to today's puzzle

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| <u>F</u> <i>Men who had to start the human race over again</i> | A NIMROD |
| <u>D</u> <i>God's instructions to Noah and his sons after the Flood</i> | B PRIDE |
| <u>A</u> <i>Convinced the people to build one big city</i> | C BABEL |
| <u>I</u> <i>Would reach up to heaven</i> | D "SPREAD OUT!" |
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