

The Tower of Babel

Genesis 11:1-9

PPT Title

The Tower of Babel

Main Point: God loves people. He wants us to listen to Him and obey Him because He knows what is best.

PPT Verse

Key Verse: Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, My thoughts and My ways are higher than yours. - Isaiah 55:9 CEV



Teacher: If you know how to say anything in another language, begin your lesson by speaking that language. If you don't speak another language, invite someone else to begin your lesson.

Say: Today we're going to learn why there are so many languages in the world. Since Noah and his sons lived through the flood and experienced God's deliverance, it is very likely that their children heard all about God and His wonderful power. But somewhere down the line, the parents were not faithful in teaching their children to listen to, trust, and obey God. Here we are in Genesis chapter 11, and something terrible is going on!



Ask: After the floodwaters went down and Noah and his family got out of the Ark, do you remember what God told Noah's sons to do? *Have many children, fill the earth.*

*Then God gave his blessing to Noah and his sons. He said to them, "Have children and increase your numbers. **Fill the earth.**"* - Genesis 9:1

Say: And this is the problem: they were NOT filling the earth. They were all staying in one place. They moved east and settled down there.

The whole world had only one language. All people spoke it. They moved to the east and found a broad valley in Babylonia. There they settled down.

They said to each other, 'Come. Let's make bricks and bake them well.' They used bricks instead of stones. They used tar to hold the bricks together.



Then they said, 'Come. Let's build a city for ourselves. Let's build a tower that reaches to the sky. We'll make a name for ourselves. Then we won't be scattered over the face of the whole earth.'" - Genesis 11:1-4

Teacher Note: Notice, They used bricks (which are MAN-made) instead of stones (which are GOD-made).

Ask: Did you hear that? Let's build a city **for ourselves**. We'll make a name **for ourselves**. Then we won't be scattered over the face of the whole earth.

Ask: Were they obeying God's command to fill the earth? *No.*

Say: Sin ALWAYS spoils things. Because the people chose to disobey God, there were going to be serious consequences. The Bible says that the whole world had only one language. All the people spoke it. There is certainly nothing wrong with speaking one language. But like every other good gift that God has given to people, it was misused.

Ask: Can you think of other good gifts that God has given to people that we misuse? [\(Listen to answers\)](#)

For example, sleep is a good gift from God. In Psalms, the Bible tells us that God gives His children rest. Can rest be misused? Yes. If someone is lazy and stays in the bed all the time instead of getting up and going to school or work, then rest is being used in the wrong way.

This is how it was with the gift of language. By itself, one common language was a good thing. But when the people used that gift as a means of disobeying God, it became a bad thing.

Say: The people had clear intentions: they wanted to build a city FOR THEMSELVES and make a name FOR THEMSELVES. It was all about them, and NOTHING about God! And to make matters worse, they were in clear opposition to what God said: "Fill the earth". Their ending statement indicated that the main reason for building this tower was that they did not want to be scattered all over the earth.



Building this tower was not easy. Look at what hard work they put into this effort: they made their own bricks and even had to bake them. Most of the buildings at that time were made from rock, but the area that they settled into did not have enough rocks for this tower. That's why they had to make bricks.

Ask: Do you think that making and baking bricks was an easy process? *No.*

Say: They went through a lot of hard work to disobey God. Whenever you disobey God, things get MUCH harder!

Note to Teacher: Think about times in your own life when you've sinned and gone your own way. Those are some of the hardest times! That's why Jesus said that His yoke was easy and His burden was light (Matthew 11:30). Sin weighs us down and makes us miserable in the end. It is hard work to stay in sin!

The real issue here is a lack of listening to God and trusting God. When God told the people to fill the earth, He meant it. He knew that it was for their own good. The Bible says that God's ways are FAR better than our ways (Isaiah 55:9). But the people couldn't imagine not all living together. They didn't trust that God's way was the BEST way!

But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. The Lord said, "They are one people. And all of them speak the same language. That is why they can do this. Now they will be able to do anything they plan to. Come. Let us go down and mix up their language. Then they will not understand each other."



So the Lord scattered them from there over the whole earth. And they stopped building the city. The Lord mixed up the language of the whole world there. That's why the city was named Babel. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.
- Genesis 11:5-9

It is impossible to succeed against the plans of the Lord (Pasm 33:11). No matter how hard these people tried to do their own thing, their plans could never succeed against an all-powerful God. Some people work very hard to oppose God and His people. But they will never succeed. God is ALWAYS the Victor! And God is the Victor in this story. Because God loves people, He steps in to help them listen to His way, which is always the BEST way!

The Bible says that God "mixed up their language" so that they could not understand each other. Then the Bible says that He scattered them over the whole earth. The city was named Babel. Mixing up the language and scattering the people was really not so much of a punishment as it was an incredible act of mercy.

Think: Have you ever been FORCED to obey? Do not be frustrated with God for this.

Instead, GIVE THANKS! He loves you, and He ALWAYS knows what is BEST for you!

Say: The irony here is that the thing the people feared the most (being scattered) was the very thing that saved their lives! God clearly knows what is best, and we are wise if we listen to Him from the beginning (Proverbs 8:33)!

In this time, the people put their trust in themselves by building a tall tower.

Ask: What are some things that people today put their trust in? **Listen to answers.** Relationships, money, stuff, technology, etc.

Say: At any time, if we begin to trust in something other than God, we are in serious danger (Psalm 20:7)!

PPT Main Point

Main Point: God loves people. He wants us to listen to Him and obey Him because He knows what is best.

Note to Teacher: Zephaniah 3:9 indicates that one day we may all serve God with one language.

*"In the end, I will turn things around for the people.
I'll give them a language undistorted, unpolluted,
Words to address God in worship." - Zephaniah 3:9 (The Message)*