

# Church of God Sunday School

## THE TOWER OF BABEL

Genesis 11:1-9

God sent a great flood to destroy the earth because people were so wicked. Only Noah, his family, and the animals that were on the ark were spared. When the water from the Flood finally went down, Noah and his family left the ark.

"And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth" (Genesis 9:1). God wanted Noah and his wife and their three sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth (*Jafeth*)—and their wives to fill the whole earth with more people.

Many years passed, and the number of people grew. At that time in the earth's history, all the people spoke one language, and everyone could understand one another.

As the people multiplied, they began to travel together "from the east," and "they found a plain [a valley]." This place was called Shinar (*Shinar*). No doubt, this was a large plain with fertile ground—a good place to grow crops and feed their animals. So, they decided to live in this land.

After deciding to dwell in Shinar, the people also agreed to work together and construct a city and a great tower. The tower would be built of brick and mortar. They wanted the tower to "reach unto heaven." The people wanted to make a name for themselves so that all men who came later would know of them. Also, they believed that with the tower to represent them, they would not be scattered upon the face of the earth.

So the work of building the great city and the tower began. Remember, they did not have all the modern equipment that we have today. The work was hard. Just the making of the brick was hard work, and it took time. Day after day they worked on the city and the tower. They were making progress, little by little,

on the tower, but it was all for their own glory. And, while they were busy working on the tower, they were forgetting all about God.

The Lord God was watching the men as they worked. When the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, He saw that the people were one. They had one language, and they were all working together toward one common goal. But God saw that their reason for building was wrong.

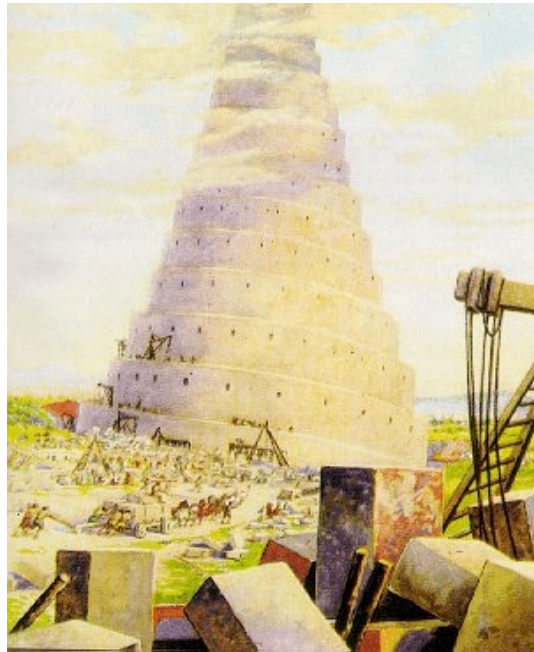
"The Lord said, This is only the beginning of what they will do. They will be able to do anything they want" (*International Children's Bible*). God knew if He let the people continue building, they would stop at nothing once they had set their minds to do it.

So God decided to confound (or to confuse and mix up) their speech so that they could not understand one another. This caused the building of the tower to stop. Even the building of the city was stopped for a while because the people gave up and separated from one another.

"So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth."

The people left the plain of Shinar and began to scatter about over the whole earth, just what they had not wanted to do! Some men went here; some went there.

And, because God had confused and mixed up their speech when they were building the city, the people called the city *Babel*, which means "confusion." Babel, or Babylon as it was also called, later became the capital of the country of Shinar.



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**MEMORY VERSE:**

*"And the whole earth was of one language, and one speech."*  
—Genesis 11:1