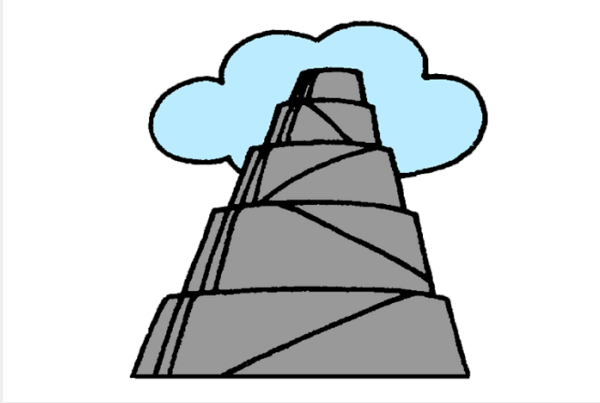
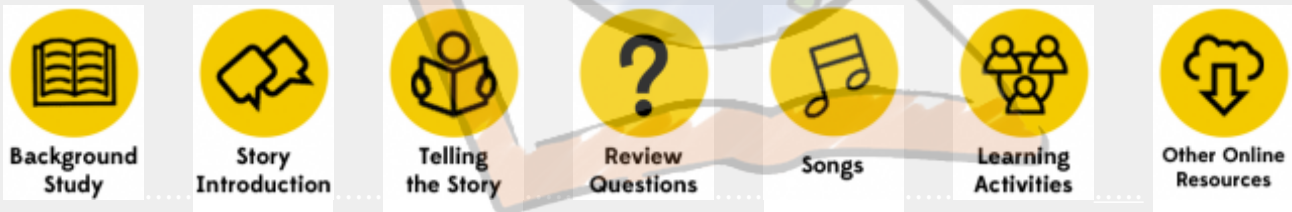


Tower of Babel



Scripture Reference: [Genesis 11:1-9](#)

Suggested Emphasis or Theme: We should not have an unhealthy pride.



Story Overview:

After Noah and his family left the ark, God planned for them to spread out over the whole earth and repopulate it. Instead, in their pride, they gathered in one place and began to build a tower. To intervene, the Lord confused and stopped their plans by causing everyone to speak different languages. Once again people began to move away and spread all over the earth.

Background Study:

Only eight people survived the flood. They were Noah and his wife, his three sons, and their wives. Through these eight people the world was populated again ([Genesis 9:18-19](#)).

After tracing the descendants and movement of Noah's sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth in the tenth chapter, [Genesis 11:1-9](#), actually goes back to fill in the detail of how it came about that the descendants of these brothers spread all over the earth after the flood.

God's plan seems to have been for Noah's descendants to spread out and replenish the earth. Instead, they wanted to stay in one place and show what amazing things they could do. In [Genesis 11:4](#) it is clear that the tower being built was a monument to their own abilities instead of a reliance upon God. Years later the Psalmist will write about the importance of submitting to God.

"If the Lord doesn't build the house, the builders are working for nothing."

[Psalm 127:1, International Children's Bible](#)

In addition to the pride of the people in their own abilities there was a direct intention to push God out of the picture and be in charge themselves. They were building this tower "so that we may make a name for ourselves." ([Genesis 11:4, NIV](#)) In contrast to this attitude God will later make it very clear that HE is the one with the power to make a people and a name great when he tells Abram,

"I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing." [Genesis 12:2, NIV](#)

([Genesis 11:5-9](#)) It is ironic that the tower at Babel seemed to soar so high and yet the

Lord had to “come down” to see it. Towers in ancient Mesopotamia were called [Zigurats](#). The buildings began with a square base and then “it had the form of a terraced step pyramid of successively receding stories or levels.” ([Wikipedia](#))

The people proudly built their tower higher and higher without any apparent intention to pause and consider God. It was at this time that God chose to intervene and “re-set” the situation. By confusing their language He forced them to immediately come to terms with their own limitations. The building project stopped and the people began to move out from this place.

In today’s lesson talk about the difference between healthy self-esteem and an unhealthy pride. Here’s a definition of pride from [Dictionary.com](#):

- Positive Pride- A becoming or dignified sense of what is due to oneself or one’s position or character; self-respect; self-esteem. Pleasure or satisfaction taken in something done by or belonging to oneself or believed to reflect credit upon oneself:
- Negative Pride: A high or inordinate opinion of one’s own dignity, importance, merit, or superiority, whether as cherished in the mind or as displayed in bearing, conduct, etc.

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Way to Introduce the Story:

As the children arrive, have blocks or legos available. Guide the students in building a tower as tall as they can. Older children might want to play a round or two of “Jenga” or build a house of cards. “Today we are going to read about a time when some people decided to build the tallest tower that had ever been built.”

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The Story:

After the flood people had to begin all over again. Noah’s sons had large families and there were soon many people. Sadly, the people began to forget about God. God wanted them to move to other places but they decided to stay together in one city instead.

As time went by they began to forget about God and only think about what good builders they were. They were so proud of themselves! The people wanted to build something to show how good they were. They wanted to be famous. They decided to build a very tall tower.

Do you know what the word “pride” means? Actually, pride can have a good meaning or a bad meaning.

Good Pride is when you feel good about yourself because you have done a good job or you are part of something good that makes you feel happy. You might feel proud of the way you have learned something new at school or you may be proud of your family. God likes it when we feel this kind of pride.

Bad Pride is when you think TOO well of yourself. You might think you are better than you really are if you have bad pride. You might look down on other people and think you are better than them. God does not want us to have this kind of pride.

The people who were building the tower had a bad kind of pride. They thought they were so good that they were even better than God. They never even said “thank you, God”. They thought they didn’t need God to make the best city and the tallest tower. They thought they could do it all on their own. In fact, they thought so much about themselves that they didn’t even think about God very much at all.

Finally, God decided that he had to put a stop to this pride. He wanted the people to think about him and not about a tower. He wanted to people to start moving to new places and not all live in one big city.

So God caused something amazing to happen. God confused the people’s languages so that they could no longer understand each other. When someone talked it just sounded like strange noises or “babbling.”

It became impossible to work together on the tower. Everyone just got mixed up. The people stopped working together. The town became known as “Babel” because of all of the different languages. Everything in the city was so confusing that the people started moving away into smaller places where they could learn to talk together better. Now they stopped having so much bad pride. They learned an important lesson about pride. They learned that they were not the best after all. God is the best!

Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using a variety of methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection, student interaction and/or emotion.

[Click here for visual aids and story-telling methods.](#)

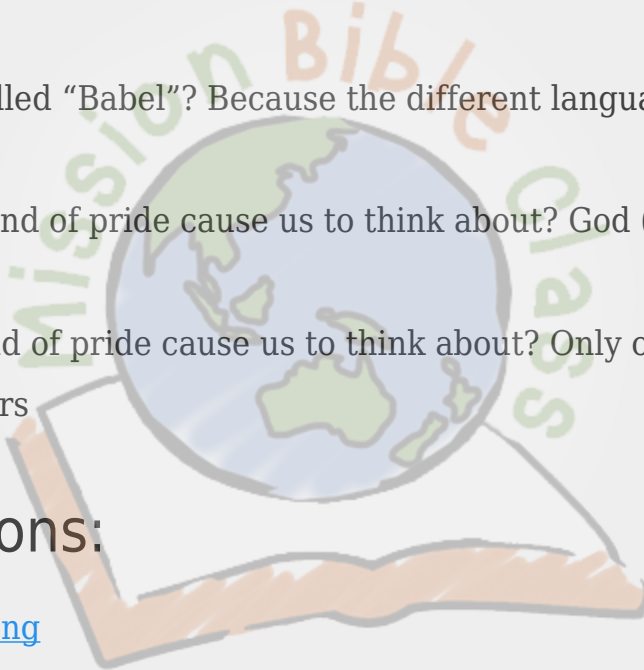
[Click here to download the slideshow](#) or [click here to download the pictures to print](#). Each teacher is unique so only use the illustrations that best relate to the way YOU are telling the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing so eliminate

any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

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Review Questions:

1. Did God want Noah's sons and their descendants to live in one place? No
2. Why did the people of Babel begin building a tall tower? To make a tower so good that they would be famous and so that everyone would want to live in one place—their city.
3. How did God stop the people from building the tower? He caused them to speak different languages.
4. Why was the city called "Babel"? Because the different languages sounded like babbling.
5. What does a good kind of pride cause us to think about? God (and what He has done for us)
6. What does a bad kind of pride cause us to think about? Only ourselves and how we are better than others



Song Suggestions:

- [My God is So Big Song](#)
- [Oh Be Careful Song](#)
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more options.

Learning Activities and Crafts:

[\(How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation\)](#)

Activities:

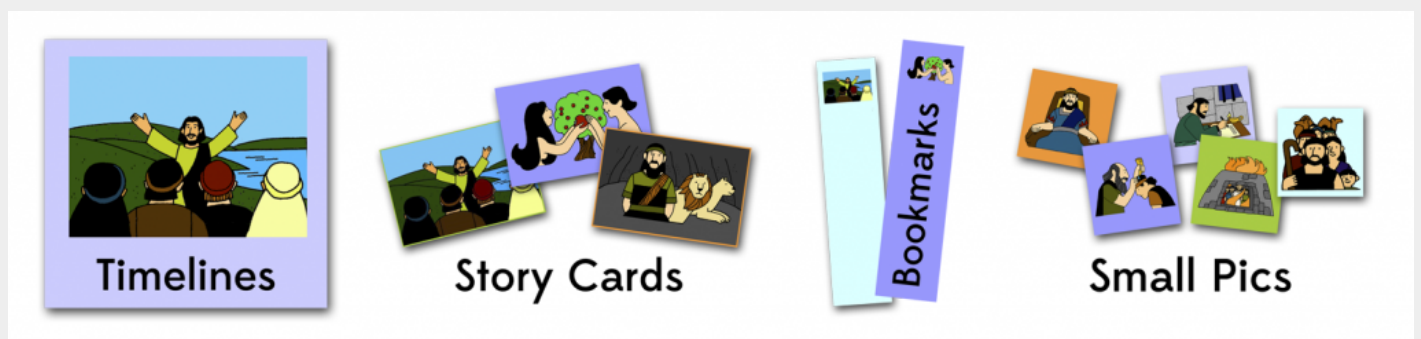
- Brainstorm things people might say when they brag about something.

- Ask someone who speaks a different language to come to class and give the children simple instructions on how to do something (example: “children, take a pencil and paper and write your name on the paper”, or “open your bible to Genesis chapter 11”). Discuss how difficult it would be to build a tower when everyone spoke different languages.
- Snack: Build a tower out of square biscuits/cookies or crackers. “Glue” pieces together with peanut butter or icing.
- Look up and discuss scriptures concerning pride: [Psalms 17:10](#); [138:6](#); [Proverbs 13:10](#); [16:5, 18](#); [28:25](#); [Acts 12:21-24](#); [James 4:4-6, 10](#).
- Contrast “Healthy Pride” and “Unhealthy Pride” using this [Drawing Contrasts for an Application Activity](#) idea.
- Sing “Humble Yourselves in the Sight of the Lord”

Crafts:

- Make a poster depicting [Proverbs 16:18](#).
- Cut rectangles from coloured paper to represent bricks. Use the paper bricks to “build” two towers. One of paper bricks on which are written godly attributes (humility, love, unselfishness, etc.). The bricks for the other tower should have ungodly traits written on them (pride, hate, selfishness, swearing, etc.) Discuss which tower God would want us to build.

Check the [Teaching Ideas](#) page on this website for ideas that are adaptable to any lesson.



[Click here for "Tower of Babel" printables to print on A4 size paper](#)

[Click here for "Tower of Babel" printables to print on Letter size paper \(USA\)](#)

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Other Online Resources:

- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Wordsearch puzzle \(Christian Answers\)](#)
- [Old Testament Worksheets \(HubPages\)](#)
- [Crafty Snacks \(DLTK\)](#)

<https://www.pinterest.com/marynnz/tower-of-babel/>

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