

To Study: Genesis 8:15-22, 9:1-19, 11:1-9.

To Read in class: Genesis 11:1-9.

Memory Texts:

Younger: Psalm 10:4 "The wicked, through pride ..., will not seek after God."

Older: Isaiah 2:17 "The loftiness of a man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

OBJECTIVES: To teach that:

1. The heart which is not submissive to God increasingly rebels against His divine authority.
2. God permits man to follow his own plans up to a certain point, and then He acts decisively.
3. That the will of man will not prosper; it is always the will of God that prevails.
4. Human efforts to bring about unity in a group without taking God into account will not have God's blessing.
5. On the day of Pentecost, the Spirit of God empowered His people so that the gospel could be heard in many languages.

SCENE 1. (E-29) VISUAL AIDS: Countryside with figures of people carrying out different activities. On the horizon, the figure of a rainbow is a reminder of the flood of many years earlier.

DEVELOPMENT:

Sug. Introduce the lesson by reviewing the period following the time that Noah went out of the ark, during which men began to build the tower of Babel.

Outline of these events.

Noah and his family proved God's goodness when He saved them from death in the flood.

2. They showed their gratitude with an offering to God.
3. God told Noah and his sons to be fruitful and multiply and populate the earth (Genesis 9:1).

Noah's sons had many children and soon there were many people living on earth again (Genesis 10:32).

The families traveled together until they came to the fertile lands of Shinar, an area of the country known today as Iraq.

- Soon it was seen that the heart of man had not changed, in spite of having known about the judgment of the flood, for the people acted according to their own ideas.
- In their concern to create their own type of society and commemorate their name in the world, they decided to construct a tower.

Cmt. The absence of any orientation towards God could be clearly seen as the people proceeded without taking Him into account.



THE TOWER OF BABEL

SFC005

Cns. It is alarming and sad when Christian's children do not follow the footsteps of their believing parents and grandparents.

Apl. Warn the students about the dangers of living their lives without taking God into account.

SCENE 2A (E-4) VISUAL AIDS: In the plains of Shinar. If possible, use figures of people working together on a construction project with a figure of the base of the tower being started and the figures of men mixing cement, etc. These figures will be changed in the following scene.

DEVELOPMENT:

- As the population multiplied, the people decided to build an important city and a tower whose top will reach to heaven.
- Since there were no stones for building, they burned bricks for the construction and used "slime" or tar for mortar.
- They thought that working together on the same project would keep them united, and the tower would be admired by all.

Cns. True and lasting union is achieved by working together for the glory of God, and not of themselves.

- They believed they could make an imposing monument that would last forever and make their name known in all the earth.

- When they said, "**let us make us a name**", they were thinking of the future, wanting to be thought important after they left this earth.

Sug. Guide the conversation of the students to think about how easy it is to plan for the future without taking God into account. Ask them what they think of doing after they finish school or other studies. Are they including God in their plans?

- The people building the tower did not take the will of God into account, for His instructions were to populate the earth.
- Seeking great honour, they were in open rebellion against God, the Only One who deserves honour.
- No doubt they worked long and hard, gathering beforehand the bricks and other things they needed for the construction.
- Every problem was solved, even though it was with the use of inferior materials.
- The pride of these men was the same as that which was seen in their forebears before the flood.

Lsn. Sin passes on from generation to generation. The natural heart of man remains unchanged.

Lsn. The sinful condition of man makes the new birth indispensable, for only an internal transformation can change the rebellious nature of the human being.

Ilu. An illustration of self-will is found in Acts 9 when Saul of Tarsus makes plans to go to Damascus to persecute the Christians. God intervened and his plans were defeated. Then he asked the Lord, "What wilt Thou have me to do?" In this we have the essence of repentance.

Cns. Self-importance was seen in Cain and also in the people who perished in the flood. It is also seen in the people who are constructing the tower, and can be seen in many people today.

- Everyone works together in the project, for they all speak the same language.



THE TOWER OF BABEL

SFC005

Cns. The permissive will of God allowed man to carry forth his plans up to a certain point. This shows the lengths to which a person will go in insisting on carrying out his own ideas, and it also shows how decisive God is in carrying out His own will.

Cmt. However far away a person moves from God, the seriousness of his error is clearly shown when God intervenes.

- Men wanted to reach **UP**, to heaven. God **CAME DOWN** to see the city and the tower that was being built.
- God had to act in judgment. He put an end to men's plans, using a very simple and ordinary means.
- The men did not achieve their objective, despite their best efforts.

SCENE 3. VISUAL AIDS: Using the same figures as in Scene No. 2A, replace the figure of the foundation of the tower by the higher, nearly finished tower. The figure of men mixing materials is changed for one of the same men whose body language shows they do not understand what the other is saying.

“Bubbles” can be made such as are shown in cartoons. Try to obtain words from different languages which can be written inside these bubbles and placed as if the figures are speaking. Spanish: “No entiendo lo que dices” is English for “I don't understand what you are saying”. Or “es hora de comer ” is “it's time to eat”.

DEVELOPMENT:

Sug. It will not be hard for the students to imagine how difficult it is to understand a person who speaks a different language. Perhaps there is a child in the class who speaks a different language. Ask that child to say a sentence in the language that the others do not speak.

Cmt. This will help the students to understand the seriousness of God's judgment, for life became very complicated as a result of the break-up caused by being unable to communicate.

- The confusion of tongues was literal and universal, and explains the origin of the many languages that are spoken today.
- With the confusion produced in Babel, as the town was called, it acquired the meaning “confusion”. See the dictionary notes at the end.
- The men could not continue working together and began to separate into groups.
- Those that spoke the same language kept together as a group, separating themselves from the others and migrating into a different part of the country.

Lsn. God thwarted human plans and thus caused the divine plan to be carried out with its objective of populating the whole earth.

Cmt. God's judgment always has the objective of making men react and ask themselves if they are on the right road.

Apl. In the life of each one God permits certain things to happen to make us think about our actions.



Obs. Perhaps the children have not had much go wrong in their lives, but they will have had some experience of plans not going ahead or finding obstacles in the way

Sug. Invite the children to relate some of their experiences, and then suggest these events can be interpreted as being due to God speaking to them.

Cns. The desire for importance and personal fame that motivated those who built the tower of Babel, continues to be present and active in human hearts today.

Cns. The person who places his name on the edifice of his life and says “this is what I did”, is seeking by this means to earn his own salvation.

Lsn. To boast in this way is an offense to God, for it treats the salvation that He has provided as something of little importance. **“God ... will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth”.** (1 Timothy 2:4). See also Romans 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9.

SCENE 4. VISUAL AIDS: A sign with the words of Mateo 6:33 written. Another sign with the words of Isaiah 55:6. Several figures representing 1. the construction of the tower of Babel; 2. people not able to understand each other; 3. other people of different ethnic origins worshipping God together; 4. a family working together happily and without difficulty; 5. figures of various objects such as a plane, a child with his bicycle, a car, a youth standing, a girl sitting down, looking worried, and a gift-wrapped package, etc.

Note: Three objectives of this scene are:

1. To stress the foolishness of making plans without taking God into account.
2. To show that on the Day of Pentecost, God made it possible for all to hear the gospel so that there could be no confusion as to the meaning of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. There was only one message for all.
3. To teach that only when God is taken into account can there be blessing.

DEVELOPMENT:

The men that were building the tower of Babel were thinking about their own future greatness.

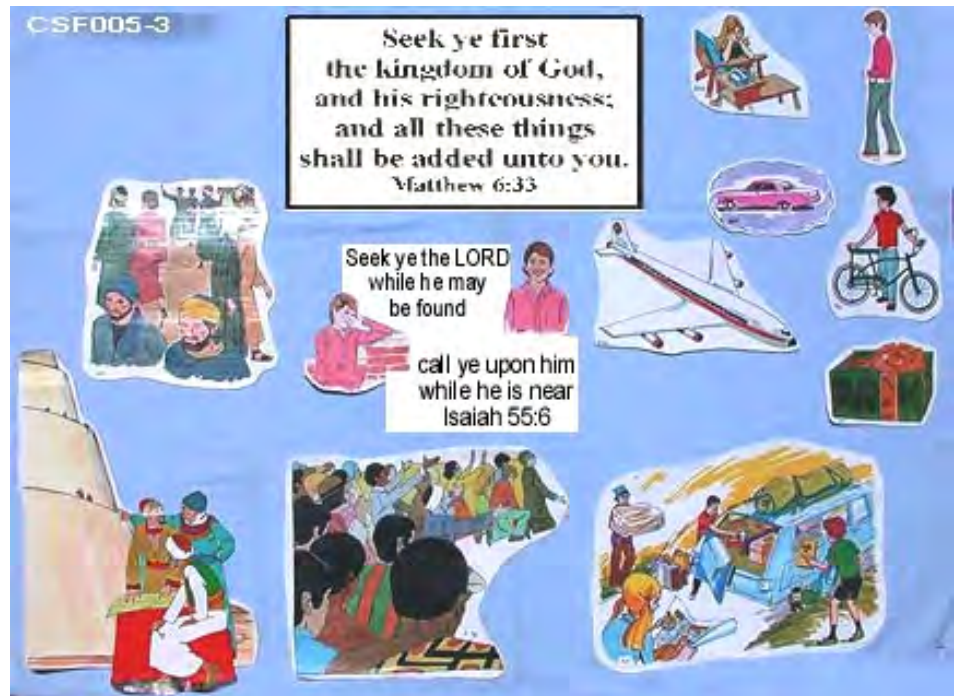
For this reason, they made their plans without taking God into account.

God did not put up with being forgotten by men and thus His judgment made them awaken to His wishes. His judgment caused the inhabitants of the earth to disperse and fulfill God’s purposes of populating the earth. When they could no longer communicate with each other, there was no alternative but to separate from each other.

Cns. God is the Author of the different languages of the world.

- On the day of Pentecost, the Lord did the complete opposite, producing an extraordinary event that united different peoples.

The Holy Spirit of God descended upon the disciples of the Lord Jesus, giving them the ability to speak in languages different than their maternal one and thus make known the gospel.



By believing the gospel, the sinner comes to know God and receive eternal life. Union with Christ is brought about and the divine desire of uniting people is thus achieved. See John 17:11 “... **keep through thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are**”.

Today thousands of people worship God in different languages but form part of a people called the Body of Christ.

Knowing God through the Lord Jesus is the only thing in the world that will truly unite people. In heaven, we will all praise God together, with no language problem. All will speak the same “New Song”.

Application.

Sug. Speak about children who are dreaming of a special vacation, or owning a car, or a bike. The idea is to refer to these children as they are all making plans for the future.

- Everyone wants to have friends and make plans with them about what they will do together. Some are thinking about marriage.
- If they make their plans without considering God, they are not free to ask His blessing on what they are doing.

Explain Matt. 6:33. “**Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.**” This same chapter outlines some of the concerns that people have. The result of seeking God’s things first is accompanied by the promise that He will add to it that which one needs.

Those who were building the tower of Babel did not include God in their plans, and their work came to nothing so that the “**Babelonians**” were scattered. In grace, God has provided the Holy Spirit to work in the life of those who believe in the Lord Jesus. He brings people together and unites them.

From the Bible Dictionary of EASTON and SMITH:

A tower constructed on a plain in the land of Shinar. Certain ruins excavated in 1913 of a stepped tower (ziggurat) have been identified as the possible remains of Babel. Here was found the tower of a seven-storey temple, ninety meters in height, and with a solid underground foundation of some ninety meters on each side. On its highest floor was found the temple or wedding house of the divinity, Marduc. The archeological findings describe the area as having an immense quantity of burned and broken fragments, “one of the country’s most impressing areas of ruins”.

Certain Babylonian tablets relate details of the event. They also include references to creation and the flood.

The ziggurat style was developed in Babylon three thousand years before Christ, but Genesis 11 speaks of a prototype of earlier date.

The Greek historian Herodotus described another edifice that occupied the same site and is called the Temple of Belus. The Babylonians built it to honour their god Belus. The treasures that Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple in Jerusalem were put into this temple (2 Chronicles 36:7).

The name Babel comes from “Babulwn” and was the capital city of the country called in Genesis, Shinar. Later in the Scriptures it is called Chaldea, or the country of the Chaldeans. The name Babel in Genesis is from the Hebrew root that signifies “to confound”. Nevertheless, the native etymology is Bab-il “the door of the god Il”, or simply “the door of God” which was without doubt what Nimrod originally intended it to be, although later the word meant, “confusion of tongues”.

At any rate, the area of Babel (Babylonia) was a place of great importance and symbol of his desire for power.
