06.01 Babel (Genesis 10:1–32; 1:1–9)

✓ "*Check*" it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows

[...] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Genesis Series 2 Flash a Cards, "Enoch, Noah, and Babel" (A Beka Book)
- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- (optional) *Tower of Babel*, a pop-up book (has only one "pop-up") illustrated by Jon Taylor (Master Book, 2007, Answers in Genesis)
- Check "Activities" and "Handwork" for other suggestions.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: [Flashcard words are enlarged at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.]

- *descendants*: children, grandchildren, great grandchildren, *etc.*, *etc.*
- generation: levels of ages—grandparents are in one generation; parents are in another generation, etc.
- *language*: the use of words to communicate; before and after the flood only one language was spoken by everyone on the earth

Scripture: (ESV) (Genesis 10:1–32 is not copied here but referenced in the story)

Genesis 11:1 Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. 2 And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. 3 And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. 4 Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth." 5 And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. 6 And the Lord said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. 7 Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech." 8 So the Lord dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. 9 Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth. And from there the Lord dispersed them over the face of all the earth.

Introduction/Review:

The world-wide flood destroyed all air-breathing animals, including humans, except for how many people? [Eight: Noah, His wife, their three sons, the sons' wives.] This family and two (seven of some) of every airbreathing animal stayed on the ark, the barge-like boat built by Noah, how long? [Over a year; exactly one year and seventeen days, including the seven days before the flood broke out; Genesis 6:10, 11 and 8:13, 14.] When they exited the ark, Noah and his family worshiped God, \checkmark no doubt in thankfulness to be spared from the terrible punishment due to the wicked world.

Remember that terrible sin—wickedness that cannot be described—was the reason God caused the flood. Rather than get better and better, in every age, including our present one, the general population tends to become more and more sinful. That's what God said to Noah: "The intention of man's heart is evil from his youth" (Genesis 8:21). That doesn't sound too hopeful, does it? But remember this: out of every age, every nation, every language God is rescuing people—those who trust Jesus to be their Saviour—who will live with Him forever.

Our good God, who always does right, told Noah that He would never again destroy the earth with a flood. What was the thing He gave as a sign of this promise? [The rainbow.] God commanded and promised several other things that we won't take time to describe, but we will tell you this command: "Be fruitful and multiply and *fill* the earth" (Genesis 9:1). What do you suppose that means? [Have lots of babies as Adam and Eve had done, and go to live all over the earth.]

Story:

Our country became a nation over two hundred years ago. We still know what happened at that time because it was an important event.

Well, opinions vary among the scholars, but it seems that ✓ between one hundred and four hundred years went by after the flood. Don't you suppose all of those people who descended from Noah's sons knew by word of mouth from one generation to another about the flood God had brought upon the whole earth? Yes, that was a HUGE event. In fact, we know that cultures in every corner of the world have traditions about a world-wide flood.

Fill the earth?

God had said, "The intention of man's heart is evil from his youth." Do you suppose when men remembered God's punishment for wickedness—the flood—they thought, "I always want to obey God, no matter what. I will never rebel against God"? I wish that was the case, but "evil intention" now concentrated on disobedience against God's command to fill the earth.

Genesis 11 tells us that people gathered to live together in one area—the Plain of Shinar. [Teacher, locate Shinar on the map near Babylon.] This is what they said to one another: "Hey, let's make bricks." And they did. They put tar/asphalt (similar to what Noah had used inside and outside the ark for waterproofing) between the bricks to hold them together.

Build a tower?

What were they going to construct—a temple to God, a stadium? No, a whole city! And something even more ambitious—a—. Well, let me read from the Bible what it was. [Read Genesis 11:4.] "Let us build ourselves a city and a tower." Hmm! A tower. I wonder if it would be a tower like the one we have in our city park. Let's read further. "A tower with its top in the heavens." What!? Our tower in the park isn't even as tall as the ark; these people want their tower to reach the heavens?! Really? That's a *very* tall tower.

Why in the world would they want to build a tower so tall? We'd better read on to find out why: "And let us make a name for ourselves." Oh, oh. This isn't sounding good—"a name for *ourselves*" and not for God. Sounds to me to be pretty self-centered, proud, and with an attitude of "Forget You, God." Watch out, people!

Why build a tower?

Why would they want to exalt themselves instead of God so much? Read on: "So that we won't be scattered over the face of the whole earth." Oh, now it's clear: this is out-and-out rebellion against God's command to fill the earth. How dare they? Don't they fear God? Being acquainted with the flood's destruction, aren't they concerned about another punishment? It doesn't sound as if they are. To say, "Let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered over the face of the whole earth" sounds like rebellion of the worst kind.

Several thoughts about the people's intentions surface from reading this text of Scripture and surrounding chapters. Why did they want the tower to be so high? ✓Perhaps to save themselves in case another flood came. ✓Perhaps to study the stars and thereby try to determine the future as people sometimes do today. This is not something God wants us to do. ✓Perhaps to worship the sun, moon, and stars. Certainly, we know this is not right! Definitely, they wanted to stay in one place and to make a name for themselves contrary to what God wanted.

Did God know?

Did God know what these people were doing? Of course, for He knows all things-every little thing in the

whole wide world. God was not pleased. He must stop this defiance—this idea of ✓strength in numbers against God. He would scatter them in a way they never saw coming. He would scatter "them by a simple, peaceful, and effectual means which subsists to this day" (William Kelly, *The Early Chapters of Genesis*, in Online Bible).

"What did you say?"

God merely changed their languages. [Pause.] Imagine the scene at the tower: ✓"Get me another brick."

"Was sagst [pronounced vahs zahgst] du? Ich verstehe [pronounced ferschtayeh] nicht."

"What in the world are you saying? I don't understand a single word!"

"Was? Was?!"

"You are acting very strange. What has happened to you? Oh, there's my brother. Hey, Reuben! We need to find help for Judah here. He's talking in gibberish." [Pause.] "What? Your helper is doing the same thing?! Oh, this is spooky. Do you suppose God has done this?"

Yes, God had done it. One family spoke one language, and another family spoke another language. They could no longer work together; they could not longer build their tower or their city, for they could not understand each other. They had to separate! They had to scatter throughout the earth because the Lord had confused their languages.

God named the city they had started to build Babel [pronounced either as *Bab-el* or *Bay-bel*]. That word means "confusion." How does the name fit the situation? [The languages were confused.]*

"Where will we go?"

This is generally how the families, divided among Noah's three sons, separated. [Teacher, refer to the chart and map found at the end of this lesson in order to show the migration.] Here is the general migration of the descendants of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

People who study these things tell us that Japheth's descendants migrated north to the area around the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea. Eventually they went to Europe, from which many of us have ancestors.

Ham's descendants moved south to Egypt, Africa, Arabia, and the east coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

Shem's descendants lived in the Near East (also called the Middle East). [Teacher, take time, if you wish, to mention other points on the chart.]

God will do all His holy will, and sometimes it takes drastic means to accomplish His will. Where can we learn the will and desire of God? [In the Bible.] That's the main reason why we have [Sunday School, Bible Club]. Hearing stories like these help us to see what God wants from us. The Bible is very clear about God's expectations. Oh, I want to do His will. I hope you do too.

*"God has wise and holy ends, in allowing the enemies of his glory to carry on their wicked projects a great way, and to prosper long. . . . If they could not understand one another, they could not help one another; this would stop them from their building. God has various means, and effectual ones, to baffle and defeat the projects of proud men that set themselves against him. . . . God is able to blast and bring to nothing all the devices and designs of Babel-builders: there is no wisdom nor counsel against the Lord" (Matthew Henry in Online Bible).

[The teacher who desires to expand this lesson to teach more about the time and events surrounding Babel, will want to include Nimrod (Genesis 10:8–10—his being a "mighty hunter before the Lord" means \checkmark he hunted men in order to talk them into going against the Lord), Peleg (Genesis 10:25—"In his days was the earth divided"), and the seventy nations of Genesis 10. Accent's Junior (J1A) teacher's manual, pp. 24–26, presents a fine lesson that also includes the idea of studying the stars at the top of the tower and relates it to

modern consultation of horoscopes.]

Lessons from this lesson:

- "How vain is human wisdom in collision with God!" (William Kelly, *The Early Chapters of Genesis*, in Online Bible).
- Honor God, not yourself.

Activities:

- Play dough: tower; bricks
- Do puppet skit with Matt the Moose found at the end of this lesson.
- Sing the chorus to "Jesus Loves Me" in English, French, Spanish, Japanese, Hebrew, and German or just the languages you wish to sing (see enlarged words at the end of this lesson)
- Review the songs found in previous lessons, and sing the ones found below.
- Review questions. (Game: Make ten paper bricks backed with flannel or flocked paper. (See pictures at end of this lesson.) Place the bricks to resemble a tower on the flannelgraph board. When a student answers a question correctly, [s]he may take a brick off the tower.)
 - 1. Name one of Noah's three sons. [Shem, Ham, Japheth.]
 - 2. We've learned that we are all descendants of Adam. We all are also descendants of someone else. Who is that? [Noah.]
 - 3. What was God's command to Noah and his descendants after the flood? [To multiply and fill the earth.]
 - 4. About how many years had it been after the flood when the people gathered together to make bricks at Shinar? [About 200–400.]
 - 5. What did the people attempt to do to reach heaven? [Build a tower.]
 - 6. Why did the people build a city and a tower? [To make a name for themselves; to avoid being scattered.]
 - 7. What did God call this tower? [Tower of Babel.]
 - 8. How did God stop the building of the tower? [He confused the languages of the people.]
 - 9. What does Babel mean? [Confusion.]
 - 10. What resulted when the people began speaking different languages? [People moved away to live with others who spoke the same language they did; work on the city and tower ceased.]
- Play "Scrambled Languages" (from http://www.grouppublishing.com/tips/fw2003_item.asp?ID=3765)

Use crayons or markers to write each of the following words in two index cards: *English*, *French*, *Spanish*, *Japanese*, *German*, *Hebrew*. Use a different color for each language name so that children who cannot read can match colors. Have children stand in a circle. Mix up the cards and distribute them to the children. When you say, "Go," the children must hurry to find another child who has the same language/color as they do. When they find their partner they should sit down together. They should not talk to anyone who does not have the same language as they do. Ask, "How did you know your partner? Do you think it might be hard to play with someone who speaks a different language? When the people built the Tower of Babel, God confused their languages."

- Examine world maps. Talk about missionaries in specific countries and languages spoken there.
- Discuss the probable population at the time of the Tower of Babel. Here is information from http://www.ldolphin.org/morris.html: "Assuming an average family of 10 children gives a population at Babel of over 700. An average of 12 children gives 1,250. Both these figures assume 40-year generations, with, therefore, 3.5 generations from the Flood to Babel. Since there are 70 nations mentioned in Genesis 10 as resulting from the "division" at Babel, it is reasonable to infer that there

were 70 families at Babel, representing probably the generation of Noah's grandsons and greatgrandsons. Seventy families containing 800 or 1,000 individuals altogether seem to fit the situation described at Babel very adequately." Again, scholars are all over the place, from 70 people to 70,000, when it comes to estimating population at the time of the Tower of Babel.

- Read *Tower of Babel*, a pop-up book illustrated by Jon Taylor (Master Book, 2007, Answers in Genesis)
- Discuss the chart and map found below about Noah's sons.
- If you wish to present extraneous information, show the art work found at the end of this lesson of a modern Tower of Babel made of books.

Handwork:

• Color the clipart found at the end of this lesson. Applying glue and dusting with sand along the picture's path adds texture.

Memory Verse: John 14:15: "If you love me, keep My commandments."

descendants

generation

language

Descendants of Noah's Sons

Son	Areas Settled	Abilities	People
Japheth (Genesis 10:2–5)	 Asia Minor around Black and Caspian Seas Europe Later took some land from Hamites 	 Philosophy Science	 Greekş Romans Persians
Ham (Genesis 10:6–20)	 South Africa Egypt Arabia Palestine 	 Math Commerce Inventions Medicine Fabric Building 	 Africans Egyptians
Shem (Genesis 10:20–32)	 Near East Babylon 	• All areas	 Jews (including Jesus) Assyrians Syrians

(Source is unknown)



"Jesus Loves Me"

English: /// Yes, Jesus loves me /// The Bible tells me so

French: ///Oui, Jésus m'aime/// Car la bible me le dit

Spanish: /// Si, Cristo me ama /// La Biblia dice asi

Japanese: ///waga shyu iesu/// ware o aisu

Hebrew: ///Yeshee aykẹth ehday ehtzay/// Yehkẹhnayr amayr lehkaykạh

German: /// Ja, Jesus liebt mich /// Die Bibel sagt es mir



http://www.realthinbrick.com/uploads/4/7/6/0/47608337/Thin-brick-antique-collection-16-full.jpg



by Marilyn Alexander



by Marilyn Alexander



The top may not reach unto heaven, but the Argentinian artist Marta Minujin's 25-metre tower is made of 30,000 books in languages from all over the world. Built in San Martin Square, Buenos Aires to mark the Argentinian city's naming as 2011 World Book Capital, the artist suggested that in 100 years people will say 'there was a Tower of Babel in Argentina ... and it didn't need translation because art needs no translation' The 30,000 books which make up the seven stories of the Tower of Babel have been donated by readers, libraries and more than 50 embassies Photograph: Juan Mabromata / AFP/Getty Images

https://www.theguardian.com/books/gallery/2011/may/16/tower-of-babel-books-argentina

B - **A** - **B** - **E** - **L**

Words by Marilyn Alexander

Tune: "B-I-N-G-O"



Rather than go back and sing the entire song as in "B-I-N-G-O," go back to measure #3 and sing to end of song, repeating until "B-A-B-E-L" is finished:

"(clap) A-B-E-L, (clap) A-B-E-L, (clap) A-B-E-L; They had to separate."

"(clap, clap) B-E-L, (clap, clap) B-E-L, (clap, clap) B-E-L; They had to separate."

"(clap, clap, clap) E-L, (clap, clap, clap) E-L, (clap, clap, clap) E-L; They had to separate."

"(clap, clap, clap, clap) L, "(clap, clap, clap, clap) L, "(clap, clap, clap, clap) L; They had to separate."

"(clap, clap, clap, clap, clap); (clap, clap, clap, clap, clap); (clap, clap, clap, clap, clap); They had to separate."

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Motions: "Building did not go well": shake head "No"

"God confused their languages"" repeatedly circle mouth with index finger

"They had to separate": palms down, spread hands with moving fingers outward

God Said, "Scatter"

Marilyn Alexander

Marilyn Alexander



2017

An audio recording of this song and "B-A-B-E-L" may be found on the Songs page of teachingthebibletokids.org.









➤ TEMPLES, CALLED ziggurats, dominated Mesopotamian cities. Around each ziggurat was a large complex where thousands of people lived and worked. Babylon's seven-story ziggurat, called Etemenanki, is thought to be the Tower of Babel referred to in the Bible.



From Kids Discover Mesopotamia

A MONOLOGUE ABOUT LANGUAGES by Matt, the Musical Moose Written by Marilyn Alexander

[Have a sign with the following words listed: English; French, Spanish, Japanese, Hebrew, German Know the following songs well enough to sing: Freres Jacques; La Cucuracha; Haru Ga Kita; Haga Nagila; Guten Abend or Mein Hut. Alternatively, you could sing the chorus to "Jesus Loves Me" in various languages. Words to "Jesus Loves Me" are enlarged above; the order in which to sing them follows the monologue.]

Hi, kids! I'm Matt, your musical moose [or mutt]. I'm going to sing for you today in six different languages: English, French, Spanish, Japanese, Hebrew, and German. See the list? English, French, Spanish, Japanese, Hebrew, and German. What I want you to do is to guess the language the song is written in when I sing it. Okay?

This is how it works. I'll sing a song or part of a song [or the chorus of "Jesus Loves Me"]. Then I'll call on one of you to guess what language I'm singing. Look at the list. If you can't guess the language, I'll give you some clues. Here goes!



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Hints: It's about a cockroach. EEk!

It might be sung in Mexico.

It could be sung in Spain.

What language do people speak in Mexico and Spain? [Answer: Spanish]



Hints: It's about springtime.

This language is spoken on a big island.

This island is near China.

This language starts with the letter J. [Answer: Japanese]

(Sing "Freres Jacques")

Frère Jacques

singing-bell.com



Hints: It's about Brother John sleeping.It's a language spoken in a country in Europe and in part of Canada.This country has a big city named Paris.This language starts with the letter *F*. [Answer: French]

HAVA NAGILA

This is one of the most popular folk songs of Israel. It invites us to be joyful as we dance and sing.

TRADITIONAL Arranged by DAVID KARP









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This is the language of the Old Testament. Hints: This language is spoken in Israel. [Answer: Hebrew]

(Sing "Guten Abend, Gut Nacht")

WWW.MAMALISA.COM GUTEN ABEND, GUT' NACHT! WWW.MAMALISA.COM/FR/



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Hints: This language is also spoken in a country in Europe.This language sounds sometimes as if you need to clear your throat.Martin Luther translated the Bible into this language.This language starts with the letter *G*. [Answer: German]

(Sing the last half of the last stanza of "All Creatures of Our God and King"— "Praise, praise, the Father, praise the Son, and praise the Spirit, three in one." All Creatures Of Our God And King

St. Francis of Assisi

Geistliche Kirchengesange, Cologne



@MichaelKravchuk.com

Hints: This is the language we speak in the United States.
This language comes from a European island country.
This language is also spoken in most of Canada.
The Bible has several translations in this language. [Answer: English]

Kids, God has given us our language and our tongues to communicate with people. Let's do what God tells us to do with our tongue because, as David said, "*there is* not a word in my tongue, *but*, lo, O LORD, You know it altogether" (Ps 139:4).

- Ps 34:13 Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking guile.
- Ps 35:28 And my tongue shall speak of Your righteousness *and* of Your praise all the day long.
- Ps 39:1 I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue:
- Ps 119:172 My tongue shall speak of Your word: for all Your commandments *are* righteousness.

"Jesus Loves Me" chorus 6. English: /// Yes, Jesus loves me /// The Bible tells me so 3. French: ///Oui, Jésus m'aime/// Car la bible me le dit 1. Spanish: /// Si. Cristo me ama /// La Biblia dice asi 2. Japanese: ///waga shyu iesu/// ware o aisu 4. *Hebrew:* (rough pronunciation that may be wrong) ///Yeshee ayketh ehday ehtzay/// Yehkehnayr amayr lehkaykah 5. German: /// Ja, Jesus liebt mich /// Die Bibel sagt es mi

English

French

Spanish

Japanese

Hebrew

German