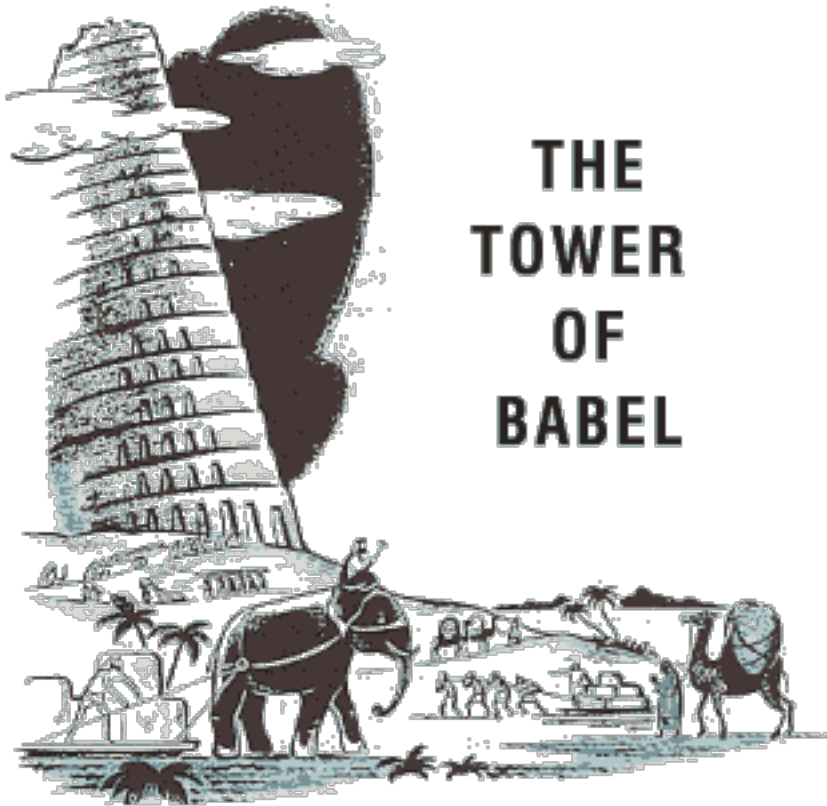


THE TOWER OF BABEL



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IF YOU should be out playing some day, and a little boy should come along and say to you, “Vatten,” what would you say? I guess you’d say, “My, that poor little boy can hardly talk, can he?” But if you thought this you would be wrong, because he does know how to talk.

You see, he talks a different language than you. When he used that word which sounded so funny to you he was really asking for a drink of water. He was a little Swedish boy, and Swedish boys speak the Swedish language. If you were Swedish, you could have a fine time with him. You could talk about ever so many things, and you would understand each other. But that little Swedish boy was afraid you wouldn’t understand him, so he just said one word which meant water, and you didn’t even understand that.

Years and years ago all the people in the world spoke the same language, so they understood one another. Of course there weren't as many people in the world then as there are now, because it was shortly after that great flood had drowned nearly everyone as I told you in my last story.

Right after that flood there were only eight people in the whole world—Noah and his family. Noah had three sons, as we learned before, and they all had wives, and after the flood children were born to these families. These children grew up to be men and women, and other children were born. After a while there were quite a few people in the world, you see.

One of Noah's sons was called Ham. One of Ham's children was called Cush, and Cush had a boy called Nimrod. So, you see, Noah was the great-grandfather of a man called Nimrod. The Bible tells us that Nimrod was a very expert hunter. Many people thought Nimrod was a wonderful man because he was so brave, and could hunt wild animals, so they thought it would be good if he could be their king, and rule over them.

These people decided to work together and build a big city, and they decided also that in this city they would build a great and tall tower. They planned to build that tower so high into the sky that it could be seen for a great distance. The Bible tells us that the people thought this high tower would keep them from losing each other.

They wanted the tower to be very strong, so they learned how to make bricks, and they stuck these bricks together with what the Bible calls slime. It probably wasn't much different from the way we cement bricks together today when we want to build a house.

But God was not pleased to see the people build such a big tower. God did not want all the people to stay in one place where they could see this tower. He desired them to live in various other parts of the earth. So what do you suppose he did? He did something that got them all mixed up when they tried to talk to each other!

Can you imagine that? Instead of talking together in one language and making plans to build that tower higher and higher, they just couldn't understand one another at all!

You can see that it wouldn't be good for them all to live in one place if they couldn't understand each other when they talked. So they started to move away. Some went in one direction, and some went in another. Probably a few of them could talk to each other, and those who could went away together in one group, while another group who spoke a different language went in another direction. That's why there are so many languages in the world today. By and by, though, everyone in the whole wide world will be able to talk the same language. It won't make any difference whether a person comes from Sweden, or France, or Turkey, or China, or any other place. Wherever he is in the world he will know how to talk to the people who live there, and everybody will understand him. Won't that be grand?

And the best thing about it is that when all the people in the world learn how to talk one to another they will learn about God. They will learn how wonderful God is, and what great things he can do for them if they will just do the things he wants them to do.

QUESTIONS

- Why is it not possible for everyone in the world today to speak the same language?
- Will a time ever come when all people will be able to speak the same language?