****

**THE TOWER**

**Story:** Tower of Babel

**Scriptures to study:** Genesis 11, Genesis 9:1

This discussion is based on the Friday Morning Men’s Fellowship study “Genesis”, available at <https://leadmin.org/genesis>.

Mankind rebuilds after the flood and grows in number. God tells them to go and fill the whole earth. But after a number of years they decide to settle in a hospitable area and build a large city, with a tower at its center. They do this “to make a name for themselves”. Just as Cain murdering Abel, and Noah and the flood, this story is another account of sin against God and its punishment.

**The sin of disobedience.** Building a city and a tower doesn’t seem to be a bad idea. The problem is that God gave clear instructions to Noah and his descendants in Genesis 9:1 to “Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth…” The events of Genesis 11 take place 500 to 700 years later. The flood was now a faint memory of their parents’ grandparents. But there is no time limit on God’s instructions. What was written 2,000 years ago in the Bible still applies and is relevant to us today. Whenever we determine a course in life or work, we should always ask, “Is this what God has told me to do?”

**The sin of pride.** The people were building a city and tower “so that we may make a name for ourselves” (Genesis 11:4). God said if He allowed this, “nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them” (Genesis 11:6). This is not God saying the people would grow in power equal to God. Rather, they would stop listening to God altogether. They will pursue their plans and designs and not God’s. They were becoming arrogant in their self-reliance and self-confidence. A central lesson of the Tower of Babel is that pride is sin against God. Pride is the pursuit of our own glory over God’s glory. Whenever we determine a course in life or work, we should always ask, “For whose glory am I doing this thing?”

**The result of punishment.** As punishment for their disobedience, God gave them different languages, saying, “Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other” (Genesis 11:7). Note the result of God’s action: “So the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city” (Genesis 11:8). This scattering was the beginning of the organization of the world into various nations that we have up to this day. God’s original plan was carried through. Our plans as leaders will never supersede God’s plans. When the people went against God’s plans, they were confused. As leaders, we should remember that God’s plans are always first priority, and bring clarity to our lives and work.



Use one of these to get the group talking about today’s topic:

* What’s the highest place you’ve ever been? On a mountain? The Eiffel Tower? A tall building? Did you enjoy the view?
* Do you speak a second language? How do you communicate with people who don’t speak your language? Are you able to convey the basics through gestures, body language? Google translate?
* Do you believe God has a specific plan for each person? Why or why not? What do you believe God desires from you and your leadership that is specific to you?



Go in-depth with these questions. Based on your available time, choose 3-4 that you believe are most thought-provoking:

* Read Genesis 11:1-4. What was wrong with the people’s plan for the city and tower (Hint: Read Genesis 9:1 as well)? Why do you think they wanted to stop spreading out and settle down?
* How should a leader handle pride in his own work or accomplishments?
* Is pride always bad? Why or why not?
* How does God want us to view pride in work and life?
* Read Genesis 11:5-9. God’s answer to the sin of pride was to confuse the people. Why do you think God chose this punishment?
* What was the result of God’s punishment? Were God’s plans carried out?
* Is it possible God still causes confusion in people today? Why or why not?
* What should we do in life and leadership when we are confused?
* Can we really know if what we are doing or planning in life, work, or family is in line with God’s plans for us? If so, how?



* What are you planning or working on right now? If you haven’t already, take some time to hold up those plans against God’s plans and make sure you are doing what God has told you to do.
* If you are confused in an area of work, family, marriage, take the opportunity to pray and ask God to give you clarity by helping you know His plans for you in that area.
* Is pride an issue in your life and leadership? Are you pursuing your own “glory” through accumulating successes, power, position, possessions? Pray that God will remove unhealthy pride and replace it with humility and obedience toward Him.



• Commentary on Genesis 11: <https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/mhc/Gen/Gen_011.cfm>

• What does Genesis 11 mean? <https://www.bibleref.com/Genesis/11/Genesis-chapter-11.html>

• *Study Guide for Genesis 11* by Chuck Smith: <https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/smith_chuck/StudyGuides_Genesis/Genesis.cfm>

• Precept outline and commentary on Genesis 11: <https://www.preceptaustin.org/genesis-11-commentary>

• *Genesis 1-11: Creation, Sin, and the Nature of God* by John MacArthur: <https://churchsource.com/products/genesis-1-to-11-creation-sin-and-the-nature-of-god>

• *Exalting Jesus in Genesis* by Phillip Bethancourt: <https://www.amazon.com/Exalting-Genesis-Christ-Centered-Exposition-Commentary/dp/0805496556/>

• *Genesis: A 12 Week Study* by Mitchell M. Kim: <https://www.amazon.com/Genesis-12-Week-Study-Knowing-Bible/dp/1433535017>

• *BibleProject Guides: Book of Genesis:* <https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-genesis/>

**More ways to apply “The Tower” to your life and leadership:**

• How do you handle pride in the workplace? Consider how you might affirm, encourage and recognize people for their good work without being prideful.

• God gives many instructions to help us have clarity as to His will and purposes. Do a Bible study of the New Testament, focusing on God’s specific instructions to Christians. Any idea how many instructions we are given by God in the New Testament? The answer may surprise you!

• In your daily time with God this week, pray about your plans and pursuits, and ask God to help you know that you are doing what He has told you to do.

• Organize your life and work. Get a good day planner or planning app for your phone. Segment out times for God, for your wife and family, for work, and for personal enjoyment. Take note of areas where you are sacrificing something important for something that may not be as important.

• Consider how your business or company might be a Gospel influence with your employees, customers or in your community.

• Seek out a mentoring relationship with someone at your local church, a pastor, elder or other leader who can give you good advice on following God’s direction in life and leadership.