

I. The Tower of Babel

At one time all the people of the world spoke the same language and used the same words. As the people migrated to the east, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia and settled there.

They began saying to each other, "Let's make bricks and harden them with fire." (In this region bricks were used instead of stone, and tar was used for mortar.) Then they said, "Come, let's build a great city for ourselves with a tower that reaches into the sky. This will make us famous and keep us from being scattered all over the world."

But the LORD came down to look at the city and the tower the people were building. "Look!" he said. "The people are united, and they all speak the same language. After this, nothing they set out to do will be impossible for them! Come, let's go down and confuse the people with different languages. Then they won't be able to understand each other."

In that way, the LORD scattered them all over the world, and they stopped building the city. That is why the city was called Babel, because that is where the LORD confused the people with different languages. In this way he scattered them all over the world.

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+11&version=NLT>

Reading Guidelines:

Develop the power of your English and your competence in translation by starting with simple and very clear texts as the one above. For translation, you can also start with fabricated short texts which do not exceed the limits of the sentence.

Q.I Give the exact meaning of the following words first in English and second in Arabic: migrated, plain, tar, mortar, scattered, set out, confuse.

Q.II Derive as many words as you can from the following words: migrate, settle, hard, tower, unite, differ, confuse, possible.

Q.III Give the opposites of the words below and use them in good English sentences of your own: settle, harden, famous, came down, united, confused, different.

Q.IV Answer the following questions briefly:

1. Where did all the people migrate and settle, and why?
2. What did the people decide to do while they were at Babylon?
3. Why did the people decide to do so?

4. Do you share the story's idea that Almighty God hated people's unity and decided to scatter the people and confuse them?

5. What do you conclude from the following aya in the Holy Quraan: "و من آياته خلق السموات و الأرض و اختلاف ألسنتكم و ألوانكم" ?

6. This story of the Genesis is often used to date the beginning of translation. Can you think of other stories about the beginning of translation?

Q. **V** Examine paragraphs 3 & 4, and then translate them into plain Arabic.

Research Activity:

Arabic has more than one equivalent for Lord in the text. Which one would you choose and why?

Quote of the Day:

A translator ought to endeavor not only to say what his author has said, but to say it as he has said it.

John Conington