

Tower of Babel

The Tower of Babel is a structure featured in chapter 11 of the Book of Genesis, an enormous tower intended as the crowning achievement of the city of Babilu, the Akkadian name for Babylon. Babel was a city that united humanity, all speaking a single language and migrating from the east; it was the home city of the great king Nimrod, and the first city to be built after the Great Flood. The people decided their city should have a tower so immense that it would have "its top in the heavens." However, the Tower of Babel was not built for the worship and praise of God, but was dedicated to false man-made religion, with a motive of making a 'celebrated name' for the builders. - Genesis 11:4. God, (written in the Hebrew as YHWH; translated into English as either Yahweh, Jehovah, or most commonly, the LORD), seeing what the people were doing and sinning against him, confused their languages and scattered the people throughout the earth.

"Babel" is the Hebrew equivalent of Akkadian Babilu (Greek Babylon), a cosmopolitan city typified by a confusion of languages. The Tower of Babel has often been associated with known structures, notably the Etemenanki, the ziggurat to Marduk, by Nabopolassar (610s BC).

The phrase Tower of Babel does not actually appear in the Bible; it is always, "the city and its tower" or just "the city".

The story explains the origin of nations, of their languages, and of Babylon (Babel). The story's theme of competition between the Lord and humans appears elsewhere in Genesis, in the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The story displays the Lord's contempt for human ambition.

The traditional Judaeo-Christian interpretation, as found for example in Flavius Josephus, explains the construction of the tower as a hubristic act of defiance against God, ordered by the arrogant tyrant, Nimrod.

The account in Genesis makes no mention of any destruction of the tower. The people whose languages are confounded simply stop building their city, and are scattered from there over the face of the Earth. However, in other sources such as the Book of Jubilees, God overturns the tower with a great wind.