

LENTEN DEVOTIONAL

19 FEBRUARY 2021

Lent Devotion/Day 3/Friday, February 19, 2021

Genesis 11:1, 4-7: Now the whole world had one language and a common speech ... Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth." But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. The Lord said ... "Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other."

Acts 2:5-8,11: Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? ... We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!"

Read also Ephesians 4:3-6, Revelation 5:9 and 7:9-10

Meditation: The very first command God gave to people was to multiply and fill the earth (see **Genesis 1:28**). Those who had known their Creator face to face would spread the goodness of his community throughout the whole earth. Sadly, it was not long before humans had fouled up the plan, built a city and let their pride lead them to believe they could build a tower so high it would bring them fame. In direct disobedience to the One who had given them life and breath and all things, they began to build. Proverbs 29:23 says that "pride brings a person low." And so these tower-builders were brought low and divided. And for centuries, this is how they lived, with many different languages, which formed national barriers and constant strife. But the plan of God has always been to reverse the curse of sin, a plan put in place with Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. At Pentecost, the language barriers were supernaturally removed, and those who had come together in Jerusalem to worship took the message of Jesus back home. It is our task too to spread the message of God's goodness to all people of all languages, lifting high the name of the One who, through his life, death and resurrection, brings us all back together again.

Prayer: *Lord of boundless love, your plans are perfect and your goodness extends to all who wish to receive it. Yet the whole of human history appears as a series of our attempts to make a name for ourselves in our own strength, on our own timetable and through our own efforts. Like the Tower of Babel, this always ends in confusion and division and chaos. But when we invite you into our lives, you turn our chaos into creative order. Grant me the wisdom to be more concerned with pleasing and obeying you and bringing honor to your name than I am about making a name for myself, for nothing on earth could ever compare to the incomparable pleasure of hearing you say, "Well done, good and faithful servant." In Christ's unifying name I pray. Amen.*

-from **once a day/40 Days to Easter**, Kenneth Boa and John Allen Turner, Zondervan