“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.’”

(Genesis 11:4, NIV)
**what do you think?**

Do you ever try to be God? Complete the following statement with one or more statements from the list below: I play God when I . . .

a. tell on a friend who does something wrong.

b. skip time alone with God.

c. make important decisions after talking with friends.

d. ask God to guide my future.

e. eat healthful foods.

f. don’t listen to my parents.

g. do my homework.

**did you know?**

The people of Babel didn’t just come up with the idea to build a tower on their own. No, they had an instigator. His name was Nimrod, ruler of the nation, and a man whom the Bible refers to as a “mighty hunter” (Genesis 10:8-10, NIV). The great historian Josephus wrote: “Now it was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God.”

**INTO THE STORY**

“Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. As people moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there.

“They said to each other, ‘Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.’ They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. 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, ‘If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.’

“So the Lord scattered them over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel—because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.”

(Genesis 11:1-9, NIV)
punch lines

“Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain” (Psalm 127:1, NIV).

“Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him” (Psalm 34:8, NIV).

“Blessed are those who listen to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway” (Proverbs 8:34, NIV).

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God” (Colossians 3:1, NIV).

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15, NIV).

“Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like” (James 1:23, 24, NIV).

“If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them” (James 4:17, NIV).

OUT OF THE STORY

Who are the main actors in this story?

________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

What parts of the story are key to understanding it? (Underline them.)

What aspects of the story are new to you? (Place an arrow beside them.)

What emotions, actions, or adjectives enrich this story? (Draw a rectangle around them.)

The builders of Babel had harnessed two of the greatest powers known to humans: effective communication and unity. Can you give any modern-day examples of groups that communicate effectively and are unified in doing something wrong?

________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

To whom or what was the tower a monument? What types of monuments to themselves might people produce or create today?

________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

How do we know the difference between using the gifts God gives us as monuments to ourselves or as monuments to God? (See 1 Cor. 13:1-7)

________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

What are two main lessons that you got from reading this story?

________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________
________________________________________

further insight

“When Christ took human nature upon Him, He bound humanity to Himself by a tie of love that can never be broken by any power save the choice of man himself.” —Ellen G. White, Steps to Christ, p. 73.
They were not the first beings to try to play God. From today’s reading identify three actions and behaviors exhibited by Satan in his effort to kill God and take His throne. (Hint: Notice the number of times in Satan’s statements.)

1.  
2.  
3.  

In today’s reading, who was being swept away in a tide of wrongdoing? What does Jesus’ mock trial tell you about the dangers of following the crowd?

If you could witness to a friend who is about to join a gang or follow the wrong crowd, what can you “taste” God? Why does the psalmist ask us to taste God first before seeing how good He is? Don’t you like to see your food before tasting it? If someone asks you to close your eyes before they feed you a piece of some food, they are asking you to trust them. To experience God we must trust Him and exercise faith in Him.

Several texts in the Punch Lines section deal with obedience to God’s Word. Choose one of these scriptures that specifically captured your attention. Explain what this scripture means to you.

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**Patriarch and Prophets (or Beginning of the End), chapter 10.**

*Beginning of the End* is a special adaptation of Patriarchs and Prophets, created for you by the Ellen G. White Estate and Pacific Press. Get more information about it at [www.cornerstonconnections.net](http://www.cornerstonconnections.net) /article/191/about-us/conflict-of-the-ages-companion-books#.UHtF1rB09s. By following the weekly reading plan, you will read at least one book of the Conflict of the Ages series each year.