

Confusion of Tongues Distorts the Ether

● Truly this is a confusion of tongues. Truly the heavens above Europe are a modern Babel, not greatly different in their wordy welter from the site of the famous tower of the scriptures, where taskmasters cursed bewildered workmen who could not understand their orders.

● The familiar story from the eleventh chapter of the book of Genesis relates how, not long after the deluge, the people of the world, who were of one language and one speech, decided to construct a colossal tower of brick for the purpose of reaching heaven. And, so the biblical account goes, the Lord came down to earth to observe the progress being made by the workmen on the tower. He thereupon confounded the language of all the earth, scattered its people, and put an end to their ambition to climb to the throne of God by means of a lofty tower.

● This is the ancient and inspired Hebrew explanation of why the inhabitants of the earth today speak a multiplicity of languages, why those in one part of the world cannot understand those in other parts, why there is a confusion of tongues such as is revealed in the radio programs that bombard each other in the ether over Europe.

● The word Babel itself comes from the Hebrew verb *balal*, to confound. The Old Testament says: "Therefore is the name of it [the site of the tower] called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth. . . ."

● Babel is the native name of Babylon, one of the greatest cities of antiquity. It was in the ruins of this great city that not long ago were found vestiges of a great tower believed to have been associated with the biblical story. From study of the foundation of this tower models have been made to show to the modern world how this famous may have appeared in the long, long ago.

- Some traditions, however, associate the scriptural story with a certain tower at Borsippa, an ancient city about fifteen miles southwest of Babylon. There may be still further confusion as to the



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An unidentified sixteenth-century painter's conception of the Tower of Babel, celebrated structure of the scriptures. The painting is of the Flemish school.

site of the tower, since structures such as the one at Borsippa are well scattered over Mesopotamia. From various other parts of the world, in addition, have come legends linking this or that ruin with the story of the Tower of Babel. Natives of Zambesi, in Africa, have their own particular version of the story, as do those of the

Burma-Tibetan border and those of Assam. Even in Mexico there is told a tale that links the great pyramid of Cholula to the biblical account. This last-named version, however, is believed to have arisen in the Mexican Indian mind as a result of the introduction of Christianity in the land.

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