

Where did languages come from?

ANCIENT LANGUAGES ARE NOT SIMPLE!



The evolution theory says that human speech began with animal grunts which gradually changed into words. But the sounds made by apes are nothing like the words we

use when we talk. All animals have ways of communicating with one another, but this is not at all like our own language. If languages really evolved, then the oldest languages on earth should be the simplest ones. But they are not. Ancient languages such as Sanskrit—still spoken in parts of India—are much more complicated than modern languages. Language experts who believe in evolution are puzzled by this.

Sanskrit—one of the oldest languages—is much more complicated than modern languages.

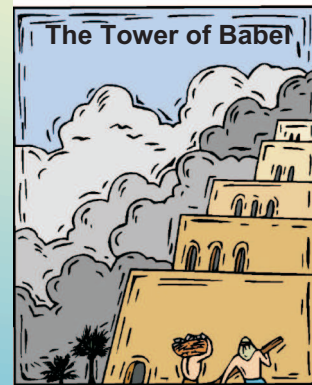
তহদহা হুআনু আহরামি, একেন পাপিনা মনসি পাবিব-
র্তিতে, ঈশ্বরস্ত ছতানাং মধ্যেছ শানন্দো জায়তে।

We learn to talk when we are very young as we listen to other people speak. There are thousands of different languages in the world. If they didn't evolve, where did they come from? In the Bible we read that in the beginning God gave the first people, Adam and Eve, a language. There was only one language until the time of the great flood.



After the flood, when people began to multiply, God wanted them to spread around the world.

But they decided to stay in one place, and build a huge tower, called the Tower of Babel. So God worked a miracle by making people speak lots of new languages. People then found others who spoke the same language and these groups began to spread around the world. This is where all the world's people groups came from (see Genesis chapter 11).



Many modern languages are related to others, but there is no evidence that all came from the same beginning. The facts suggest that the Bible is right about how languages began.

Nature Notes by the Editor



Bulbs look dry and dead when they are planted....



...but in the spring they grow and provide a beautiful display

I am writing this in the middle of winter, and we have had some cold, frosty days. But even during the cold weather the green shoots of spring flowers have appeared, braving the cold, ready to give a display of colour in only a few weeks. Already snowdrops are in bloom, and even a few brave daffodils have appeared. In the colder parts of the world winter appears to be a dead time, when most of nature seems asleep. But we always have the promise of spring, and new life. After the flood, God promised that as long as the earth continues, "Cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will not stop." (Genesis 8: 22). That promise never fails. Sometimes the weather is unusual; it may be colder, warmer, wetter or drier than usual, but we know that after winter comes spring, then summer.

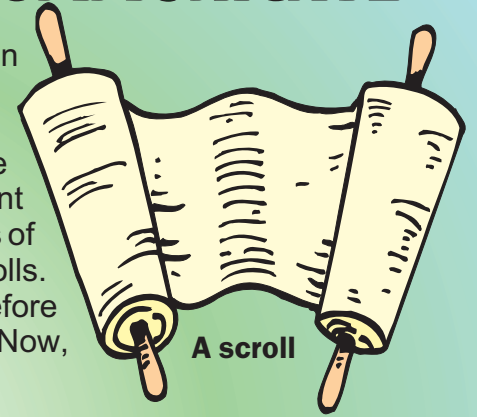
In the autumn I planted bulbs in the garden. They looked dry and dead, but they were packed with life, just waiting for the right time to spring into action. After staying in the dark earth for several months, they will send up shoots, then flowers. Other plants in gardens, parks and countryside will also bloom, to give a wonderful display of colour.

In the spring, let's thank God for the new life we see. More important, we should thank Him for the new life we receive when we put our faith in Jesus, His Son, who said, "I came to give life—life in all its fullness." (John 10: 10).—Geoff Chapman



HOW WE USE LANGUAGE TO COMMUNICATE

Being able to talk is great, but it is even more useful to have a written language. This makes it easier to record history, and pass on information to future generations. In the beginning, people wrote on pieces of clay, which were then baked. Thousands of these tablets have been discovered by archaeologists. The ancient Egyptians learned how to make a kind of parchment from the stems of a plant called papyrus. This was joined together in rolls called scrolls. Modern-type paper was first made in China 1,900 years ago. Before printing was invented, books were handwritten—a very slow job. Now, millions of books can be quickly printed.



A scroll

Ancient tablets show we can trust the Bible

In 1964, thousands of clay tablets were discovered in an ancient palace at Ebla in Syria. There were about 17,000 pieces, which when put together made about 2,500 tablets. This discovery was very exciting because the writing on the tablets



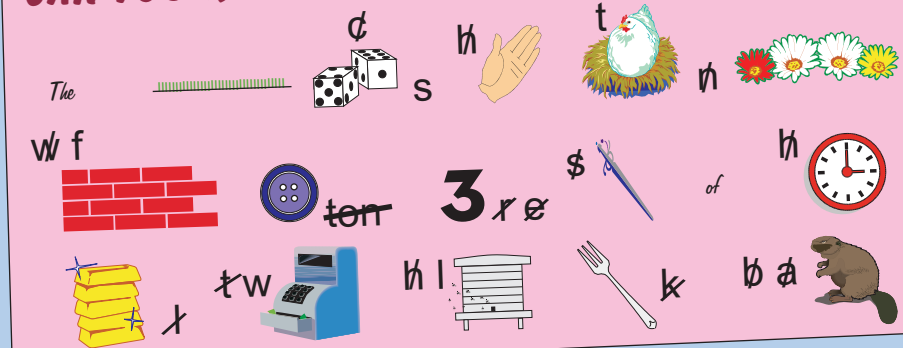
proved that the history recorded in the Bible is true. The Ebla tablets, which were written between 2,400–2,300 B.C., contained a record of the creation of the world, the flood and early human history. Many people who had said we could not trust the Bible now had to admit that it was true history after all.

How do we know what happened in the past? Because people who were alive at the time wrote down what they saw. Without written languages we would know very little about the history of the world. We should be very grateful that God has given us a book that tells us how He created the world and human beings in the beginning. Many people have their own ideas about how the world began, but these can only be guesses, because they were not there at the time. But God the Creator was there, and long ago He told a man named Moses to write down the story of creation, the flood, and early history of the world. We find this record in the Bible, and we can trust it, because it is God's word.

(See our back page to find out how God has spoken to us)

PUZZLE CORNER

CAN YOU READ THE BIBLE VERSE BELOW?



1. Raven, penguin, eagle, octopus, kiwi.
2. Lion, tiger, kangaroo, puma, lynx.
3. Mouse, weasel, whale, shark, seal.
4. Ant, bee, wasp, dragonfly, spider.
5. Sheep, pig, cow, hamster, goat.
6. Salmon, eel, trout, sturgeon, dolphin.

(Answers on the back page)

Study the two pictures below. The lower picture has 10 differences. Can you spot them?

