

## Sunday School Lesson – Upper Primary

<b>BIG IDEA</b>	Only God is God – and we are not
<b>Bible Reading</b>	Genesis 11:1-9
<b>Preparation</b>	<p><b>Read Genesis 1:26, 9:1-3 and 11:1-9:</b> Right from the very start, God established the order of authority in his creation. He established himself as the rightful ruler over everything, with human beings as his “deputies” to rule over the rest of creation. While humans respected this order, everything worked out well for them. They fulfilled their role in exploring and ruling creation, and enjoyed a perfect relationship with God. But ever since the first sin in the garden of Eden, humans have tried to usurp God’s position – abandoning their God-given task and instead coveting the position of God himself. This is most graphically illustrated in the account of the tower of Babel. Human beings deliberately disobeyed God’s command to go out and look after his creation, and instead banded together in an attempt to overthrow God. Almost ludicrously, they try to do this by building a physical tower which will “reach to the heavens”. Even the materials they use make a mockery of their attempt (“brick instead of stone and tar for mortar”). The true God and ruler is easily able to deal with the attempted rebellion. His intervention and judgement forces them to do exactly what they were supposed to do in the first place – to spread over the earth. Thus he re-establishes his authority and position as the one, true God, and gives humans another chance to fulfil the job they were meant to be doing.</p> <p><b>Take home message:</b> God has given us a special place in his creation. We should make the most of this, and not try to take his job.</p> <p><b>Prepare for “Getting Started”:</b> Write the following words on card, and then cut them up into individual words: Teacher, Head teacher, Student, Parent, Child, Sunday School Teacher, Prime Minister (President), Policeman. Write out the following words on card for later in the lesson: God, People, Rest of Creation.</p>
<b>Getting Started</b>	Give the children the mixed up words prepared earlier. Get them to sort them out into pairs, each pair showing someone who is in charge, and someone who has to submit. <i>Note: some words will be needed for more than one pairing.</i>
<b>Finding Out</b> 1. God’s order for creation (Gen 9:1-3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q: How many people did God rescue from the flood?</li> </ul> <p><b>Read Genesis 9:1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q: What commands did God give to Noah and his sons?</li> <li>➤ There were now only 8 people in the whole world. God gave Noah and his family clear instructions as to what their job was now – to spread out over the earth.</li> <li>• Q: Why do you think it was important for them to spread out over the earth?</li> </ul> <p><b>Read Genesis 9:2-3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ These verses tell us why the remaining people on earth needed to spread out. Humans have a very special role. This was God’s plan from the beginning</li> </ul> <p><b>Read Genesis 1:26</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q: What special job did God give to humans?</li> </ul>

<p>2. Trying to take God's place (Gen 11:1-4)</p> <p>3. Re-establishing the right order (Gen 11:5-9)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ God gave people the job of ruling over the rest of his creation.</li> <li>➤ Talk through the hierarchy that God established at creation, with God himself as the overall ruler (<i>refer back to week 2</i>), and human beings directly under God, then all the rest of creation under human beings. (Use the cards prepared earlier. Relate this back to the "Getting Started" activity).</li> <li>➤ Explain the privileged position this puts people in</li> <li>➤ In order to be able to fulfil this role of looking after the rest of God's creation, they needed to spread out over the world.</li>   <li>➤ Skip forward a few generations, and let's see if people were doing their job.</li> </ul> <p><b>Read Genesis 11:1-4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Q: Were the people obeying God and spreading out over the world?</i></li> <li>• <i>Q: What had they decided to do instead?</i></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The people were deliberately going against God's instructions, so that they would not be "scattered over the face of the whole earth".</li> <li>• <i>Q: How high did they want their tower to be?</i></li> <li>➤ The people were not happy with the order God had made. They abandoned their role – of ruling over the rest of creation, and instead tried to reach for God's role – of being ruler over everything.</li> <li>➤ If you have time, you may want to point out the similarities to what happened with Eve when she tried to "be like God"</li>   <li>• <i>Q: How do you think God felt about the way people were behaving?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>Read Genesis 11:5-9</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Dramatically describe what it would be like to suddenly discover you couldn't understand or be understood by anyone!</li> <li>➤ People were not fulfilling the role they were given, and instead had tried to take God's role. God knows this is not good. He is our rightful ruler and knows what is best for us. So he stepped in to put things back the way they should be.</li> <li>➤ He judged the people of Babel and humbled them to show that he is God and they are not God.</li> <li>➤ Point out how easy it was for God to make sure his plan was carried out. He is the one ultimately in charge – it is easy for him to make his plans work out. Only God is God! People are not, and cannot be God!</li> </ul>
<p><b>So What?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Q: Do we sometimes think we know better than God and try to take his job?</i></li> <li>➤ Talk about examples – e.g. being discontent with what God has given them (such as abilities, looks, friendships), or being resentful of having to obey parents. When we think this way, we are telling God we know better than him!</li> <li>• <i>Q: How can we be doing our job of looking after God's creation?</i></li> <li>➤ If we see things as ultimately belonging to God and we just have the job of looking after them for a while, it will help us have the right attitude.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Memory Verse</b></p>	<p><b>PSALM 145:2</b>  <i>Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever.</i></p>

## Sunday School Lesson – Lower Primary

<b>BIG IDEA</b>	Only God is God – and we are not
<b>Bible Reading</b>	Genesis 11:1-9
<b>Preparation</b>	<p><b>Read Genesis 1:26, 9:1-3 and 11:1-9:</b> Right from the very start, God established the order of authority in his creation. He established himself as the rightful ruler over everything, with human beings as his “deputies” to rule over the rest of creation. While humans respected this order, everything worked out well for them. They fulfilled their role in exploring and ruling creation, and enjoyed a perfect relationship with God. But ever since the first sin in the garden of Eden, humans have tried to usurp God’s position – abandoning their God-given task and instead coveting the position of God himself. This is most graphically illustrated in the account of the tower of Babel. Human beings deliberately disobeyed God’s command to go out and look after his creation, and instead banded together in an attempt to overthrow God. Almost ludicrously, they try to do this by building a physical tower which will “reach to the heavens”. Even the materials they use make a mockery of their attempt (“brick instead of stone and tar for mortar”). The true God and ruler is easily able to deal with the attempted rebellion. His intervention and judgement forces them to do exactly what they were supposed to do in the first place – to spread over the earth. Thus he re-establishes his authority and position as the one, true God, and gives humans another chance to fulfil the job they were meant to be doing.</p> <p><b>Take home message:</b> God has given us a special place in his creation. We should make the most of this, and not try to take his job.</p> <p><b>Prepare for “Getting Started”:</b> Write the following words on card, and then cut them up into individual words: Teacher, Head teacher, Student, Parent, Child, Sunday School Teacher, Prime Minister (President), Policeman. Write out the following words on card for later in the lesson: God, People, Rest of Creation.</p>
<b>Getting Started</b>	Give the children the mixed up words prepared earlier. Get them to sort them out into pairs, each pair showing someone who is in charge, and someone they are in charge of. Note: some words will be needed for more than one pairing.
<b>Finding Out</b> 1. God’s order for creation (Gen 9:1-3)	<p>➤ Remember from last week, God had judged the world with a flood, but had chosen to rescue Noah and his family.</p> <p><b>Read Genesis 9:1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q: <i>What commands did God give to Noah and his sons?</i></li> <li>➤ There were now only 8 people in the whole world. God gave Noah and his family clear instructions as to what their job was now – to spread out over the earth.</li> <li>➤ God wanted them to spread out to do a special job.</li> </ul> <p><b>Read Genesis 1:26</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q: <i>What special job did God give to humans?</i></li> <li>➤ God gave people the job of ruling over the rest of his creation.</li> <li>➤ Use the cards prepared earlier to explain the order of authority, with God himself as the overall ruler (<i>Refer back to week 2</i>), and human beings directly</li> </ul>

<p>2. Trying to take God's place (Gen 11:1-4)</p> <p>3. Re-establishing the right order (Gen 11:5-9)</p>	<p>under God, then all the rest of creation under human beings. (Relate this back to the "Getting Started" activity).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Explain that this is a very special job that God gave to people. He didn't give this job to cows or monkeys, or trees – but to people!</li> <li>➤ Noah's children eventually had children of their own, and then they had children, and then they had children. Lots of years later, let's see if people were doing their job.</li> </ul> <p><b>Read Genesis 11:3-4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Q: Were the people obeying God and spreading out over the world?</i></li> <li>• <i>Q: What had they decided to do instead?</i></li> <li>➤ Point out that the people were deliberately going against God's instructions, so that they would not be "scattered over the face of the whole earth".</li> <li>• <i>Q: How high did they want their tower to be?</i></li> <li>➤ Explain that they were not happy with the job God had given them to do. Instead of doing their job of looking after God's creation, they tried to reach for God's job – of being ruler over everything. They thought that if they built a tower high enough, it would show they were stronger than God.</li> </ul> <p><b>Read Genesis 11:5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Q: How do you think God felt about the way people were behaving?</i></li> <li>➤ He was not pleased!</li> <li>➤ People were not doing the job they were supposed to do, and instead had tried to take God's job. God knew this wasn't good, and so stepped in to put things back the way they should be.</li> <li>➤ Dramatically describe how one day the people came to work on the tower as normal, but as they tried to have a conversation with their friend (maybe about what they had for lunch) they discovered that their friend could only babel at them! Then they talked to the next person, and they couldn't understand them either! Each person they talked to, the same thing happened!</li> <li>• <i>Q: How would it feel not to be able to understand or be understood by anyone?</i></li> <li>➤ They had to stop building the tower, because they couldn't talk to each other. Instead, they all did what they were supposed to do in the first place, spread out over the earth and looked after God's creation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>So What?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sometimes we try to take God's job as well. Probably not by building a big tower to try and reach up to God! But whenever we complain about what God has given us (e.g. if we think we don't have enough toys or wished we didn't have to obey our parents or teachers) we are saying to God that we think he got things wrong and we could do a better job! Do you need to say sorry to God?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Memory Verse</b></p>	<p><b>PSALM 145:2</b>  <i>Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever</i></p>

## Sunday School Lesson – Pre-School

<b>BIG IDEA</b>	Only God is God – and we are not
<b>Bible Reading</b>	Genesis 11:1-9
<b>Preparation</b>	<p><b>Read Genesis 1:26, 9:1-3 and 11:1-9:</b> Right from the very start, God established the order of authority in his creation. He established himself as the rightful ruler over everything, with human beings as his “deputies” to rule over the rest of creation. While humans respected this order, everything worked out well for them. They fulfilled their role in exploring and ruling creation, and enjoyed a perfect relationship with God. But ever since the first sin in the garden of Eden, humans have tried to usurp God’s position – abandoning their God-given task and instead coveting the position of God himself. This is most graphically illustrated in the account of the tower of Babel. Human beings deliberately disobeyed God’s command to go out and look after his creation, and instead banded together in an attempt to overthrow God. Almost ludicrously, they try to do this by building a physical tower which will “reach to the heavens”. Even the materials they use make a mockery of their attempt (“brick instead of stone and tar for mortar”). The true God and ruler is easily able to deal with the attempted rebellion. His intervention and judgement forces them to do exactly what they were supposed to do in the first place – to spread over the earth. Thus he re-establishes his authority and position as the one, true God.</p> <p><b>Take home message:</b> God has the right to tell us what to do. We need to listen to him and obey him.</p> <p><b>Prepare for “Getting Started”:</b> Find pictures of the following people: Teacher, Student, Parent (adult), and a Child. Write out the word “God” on a piece of card.</p>
<b>Getting Started</b>	Show pictures of the teacher and student. Ask them which one is the boss, and which one needs to obey? Do the same with the parent and child pictures. Explain that it is important that everyone does the right job – people in charge do their job, and people that need to obey do their job.
<b>Finding Out</b> 1. God’s order for creation (Gen 9:1-3)  2. Trying to take God’s place (Gen 11:1-4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ God has made some people to be in charge and given other people the job of obeying. God is the biggest boss of all. Every person in the whole world needs to obey God. Even if they are a teacher or a boss or a parent. God is in charge of everyone. (Use the cards prepared earlier, using the word “God”, and a picture of a child and of an adult to show God at the top).</li> <li>➤ After God rescued Noah and his family, they had lots more children and families of their own.</li> <li>➤ God gave them a job to do. Their job was to travel across the world and look after all the things God had made.</li> <li>• <i>Q: What sorts of things did God make that people needed to look after?</i></li> <li>➤ Do you think that Noah’s family obeyed God? Let’s find out.</li> </ul> <p><b>Read Genesis 11:4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Q: What did the people decide to do?</i></li> </ul>

<p>3. Re-establishing the right order (Gen 11:5-9)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Q: Were they obeying God?</i></li> <li>➤ No! Instead they chose to disobey God. They didn't spread out and look after God's creation. They chose to stick together and build a big tower instead.</li> <li>• <i>Q: How high did they want their tower to be?</i></li> <li>➤ They wanted their tower to reach all the way up to God!</li> <li>➤ They were not happy with the job God had given them to do. Instead of doing their job, they wanted to take God's job! They thought that if they could build their tower high enough, they would be stronger than God. They could then do whatever they liked, and not have to listen to and obey God.</li> </ul> <p><b>Read Genesis 11:5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Q: How do you think God felt about the way people were behaving?</i></li> <li>➤ He knew it wasn't good that the people were trying to be the ones in charge, so he decided to do something about it.</li> <li>➤ Dramatically describe how one day the people came to work on the tower as normal, but as they tried to have a conversation with their friend (maybe about what they had for lunch) they discovered that their friend could only babel at them! Then they talked to the next person, and they couldn't understand them either! Each person they talked to, the same thing happened!</li> <li>➤ They had to stop building the tower, because they couldn't talk to each other. Instead, they all did what they were supposed to do in the first place, spread out over the earth and looked after God's creation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>So What?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ God's job is to be in charge of everything. Our job is to obey him.</li> <li>➤ Talk through some examples of obeying God (e.g. obeying parents, being kind, not hurting people). It is a good thing to obey God – that what he made us to do.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Memory Verse</b></p>	<p><b>PSALM 145:2</b>  <i>Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever</i></p>
<p><b>Alternative to worksheet</b></p>	<p>Act out the story – build a tower with cushions/boxes/etc. Act out the day that everyone stopped being able to understand each other.</p>