

Sunday school lesson – Upper Primary

BIG IDEA	God works all things for good
Bible Reading	Ruth 1&2
Preparation	<p>Read Ruth 1&2 The story of Ruth takes place during the time of the judges. There is famine in the land of Israel (perhaps reflecting a time of God’s judgement?) and so Elimelek’s solution is to flee to Moab. We are not directly told about the wisdom of this decision, but he and his two sons die, leaving his widow and daughters-in-law alone and destitute. Meanwhile, the famine in Israel ends, and Naomi decides to return. She has nothing left there, but she acknowledges that it is Yahweh who has come to the aid of his people (Ruth 1:6) so maybe realises she is at least better off among his people. Ruth insists on accompanying her as she too has come to understand the value of belonging to the true God and his people (Ruth 1:16-18). Throughout the story of Ruth, we see why it is a wonderful thing to take refuge under the wings of Yahweh (Ruth 2:12). His kind and loving providence can always be relied upon.</p> <p>Take home message: <i>God is good and in control of our lives – trust him.</i></p> <p>Prepare for “Getting Started”: Have the chicken game pieces ready if using this.</p>
Getting Started	<p>Play get the chickens to safety. Have the children act as chickens. The leader closes their eyes or has their back turned. The “chickens” chose a corner/pre-defined place in the room. The leader then says which of the options was not “safe under wings”. Anyone in that area is out. Continue until you have a winner.</p> <p>Alternatively, use the “chicken game”. Put each child’s initial on their chicken and have them place their chicken somewhere on the game board, underneath a mother hen. The leader chooses an area without looking and then removes the mother hen. All chickens in that area are out.</p>
<p>Finding Out</p> <p>1. God is still in control, even in hard times (Ruth 1:1-5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explain that today’s story takes place during the time of the judges (after the Israelites had escaped from Egypt and come to Canaan to live, but before there were any kings ruling in Israel). <p>Read Ruth 1:1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use a map to show where Elimelek took his family to wait out the famine in Israel ➤ This seemed like a good plan, but tragedy struck – first Elimelek, then both of his two sons died, leaving Naomi alone. • <i>Q: How do you think Naomi felt?</i> <p>Read Ruth 1:20-21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Naomi knew God was still in control but didn’t understand why he had allowed this to happen to her. ➤ God did have a plan to bring good to Naomi, even through hard times. ➤ This is true in our lives as well – we can’t always see God’s big plan, so we are sometimes tempted to think God doesn’t care, or God isn’t in control when hard things happen. But he is always working out his plan for us, even when we can’t see

<p>2. The blessing of belonging to God's family (Ruth 1:6-22)</p> <p>3. God is in control through the small details of our lives (Ruth 2)</p>	<p>Read Ruth 1:6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Naomi heard that the famine was finally over in Israel so decided to return home ➤ Her 2 sons had married before they died, and both of Naomi's daughters-in-law wanted to return to Israel with Naomi. <p>Read Ruth 1:11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Naomi convinced them they would have no husband, no family, and no-one to support or look after them if they came with her. The future did not look happy. ➤ So, one of them, Orpah, left Naomi and stayed in Moab. But not Ruth. <p>Read Ruth 1:16-18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: Why was Ruth so determined to go with Naomi?</i> ➤ Ruth specifically wanted Naomi's God, and to belong to Naomi's people. Presumably she had heard about the true God through Naomi (she uses his personal name "Yahweh"). She was convinced that belonging to the true God and his family was worth giving up everything for. ➤ Do you realise what an amazing blessing it is to be part of God's family? It is worth giving up everything else for! You won't find anything better. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ So, they return to Israel, but now they need to find a way to eat! Neither of them had husbands, and in those days, women couldn't have jobs. <p>Read Ruth 2:1-3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Explain about "gleaning" – the very poor could go into anyone's field and pick up the grain that was dropped by the harvesters. This was part of Israelite law. • <i>Q: How did God show that he was still looking after Ruth and Naomi?</i> ➤ Ruth "just happened" to pick the field of Boaz to glean. ➤ Talk about other "coincidences" that follow – Boaz "just happened" to arrive then and to talk to his harvesters. He then "just happened" to notice Ruth. • <i>Q: Is there really such a thing as a "coincidence"?</i> ➤ Talk about how God is in control, even of the small details of our lives, to make sure that his big plan works out. <p>Read Ruth 2:8-9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Boaz continued to show kindness to Ruth every day through the harvest season, so Ruth and Naomi were well taken care of and had plenty to eat.
<p>So What?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If you are trusting Jesus, then God has a good plan for your life. You can trust him! Even when hard things happen, and you don't understand what is going on, you can still trust God. He is good, and he is in control. Trusting God is like chickens taking refuge under their mother's wings (refer to the getting started activity). Trust him! ➤ Talk about specific situations that the children are finding hard. Pray about each situation, and specifically that they would know God can be trusted.
<p>Memory Verse</p>	<p><i>Psalm 36:7</i> How priceless is your unfailing love, O God! People take refuge in the shadow of your wings.</p>

Sunday school lesson – Lower Primary

BIG IDEA	God works all things for good
Bible Reading	Ruth 1&2
Preparation	<p>Read Ruth 1&2 The story of Ruth takes place during the time of the judges. There is famine in the land of Israel (perhaps reflecting a time of God’s judgement?) and so Elimelek’s solution is to flee to Moab. We are not directly told about the wisdom of this decision, but he and his two sons die, leaving his widow and daughters-in-law alone and destitute. Meanwhile, the famine in Israel ends, and Naomi decides to return. She has nothing left there, but she acknowledges that it is Yahweh who has come to the aid of his people (Ruth 1:6) so maybe realises she is at least better off among his people. Ruth insists on accompanying her as she too has come to understand the value of belonging to the true God and his people (Ruth 1:16-18). Throughout the story of Ruth, we see why it is a wonderful thing to take refuge under the wings of Yahweh (Ruth 2:12). His kind and loving providence can always be relied upon.</p> <p>Take home message: Belonging to God is the best thing in the world – trust him.</p> <p>Prepare for “Getting Started”: Have the chicken game pieces ready if using this. Cut out pictures/have Lego people to represent Elimelech and his family and Ruth. Also have a map showing Israel and Moab printed out.</p>
Getting Started	<p>Play get the chickens to safety. Have the children act as chickens. The leader closes their eyes or has their back turned. The “chickens” chose a corner/pre-defined place in the room. The leader then says which of the options was not “safe under wings”. Anyone in that area is out. Continue until you have a winner.</p> <p>Alternatively, use the “chicken game”. Put each child’s initial on their chicken and have them place their chicken somewhere on the game board, underneath a mother hen. The leader chooses an area without looking and then removes the mother hen. All chickens in that area are out.</p>
<p>Finding Out</p> <p>1. God is with us even when it’s sad</p> <p>2. Belonging to God is the best</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There was once a family who lived in Israel. One day, they ran out of food. There was no food anywhere in the land, so they had to go on a long journey to find some. ➤ They travelled all the way to a place called Moab. (Use the map and pictures/Lego people to show the family travelling to Moab. Talk about how hard the trip must have been). • <i>Q: How do you feel when you go somewhere new?</i> ➤ Maybe they felt a bit strange and found it hard to make new friends ➤ While they were there, the daddy and two sons died. So, the mummy was left all by herself. How sad. • <i>Q: Do you sometimes have sad things happen? (talk about sad things that happen)</i> ➤ Do you know that if you are trusting God, he is with you and will look after you, even when sad things happen? ➤ The mummy, who was called Naomi, decided it was time to go back home. ➤ She thought she would have to travel on the long journey all by herself.

<p>3. God uses small things to look after us</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: How would it feel to do a long, long walk all by yourself?</i> ➤ But Naomi’s son had married a girl before he died. Her name was Ruth. Ruth told Naomi that she would go with her on the long journey back to her home ➤ Naomi asked Ruth “Why do you want to come with me? You will have to leave your home and your friends and your family. Maybe we won’t have any food to eat.” • <i>Q: What would you say if you were Ruth?</i> ➤ It would be much easier to stay at home. But Ruth said “No, I will come with you.” <p>Read Ruth 1:16-17</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: Why did Ruth want to come with Naomi?</i> ➤ Ruth knew that belonging to God and his special family was better than anything else in the world. She wanted this more than anything. So, Ruth went with Naomi ➤ (Use pictures and map to show Ruth and Naomi going back to Israel) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ God looked after Ruth and Naomi. ➤ When they got back to Israel, Ruth went out to look for food. One day, she happened to meet a man called Boaz. ➤ Boaz looked after Ruth and Naomi. He made sure they had food to eat and were taken care of. ➤ It wasn’t an accident that Ruth met Boaz, God made sure that she met him, so that she would have someone to look after her and Naomi! God is in control of everything, so he can make sure things work out the way they are supposed to. ➤ Ruth asked Boaz why he was being kind to her. This is what he said <p>Read Ruth 2:11-12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ruth was right to want to belong to God’s family – God looked after her just like a mother hen looks after her chickens (Refer back to “Getting Started” activity).
<p>So What?</p>	<p>God looks after his children. It’s the best thing ever to belong to God and his family. Pray that the children would understand how great it is to belong to God and would want this for themselves.</p>
<p>Memory Verse</p>	<p><i>Psalm 36:7</i> How priceless is your unfailing love, O God! People take refuge in the shadow of your wings.</p>

Sunday school lesson – Pre-School

BIG IDEA	God works all things for good
Bible Reading	Ruth 1&2
Preparation	<p>Read Ruth 1&2 The story of Ruth takes place during the time of the judges. There is famine in the land of Israel (perhaps reflecting a time of God’s judgement?) and so Elimelek’s solution is to flee to Moab. We are not directly told about the wisdom of this decision, but he and his two sons die, leaving his widow and daughters-in-law alone and destitute. Meanwhile, the famine in Israel ends, and Naomi decides to return. She has nothing left there, but she acknowledges that it is Yahweh who has come to the aid of his people (Ruth 1:6) so maybe realises she is at least better off among his people. Ruth insists on accompanying her as she too has come to understand the value of belonging to the true God and his people (Ruth 1:16-18). Throughout the story of Ruth, we see why it is a wonderful thing to take refuge under the wings of Yahweh (Ruth 2:12). His kind and loving providence can always be relied upon.</p> <p>Take home message: Belonging to God is the best thing in the world – trust him.</p> <p>Prepare for “Getting Started”: Have the chicken game pieces ready if using this.</p>
Getting Started	<p>Play get the chickens to safety. Have the children act as chickens. The leader closes their eyes or has their back turned. The “chickens” chose a corner/pre-defined place in the room. The leader then says which of the options was not “safe under wings”. Anyone in that area is out. Continue until you have a winner.</p> <p>Alternatively, use the “chicken game”. Put each child’s initial on their chicken and have them place their chicken somewhere on the game board, underneath a mother hen. The leader chooses an area without looking and then removes the mother hen. All chickens in that area are out.</p>
<p>Finding Out</p> <p>1. God is with us even when it’s sad</p> <p>2. Belonging to God is the best</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ There was once a family who lived in Israel. One day, they ran out of food, so they had to go on a long journey to find some more ➤ They travelled all the way to a place called Moab. (Have the children act out walking a long way to a different country) • <i>Q: How do you feel when you go somewhere new?</i> ➤ Maybe they felt a bit strange and found it hard to make new friends ➤ While they were there, the daddy and two sons died. So, the mummy was left all by herself. How sad. • <i>Q: Do you sometimes have sad things happen? (talk about sad things that happen)</i> ➤ Do you know that God is with you and will look after you, even when it’s sad? ➤ The mummy, who was called Naomi, decided it was time to go back home. ➤ She thought she would have to travel on the long journey all by herself. • <i>Q: How would it feel to do a long, long walk all by yourself?</i> ➤ But Naomi found a friend. Her name was Ruth. Ruth told Naomi that she would go with her on the long journey back to her home

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Naomi asked Ruth “Why do you want to come with me? You will have to leave your home and your friends and your family. Maybe we won’t have any food to eat.” • <i>Q: What would you say if you were Ruth?</i> ➤ It would be much easier to stay at home. But Ruth said “No, I will come with you. Where you go, I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your family will be my family and your God will be my God” ➤ Ruth knew that belonging to God and to his special family was better than anything else in the world. She wanted this more than anything else. ➤ (Act out Ruth and Naomi going on a long journey back to Israel) ➤ God looked after Ruth and Naomi. When they got back to Israel, they met a kind man named Boaz. Boaz made sure they had plenty food to eat and looked after Ruth and Naomi. ➤ Ruth was right to want to belong to God and his family. God looked after her.
So What?	<p>God looks after his children, just like a mother hen looks after her chicks (Refer back to “Getting Started” activity.) It’s the best thing ever to belong to God and his family. Pray that the children would understand how great it is to belong to God and would want this for themselves.</p>
Memory Verse	<p><i>Psalm 36:7</i> How priceless is your unfailing love, O God! People take refuge in the shadow of your wings.</p>