

Sunday school lesson – Upper Primary

BIG IDEA	God Speaks
Bible Reading	Hebrews 1:1-4
Preparation	<p>Read Hebrews 1 The book of Hebrews was written to Jewish believers who were tempted to return to Judaism because following Jesus was too hard. It argues that Jesus is much better and is therefore a plea to persevere in following him. We dive straight in at the first verse, where the writer begins with God breaking into human history, in order to reveal himself to us. This is contrasted with Gods messages in the past which, though wonderful, were indirect and incomplete. Through the Son, God himself speaks directly to us. He has the authority to speak - He is our Creator, Sustainer and Saviour, and he has come from heaven into our world because he has something to say. What a privilege to have his words! What folly to ignore them.</p> <p>Take home message: Through Jesus’ coming, God spoke to us directly. Listen to him!</p> <p>Prepare for “Getting Started”: Use PowerPoint slides or cut up a picture to progressively reveal what it contains. Use the rest of the slides later in the lesson. For later in the lesson, put something inside a locked box (and have the key!)</p>
Getting Started	Use PowerPoint (or cut up pictures) to progressively reveal a picture – show one piece of the picture, and then add another piece, etc. See who can guess what the final picture is going to be first. Talk about how you can only be sure of what the whole the picture is when you get to see the complete picture.
Finding Out 1. In the past, God spoke through prophets (Hebrews 1:1)	<p>➤ The Book of Hebrews was written to early believers who were finding it very hard to follow Jesus. They were mocked, put in prison and even put to death for being a Christian. Because of this, they were tempted to give up on their faith. This letter was written to encourage them to keep going in following Jesus</p> <p>Read Hebrews 1:1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q: How did God speak to people “in the past”? • Q: Can you think of examples of different ways God spoke to people in the Old Testament? (e.g. Moses, Elijah, Job, Gideon, Abraham, etc) <p>➤ God is not limited in how he is able to speak to people. He used all sorts of different methods in the past.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q: Think about each time God spoke in the Old Testament – how many times did the person God spoke to, ask God to speak to them? <p>➤ Most of the time, God spoke without anyone asking him to reveal himself to them. We don’t naturally seek God. But God wants us to know him, so he takes the initiative and reveals himself to us.</p> <p>➤ Even if we do want to know about God, we can’t figure out what he is like on our own – we need him to show himself to us.</p> <p>➤ For example – you might want to know what is inside this box (<i>show locked box</i>). But unless I give you the key, no matter how much you want to know, you can’t figure out what is inside! You need me to show it to you. In the same way, God needs to show himself to us, we can’t figure out for ourselves what he is like.</p>

<p>2. Now he has spoken to us through his Son (Hebrews 1:2)</p> <p>3. Why we should listen to Jesus (Hebrews 1:2-4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: About how many people did God speak to in the Old Testament?</i> ➤ Even though a few people heard directly from God, most people only heard God’s message as it was passed on to them by others (prophets). They didn’t get to hear from God directly. <p>Read Hebrews 1:2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: How has God spoken to us in these “last days”?</i> ➤ One of the reasons Jesus was born and came into the world was so that God could speak to us directly ➤ Each time God gave a message to one of the prophets in the Old Testament, he was only revealing part of the picture about himself and his plan ➤ <i>Use PowerPoint to illustrate the pieces of the puzzle that the prophets were revealing. Explain that each message the prophets gave helped people to understand a little bit more about God and about his plan, but they couldn’t see all of it yet. Relate back to “Getting Started” activity</i> ➤ When Jesus came, he revealed the complete picture. Because Jesus is God, he is the best possible person to show us what God is like. If we want to know God, we just need to listen to Jesus! <p>Read Hebrews 1:1-4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: What reasons are given here for why we should listen to Jesus?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ He is the “heir of all things” – he owns everything, including us ○ He “made the universe” – he made everything, including us ○ He is the “radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being”. – he is God! ○ He “sustains all things by his powerful word” – he looks after us ○ He has “provided purification for our sins” – he saved us ○ He has “sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high” – he rules over everything. ○ He is “superior to the angels” – he is better than anything! ➤ List all the things about Jesus together – this is the one God sent to speak to us! None of the prophets in the Old Testament could claim these things, and yet God expected people to listen to them. How much more should we listen to his Son!
<p>So What?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ At Christmas, we remember that God sent Jesus into the world. This isn’t just a nice story, it is God Himself coming into our world to speak directly to us. • <i>Q: How do we hear God speaking now? How does knowing that these are God’s words directly to us help us to appreciate and make the most of them?</i> • <i>Q: What practical things we can do to make sure we keep hearing God speak?</i> ➤ Pray that we would recognise what a privilege we have in knowing Jesus and being able to hear directly from God.
<p>Memory Verse</p>	<p>HEBREWS 1:1-2</p> <p><i>In the past, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.</i></p>

Sunday school lesson – Lower Primary

BIG IDEA	God Speaks
Bible Reading	Hebrews 1:1-4
Preparation	<p>Read Hebrews 1 The book of Hebrews was written to Jewish believers who were tempted to return to Judaism because following Jesus was too hard. It argues that Jesus is much better and is therefore a plea to persevere in following him. We dive straight in at the first verse, where the writer begins with God breaking into human history, in order to reveal himself to us. This is contrasted with Gods messages in the past which, though wonderful, were indirect and incomplete. Through the Son, God himself speaks directly to us. He has the authority to speak - He is our Creator, Sustainer and Saviour, and he has come from heaven into our world because he has something to say. What a privilege to have his words! What folly to ignore them.</p> <p>Take home message: Through Jesus’ coming, God spoke to us directly. Listen to him!</p> <p>Prepare for “Getting Started”: Use PowerPoint slides or cut up a picture to progressively reveal what it contains. Use the rest of the slides later in the lesson. For later in the lesson, put something inside a locked box (and have the key!)</p>
Getting Started	Use PowerPoint (or cut up pictures) to progressively reveal a picture – show one piece of the picture, and then add another piece, etc. See who can guess what the final picture is going to be first. Talk about how you can only be sure of what the whole the picture is when you get to see the complete picture.
<p>Finding Out</p> <p>1. In the past, God spoke through prophets (Hebrews 1:1)</p>	<p>➤ The letter of Hebrews was written to Christians who were finding it hard to follow Jesus. They wanted to just give up, so this letter was written to help them see how great Jesus is, and why it is important to keep following him.</p> <p>Read Hebrews 1:1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q: How did God speak to people “in the past”? • Q: What is a prophet? <p>➤ A prophet is God’s messenger. God gave the prophets a message, and their job was to pass the message on to other people.</p> <p>➤ God used lots of different messengers in the past (<i>show PowerPoint slide with pictures of the prophets, but don’t do the animation yet</i>). Ask the children to read the names of prophets that God gave messages to for his people.</p> <p>➤ It’s a good thing that God chose to speak to us, because otherwise we wouldn’t know what he is like. If someone asked us “Is God loving?”, we would have to say, “I don’t know”! God sent all these messengers to his people, so that we could find out what he is like, and about his plan for the world.</p> <p>➤ Even if we wanted to know what God is like, we can’t work it out for ourselves, we need God to show us.</p> <p>➤ For example – you might want to know what is inside this box (<i>show locked box</i>). But unless I give you the key, no matter how much you want to know, you can’t figure out what is inside! You need me to show it to you. In the same way, God needs to show himself to us, we can’t figure out for ourselves what he is like.</p>

<p>2. Now he has spoken to us through his Son (Hebrews 1:2)</p>	<p>Read Hebrews 1:2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: How has God spoken to us in these “last days”?</i> ➤ God used to speak to people through prophets. But now God has spoken to us in a much better way. He has spoken to us through His Son, Jesus. ➤ When God gave his messages to people through prophets, they only saw a part of the whole picture. ➤ <i>Use PowerPoint to illustrate the pieces of the puzzle that the prophets were revealing. After each “message”, ask if they can see what the picture behind is yet. Explain that each message the prophets gave helped people to understand a little bit more about God and about his plan, but they couldn’t see all of it yet. Relate back to “Getting Started” activity</i> ➤ When Jesus came to earth, he was able to finally show us exactly what God is like, and what his plan was. • <i>Q: What was God’s big plan (use PowerPoint picture)</i> ➤ God’s big plan all along was to send Jesus into the world, to die on the cross, so that people who trust in Jesus can be friends with God forever. ➤ When Jesus came, he revealed the complete picture. Because Jesus is God, he is the best possible person to show us what God is like. If we want to know God, we just need to listen to Jesus!
<p>3. Jesus reveals God and his plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Because Jesus came, we know what God is like, and we know what his plan for the world is. ➤ Without Jesus, we would only see parts of God’s plan, and we might get things wrong (for example, when some people found out from the prophets that God was going to send a king, they thought he would wear a golden crown and have lots of servants – instead, God’s king came as a servant himself!). We need Jesus to come and show us the whole picture.
<p>So What?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ At Christmas, we remember that God sent Jesus into the world. This is very good news, because now we know what God is like. And we know that his plan all along was to send Jesus to die on the cross, so that we could be friends with him. ➤ Thank God that Jesus came to show us the big picture and the complete message from God. Pray that we would listen to what Jesus has to say and trust his message.
<p>Memory Verse</p>	<p>HEBREWS 1:1-2</p> <p><i>In the past, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.</i></p>

Sunday school lesson – Pre-School

BIG IDEA	God Speaks
Bible Reading	Hebrews 1:1-4
Preparation	<p>Read Hebrews 1 The book of Hebrews was written to Jewish believers who were tempted to return to Judaism because following Jesus was too hard. It argues that Jesus is much better and is therefore a plea to persevere in following him. We dive straight in at the first verse, where the writer begins with God breaking into human history, in order to reveal himself to us. This is contrasted with Gods messages in the past which, though wonderful, were indirect and incomplete. Through the Son, God himself speaks directly to us. He has the authority to speak - He is our Creator, Sustainer and Saviour, and he has come from heaven into our world because he has something to say. What a privilege to have his words! What folly to ignore them.</p> <p>Take home message: Through Jesus’ coming, God spoke to us directly. Listen to him!</p> <p>Prepare for “Getting Started”: Use PowerPoint slides or cut up a picture to progressively reveal what it contains. Use the rest of the slides later in the lesson.</p>
Getting Started	Use PowerPoint (or cut up pictures) to progressively reveal a picture – show one piece of the picture, and then add another piece, etc. See who can guess what the final picture is going to be first. Talk about how you can only be sure of what the whole the picture is when you get to see the complete picture.
<p>Finding Out 1. In the past, God spoke through prophets (Hebrews 1:1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ We’re going to play a game. In this game, you are not allowed to talk! Get a child to try and tell you what they had for breakfast that morning, without speaking. ➤ Speaking is very important! If we want to let people know about something, or ask them for something, then we need to be able to speak. ➤ God also thinks that speaking is very important – He wants to speak to us too <p>Read Hebrews 1:1a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Q: How did God speak to people “in the past”?</i> ➤ A long time ago, God spoke to people through prophets • <i>Q: Do you know what a prophet is?</i> ➤ A prophet is God’s messenger. God gave the prophets a message, and their job was to pass the message on to other people. ➤ Give an example by telling one child a message (e.g. “Please sit quietly”), and then getting them to pass the message on to the rest of the class. ➤ That child was a messenger, because they passed on a message from me to you. ➤ God used lots of different messengers in the past (<i>show PowerPoint slide with pictures of the prophets, but don’t do the animation yet</i>). Tell them the different names of prophets that God gave messages to for his people. ➤ It’s a good thing that God chose to speak to us, because otherwise we wouldn’t know what he is like. If someone asked us “Is God loving?”, we would have to say, “I don’t know”! God sent all these messengers to his people, so that we could find out what he is like, and about his plan for the world.

