Use Week of:

The Tower of Babel

BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 11:1-9
MAIN POINT: God created people to give glory to Him alone.
UNIT KEY PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 8:6
BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why did God create the world? God created the world and everything in it for His glory.

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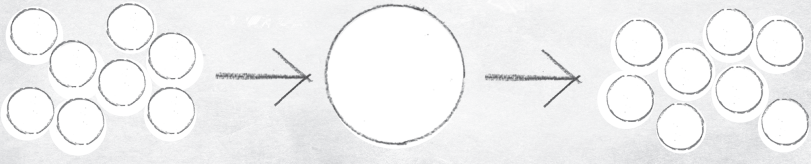

Leader BIBLE STUDY

Following the flood, God wanted to have a fresh start. God commanded Noah in Genesis 9:1 to "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth." This command echoes the one given to Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:28. God intended the paradise of the garden to spread into the whole world, but sinful people had other desires.

Genesis 10 accounts for the nations that spread out in the land after the flood (Genesis 10:32). The people moved east and settled in a valley. This story continues the cycle of disobedience to God and a choice to sin that will be a constant reminder of our need for a Savior.

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In Genesis 11:2, Scripture indicates that instead of filling the earth as God commanded, these people devised a plan to build a city and a large tower into the heavens.

Read Genesis 11:4. The people's motive was clear: "Let us make a name for ourselves." The people didn't want to be scattered. They didn't believe God would give them what was good if they obeyed Him. They sought to obtain for themselves what they believed was good.

The people tried to build a monument with its top in the heavens, but they succeeded only in separating themselves from God and from each other. God confused their language and scattered them over the earth. They were unable to finish building the city, so the city was called Babel—which sounds like the Hebrew word for "confused"—because there the Lord confused the people's language.

This week you have the opportunity to tell the kids you teach about God's better plan: His plan not for people to reach up to Him, but His plan to reach down to people by sending His Son, Jesus, to live the perfect life we couldn't live and die the death we don't want to die. That is the gospel. Pray that the kids you teach would have open hearts to receive it.



Additional resources for each session are available at *gospelproject.com.* For free training and session-by-session help, visit *www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject.*

The Tower of Babel

Genesis 11:1-9

After the great flood, God told Noah and his sons to grow their families and fill the earth. Noah's sons got married and had children. Their families grew, and **the people started to travel through the land.**

At this time, everyone in the world spoke the same language. **One day, the people traveled through a valley**. They liked it there, **and they decided to live there.**

"We don't want to be scattered all over the earth," they said. "Let's build a city and a tower so big that it touches the sky. The tower will make us famous!"

The people were not doing what God had told them to do. They wanted to be as important as God. They were saying "Look how great we are," instead of "Look how great God is." They wanted glory for themselves instead of God. **But God is greater than anyone. God created people to give glory to Him alone.**

The people made bricks out of clay and baked them in the fire to make stones. Then they **used** the **stones to start building the tower.**

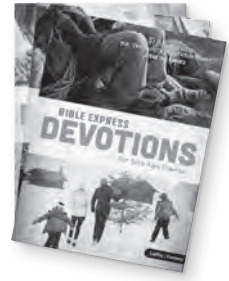
God came down to look at the tower. God said, "If they are doing this, **they will keep thinking up more bad things to do. We need to stop them."**

So God mixed up the people's words. Instead of everyone speaking the same language, everyone spoke different languages. **When people tried to make plans, they could not understand what other people were saying.** If one workman said, "Hand me another brick," nobody else knew what he wanted.

The people had to stop building the city. Families had

to move away from each other to live with people they could understand. God made it so the people did just what He had told them to do after the flood. They were scattered all over the world. **The city with the unfinished tower was called Babel** (BAY buhl)**. Because the people chose to disobey God, their sin separated them from one another.**

Christ Connection: People chose to give glory to themselves instead of God. They ignored God's plan, so God confused their language and scattered the people all over the earth. One day, Jesus will gather together all of God's people—people from every tribe and people who speak all kinds of languages—and they will worship Him. (Revelation 7:9-10)



WANT TO DISCOVER GOD'S WORD? GET *BIBLE EXPRESS!*

Invite kids to check out this week's devotionals to discover that the people God created originally spoke one language. One day, people of every language will worship Jesus together. Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out *www.lifeway.com/devotionals.*

Small Group OPENING

SESSION TITLE: The Tower of Babel

BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 11:1-9

MAIN POINT: God created people to give glory to Him alone.

UNIT KEY PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 8:6

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why did God create the world? God created the world and everything in it for His glory.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group.

Ask kids if they know any foreign languages. Teach them how to say "hello" in other languages. (Spanish: "Hola!"; French: "Bonjour!"; Swahili: "Hujambo")

Activity page (5 minutes)

- "World Languages" activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Distribute activity pages and explain that thousands of languages are spoken throughout the world today. Sometimes a country chooses an official language or languages to designate which language(s) the government will use to conduct business.

SAY • Can you guess the official language of each of these countries? (*Spain, Spanish; Cameroon, French; South Africa, English; Saudi Arabia, Arabic; China, Mandarin Chinese*)

I wonder where all these languages came from. In today's Bible story, a group of people who all spoke the same language suddenly began speaking many different languages!

Session starter (10 minutes)



OPTION 1: Great and famous

Guide kids to sit in a circle to play a guessing game. Explain that you are thinking of a person who is or was famous.

Choose a player to begin by asking a yes-or-no question about the famous person. After you answer the question, the player may guess the person's identity.

If the player guesses incorrectly, the next player may ask another yes-or-no question. Challenge kids to figure out the famous person by asking 20 or fewer questions.

SAY • What makes a person famous? People who are famous are very well known and talked about. Today's Bible story is about some people who wanted to make a name for themselves. They wanted to be famous!

OPTION 2: Tall tower challenge

Form teams of two or three kids. Give each team two sheets of newspaper. Challenge kids to use the newspaper to build a tower. Explain that whichever team can build the tallest structure wins. Teams may only use the newspaper—no tape, glue, staples, or other materials.

- sheets of newspaper, 2 per team
- ruler
- hand wipes for cleanup

Allow kids several minutes to work. Suggest they fold, curl, roll, or tear the paper. When kids finish or time is up, use a ruler to measure the height of each tower.

SAY • Today we are going to hear a story from the Bible about a group of people who wanted to build a tower with its top in the sky! Do you think they did it? Let's find out!

Transition to large group

Large Group LEADER

SESSION TITLE: The Tower of Babel

BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 11:1-9

MAIN POINT: God created people to give glory to Him alone.

UNIT KEY PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 8:6

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why did God create the world? God created the world and everything in it for His glory.

Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire
• sunglasses
• scarf
• telescope or binoculars

[Large Group Leader enters wearing sunglasses and a scarf. Leader is holding a small telescope or a pair of binoculars.]

LEADER • This is it! I'm so glad I get to spend one more day with you before I head off on my big adventure. A lot has happened over the last few weeks, and today is the day I set off for wide open skies. Pretty soon it will be just me and my hot air balloon and the Lord as I sail over prairies and valleys and mountains! Oh boy! Say, let's get started. Today's Bible story is about some people who saw the world because God scattered them over it.

Giant timeline (1 minute)

• Giant Timeline

LEADER • Let's take a look at the giant timeline. Our last Bible story was "Noah and the Ark." After Noah and his family got off the ark, God told them to grow their families and spread out across the earth. That's exactly what they did. But it didn't take long for the

people to disobey God. Today's Bible story is called "The Tower of Babel."

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • Do you remember the answer to our first big picture question? ***Why did God create the world? God created the world and everything in it for His glory.*** Well, the people on earth did not do what God wanted them to do. They did not live to give God glory. They wanted to give themselves glory. Instead of saying, "Look how awesome God is!" the people said, "Look how awesome we are!" Let's listen to the story and see how this turned out.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

- Bibles
- "The Tower of Babel" video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Open your Bible to Genesis 11. Tell the Bible story in your own words, or show the video "The Tower of Babel."

LEADER • The people tried to build a tower with its top in the sky. They wanted to build a city and make a name for themselves so they would not have to spread out over the earth like God commanded. The people thought their plan was a good idea, but **God created people to give glory to Him alone.**

Ask a few review questions and call on volunteers to answer.

1. What did the people use to build? (*bricks, Gen. 11:3*)
2. Why did the people want to build a city and a tower? (*They did not want to be scattered over the earth, Gen. 11:4*)
3. How did God stop the people from building? (*He confused their language, Gen. 11:7*)
4. What was the city named? (*Babel or Babylon, Gen. 11:9*)

LEADER • The people wanted glory for themselves, but their sin separated them from God and each other. They ignored God's plan, so God confused their language and scattered the people all over the earth.

God had a better plan. God planned to come down to the people by sending His Son, Jesus. One day, Jesus will gather together all of God's people—people from every tribe and people who speak all kinds of languages—and they will worship Him together. (Revelation 7:9-10)

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (optional)

Use Scripture and the guide provided with this session to explain to boys and girls how to become a Christian. Assign individuals to meet with kids who have more questions.

Encourage boys and girls to ask their parents, small group leaders, or other Christian adults any questions they may have about becoming a Christian.

Sing (4 minutes)

- "All Creatures of Our God and King (He Is Our Gain)" song

LEADER • **God created people to give glory to Him alone.** One way we can give glory to God is by singing about how great He is! God created everything, and He deserves our worship.

As time allows, allow kids to share things for which they would like to praise God. You might mention some of the lyrics in the song. (*He made the sun and moon and trees; He gave us life with His own breath; He sent His Son to conquer death;* and so forth.)

Lead kids to sing together "All Creatures of Our God and King (He Is Our Gain)."

Key passage (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- "There Is Only One" song

LEADER • Has anyone memorized our key passage? [*Allow two or three volunteers to recite the passage from memory.*] The people who started to build the tower of Babel wanted to make a name for themselves. They wanted everyone to know them and think they were awesome. When we care more about our own fame instead of God's fame, we forget that **God created people to give glory to Him alone.** There is one God, the Father. There is one Lord, Jesus Christ. We exist for Him!

Show the slide or poster of 1 Corinthians 8:6. Lead the girls to read the verse together. Then lead the boys to read the verse. Then sing together "There Is Only One."

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

- "Unit 1, Session 6" discussion starter video

Show the "Unit 1, Session 6" discussion starter video. Lead kids to discuss if it is OK to feel happy about something they have accomplished. Did Samuel do anything wrong by telling people how awesome he is?

LEADER • Pride is giving ourselves the credit for something that God has accomplished. If we are proud, we might think we do not need God or that we know better than He does. We might think we are good enough for God to accept us. Is that true? (*No, we are all sinners who need Jesus to make us right with God.*)

It's OK to feel happy when we score in a basketball game or earn a good grade on a test. Remember to thank God for giving you gifts and abilities. Everything we have is from Him.

Prayer (2 minutes)

Before dismissing to small groups, lead kids in prayer.

LEADER • Lord God, we praise You because You created all things. You created us for Your glory. Father, forgive us for the times we think of ourselves as greater than You are. Forgive us for wanting credit for things that You do. Thank You for not leaving us alone. Thank You for coming down to us through Your Son, Jesus. Help us to trust Him every day and give You the glory You deserve. We love You. Amen.

Dismiss to small groups

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means "good news." It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

 **God rules.** Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

 **We sinned.** Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

 **God provided.** Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

 **Jesus gives.** Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:19.

 **We respond.** Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Small Group LEADER

SESSION TITLE: The Tower of Babel
BIBLE PASSAGE: Genesis 11:1-9
MAIN POINT: God created people to give glory to Him alone.
UNIT KEY PASSAGE: 1 Corinthians 8:6
BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why did God create the world? God created the world and everything in it for His glory.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- blocks
- tape
- markers

Put a strip of tape on the sides of several blocks. Write the key passage as words or phrases on the tape. Mix up the blocks and scatter them on the floor.

Challenge kids to work together to build a tower. Point out the words on the blocks and instruct them to build the tower in such a way that the words of the key passage appear in order. If your group is large, make multiple sets and allow kids to work in smaller groups.

Show the key passage poster to check kids' work. Encourage them to say the key passage together.

Consider teaching the kids how to say some of the words or phrases in another language. For example, in Spanish: "one God, the Father" (*un solo Dios, el Padre*) or "one Lord, Jesus Christ" (*un solo Señor, Jesucristo*).

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster
- craft sticks
- marker

Make sure each kid has a Bible. Instruct kids to open their Bibles to Genesis 11.

Remind kids that Genesis is the first book of the Bible. Point out the large and small numbers and how the books of the Bible are separated into chapters, and chapters are separated into verses.

Number craft sticks from *1* to *9*. Distribute the sticks to volunteers. Explain that each number on the stick is for a verse in Genesis 11. Call for the kid holding the stick labeled with the number *1* to read Genesis 11:1 aloud from the Bible. The kid with stick 2 should read Genesis 11:2, and so on. Kids will read the first 9 verses of Genesis 11.

Collect the sticks and distribute them to other kids. Ask the following review questions or read the prompts, calling numbers from the sticks for kids to respond. Encourage kids to use their Bibles to find answers.

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

1. What did the people use to build? (*bricks, Gen. 11:3*)
2. Why did the people want to build a city and a tower? (*They did not want to be scattered over the earth, Gen. 11:4*)
3. How did God stop the people from building? (*He confused their language, Gen. 11:7*)
4. What was the city named? (*Babel or Babylon, Gen. 11:9*)
5. Ask someone else the big picture question. That person must give the answer. (***Why did God create the world? God created the world and everything in it for His glory.***)
6. Say today's main point. (**God created people to give glory to Him alone.**)
7. What major event happened before the building of the tower of Babel? (*Noah and the ark, the flood*)
8. What book of the Bible comes after the Book of Genesis? (*the Book of Exodus*)
9. Name someone we learned about in Genesis so far. (*Adam, Eve, Cain, Abel, Noah, and so forth*)



- small foam balls or paper wads
- tape (optional)

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Scattered game

Set up the game by designating an area in the center of the room large enough for several kids to stand in. You may choose to use tape to mark the boundaries on the floor.

Position small foam balls or paper wads in the designated area—the more the better! Choose three or four volunteers to stand in the center of the room. Challenge them to push the balls out of the area and scatter them around the room. The other kids should move the balls back into the area.

SAY • **God created people to give glory to Him alone**. When the people chose to give themselves glory, God scattered them over the earth.

OPTION 2: Tower of Babel review relay

- "Tower of Babel Review Cards" printable

Print and cut apart the review cards. Arrange the questions together on a flat surface in a tower formation. Then arrange the answers in a separate tower formation.

Form two teams of kids. Explain that the first player on each team will run to the question tower and choose a card. He will take the card back to his team and read it aloud. The team may discuss the answer, and then the second player will run to the answer tower to collect the answer card. The first team to collect five sets and arrange nine of the cards to form a tower wins.

As time allows, review the questions and answers.

1. Where did the people settle? (*in a valley, Gen. 11:2*)
2. What did the people use to build the tower? (*bricks, Gen. 11:3*)
3. How tall did the people want the tower to be? (*They wanted to build a tower with its top in the sky, Gen. 11:4*)

4. Why did the people want to build a tall tower? (*to make a name for themselves, Gen. 11:4*)
5. Besides the tower, what else did the people build? (*a city, Gen. 11:4-5*)
6. How did God stop the people from building? (*He confused their language, Gen. 11:7*)
7. Where did the Lord move the people? (*He scattered them over the whole earth, Gen. 11:8*)
8. What was the city called? (*Babel, Babylon; Gen. 11:9*)
9. ***Why did God create the world? God created the world and everything in it for His glory.***

SAY • Before the tower of Babel, everyone had the same language. Today, thousands of languages are spoken on earth. **God created people to give glory to Him alone.** One day, Jesus will gather together all of God's people—people from every tribe and people who speak all kinds of languages—and they will worship Him.

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Give each kid the journal page. Encourage boys and girls to write a prayer of thanks and recognition to God, giving Him glory. Remind kids that **God created people to give glory to Him alone.** We give God glory when we show or tell about how great He is.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- "Main Point Mix-Up" activity page, 1 per kid

SAY • We often want people to think that we are awesome, but **God created people to give glory to Him alone.** God deserves our worship. He is so good!

As time allows, challenge kids to complete the "Main Point Mix-Up" on the activity page. Kids will unscramble the letters to discover today's main point: **God created people to give glory to Him alone.**

Tip: Give parents this week's *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.

Journal Page

God the Creator

Key Passage: 1 Corinthians 8:6

Big Picture Questions: Why did God create the world? God created the world and everything in it for His glory.
What is sin? Sin is breaking God's law, and sin separates people from God.

Session 1: God Created the World
Genesis 1:1-25
God created everything for His glory.

Session 2: God Created People
Genesis 1:26-2:25
God created people in His own image; God created them male and female.

Session 3: Sin Entered the World
Genesis 3:1-24
Adam and Eve's sin separated them from God.

Session 4: Cain and Abel
Genesis 4:1-16,25-26
Cain's sin separated him from God and people.

Session 5: Noah and the Ark
Genesis 6:5–9:17
God is holy, and He punishes sin.

Session 6: The Tower of Babel
Genesis 11:1-9
God created people to give glory to Him alone.



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There is one God, the Father. All things are from Him, and we exist for Him. And there is one Lord, Jesus Christ. All things are through Him, and we exist through Him.

1 Corinthians 8:6



There is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.

1 Corinthians 8:6



There is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

1 Corinthians 8:6



There is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

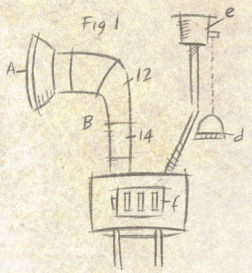
1 Corinthians 8:6



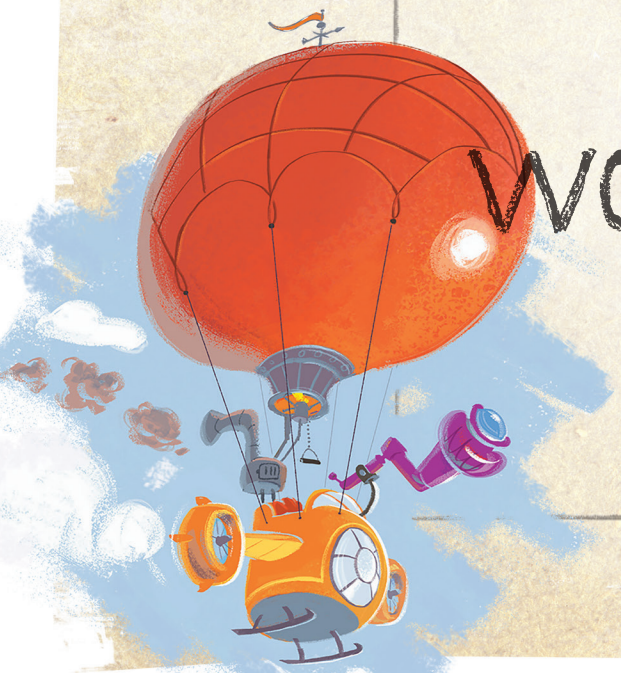
Why did God create the world?

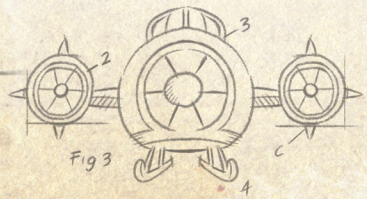


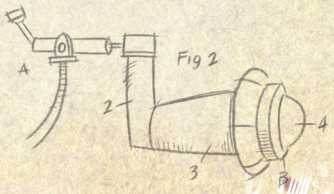
Why did God create the world?

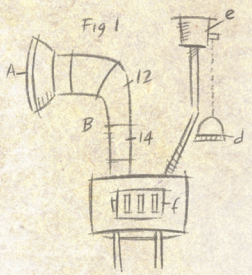


God created the world and everything in it for His glory.



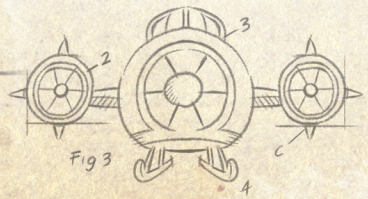


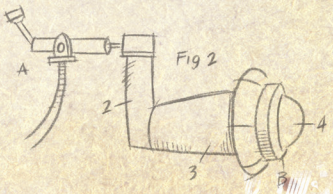




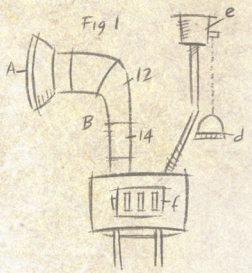
What is sin?





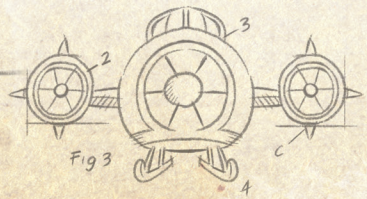


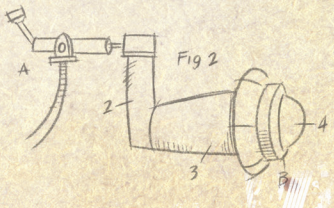
What is sin?



Sin is breaking God's law, and sin separates people from God.







God created people to give glory to Him alone.





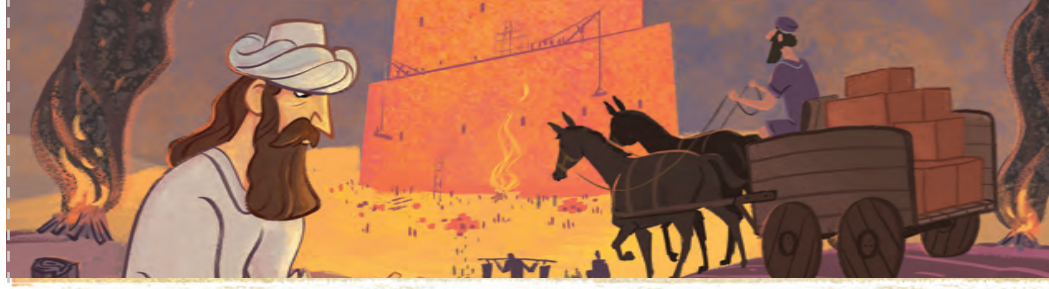
Journal Page

Write a prayer of thanks and recognition to God, giving Him glory. God created people to give glory to Him alone. We give God glory when we show or tell about how great He is. God deserves our worship. He is so good!



FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Who mattered more to the people—themselves or God?
- How have you been tempted to use your talents to make people think you are great?
- How can you use your talents to show how great God is?



The Tower of Babel

Genesis 11:1-9

MAIN POINT: GOD CREATED PEOPLE TO GIVE GLORY TO HIM ALONE.

After the great flood, God told Noah and his sons to grow their families and fill the earth. Noah's sons got married and had children, and the people started to travel through the land.

At this time, everyone in the world spoke the same language. One day, the people traveled through a valley, and they decided to live there.

"We don't want to be scattered all over the earth," they said. "Let's build a city and a tower so big that it touches the sky. The tower will make us famous!"

The people were not doing what God had told them to do. They were saying "Look how great we are," instead of "Look how great God is." But God is greater than anyone. God created people to give glory to Him alone.

The people used stones to start building the tower. God came down to look at the tower. God said, "They will keep thinking up more bad things to do. We need to stop them."

So God mixed up the people's words. When people tried to make plans, they could not understand what other people were saying.

The people had to stop building the city. Families had to move away from each other to live with people they could understand. The city with the unfinished tower was called Babel. Because the people chose to disobey God, their sin separated them from one another.

Christ Connection: People chose to give glory to themselves instead of God. They ignored God's plan, so God confused their language and scattered the people all over the earth. One day, Jesus will gather together all of God's people—people from every tribe and people who speak all kinds of languages—and they will worship Him. (Revelation 7:9-10)

WORLD LANGUAGES

Can you guess the official languages of these countries? Write the language below the country's name.

(Languages: Arabic, English, French, Mandarin Chinese, Spanish)

SPAIN _____

CHINA _____

SAUDI ARABIA _____

CAMEROON _____

SOUTH AFRICA _____

Main Point Mix-Up

These words are all mixed up! Can you make sense of them? (Hint: The first letters are in the correct positions.)

GDO CEDARET
POLEEP TO
GEVI GROYL
TO HMI AEONL.





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Tower of Babel Review Cards

Instructions: Print on heavyweight paper and cut apart the cards. Use as directed in the leader guide.



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