Preschool–Grade 6

The Tower of Babel

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: God is greater than anything we can build. We don't need to make a big name for ourselves; we honor God's name.
Bible passage: Genesis 11:1–9. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." *Proverbs 16:18 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, about 10 paper cups for each team of 3 or 4 kids, 5 paper rectangles for "bricks," one more paper brick for each child, a marker, tape, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 5 paper bricks (see part 4). Put bookmarks in your Bible at Genesis 11:4 and Genesis 11:7.

1. Opening game: Mixed-Up Builders (5 minutes)

Put the kids in teams of 3 or 4 and give each team about 10 paper cups. **Round 1:** each team builds the tallest tower it can, and they may talk as much as they like. **Round 2:** knock the towers down and build again, but this time nobody may use real words. They can only say a silly sound, like "beep-boop." Ask: *Which round was harder? Why?* Say: "Today we will hear a true story about people who were building a tower, and God mixed up their words."

2. Bible story: The Tower of Babel (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Genesis 11, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

After the flood, Noah's family grew and grew, until there were many families and many nations on the earth (Genesis 10:32). Back then, "the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech" (11:1). That means everyone in the whole world spoke the same words.

The people traveled from the east and found a **plain**, a wide, flat land, in the land of **Shinar**. They **dwelt** there, which means they lived there (11:2). They said to each other, "Go to, let us make brick." **Go to** means "Come on, let's!" They baked their bricks hard in the fire. They used brick instead of stone, and they used **slime**, a sticky tar, for **morter**, the sticky stuff that holds bricks together (11:3).

Read Genesis 11:4 from your Bible: "And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth." Say: "They wanted a tower so tall its top would reach up to heaven. **Make us a name** means they wanted to be famous, so everyone would say how great *they* were. And they did not want to be **scattered**, spread out all over the earth."

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The story continues: **Read Genesis 11:5 from your Bible:** "And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded." Say: "**The children of men** means people, and **builded** means built. They wanted to reach up high, but God came down. God saw everything they were doing."

The LORD said that because the people were all together with one language, they would not stop doing whatever they planned (11:6). So God **confounded** their language. Confound means to mix up. God mixed up their words, so they could not understand each other (11:7). Say: "Think how that would be. One builder says, 'Hand me a brick,' and his friend doesn't understand a word!"

Then the LORD **scattered** the people all over the earth, and they **left off**, which means they stopped, building the city (11:8). That place was called **Babel**, because that is where the LORD confounded the language of all the earth (11:9). The people wanted to make a great name for themselves, but God is the One who is great.

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. How many languages did everyone speak at first? *(One, Genesis 11:1)*
2. What did the people make to build with? *(Brick, and slime for morter, 11:3)*
3. What two things did they want to build? *(A city and a tower, 11:4)*
4. What did God do to their language? *(He confounded it, mixed it up, so they could not understand one another, 11:7)*
5. What was the place called? *(Babel, 11:9)*

4. Memory verse: Brick Tower Verse (5 minutes)

Tape the 5 paper bricks on the wall like a tower, from the bottom up: *Pride goeth / before destruction, / and an haughty spirit / before a fall. / Proverbs 16:18.* Explain the old words: **pride** means thinking I'm better than everyone and I don't need God; **goeth before** means comes before; **destruction** means everything falls apart; a **haughty spirit** means a proud, stuck-up heart; and a **fall** means falling down. Read the verse together. Then take one brick off the tower and read it again. Keep taking one brick off each time until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "The people at Babel wanted to make their own name great, but God is the One who is great, and God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: when you want to show off, stop and say, "God is great!" Then tell someone one great thing God has done.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Tower of Babel word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/tower-of-babel-word-search), crossword (vbshq.com/puzzles/tower-of-babel-crossword), maze (vbshq.com/puzzles/tower-of-babel-maze) or worksheet (vbshq.com/worksheets/tower-of-babel-worksheet), the coloring page or craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/tower-of-babel), or **Praise Tower:** give each child a paper brick. Each child draws or writes one great thing God has made or done. Tape the bricks on the wall into one tall tower. Say: "The people at Babel built a tower to make their own name great. Our tower is to praise God's name." Read Psalm 34:3 together: "O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together." (**Magnify** and **exalt** mean to say how great He is.)

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7. Prayer

"Dear God, You are great, and You are bigger than anything we could ever build. Help us not to show off or try to make a big name for ourselves. Help us praise Your name instead. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks how tall the tower was: the Bible doesn't say. It says only that the people wanted its top to "reach unto heaven" (Genesis 11:4).
If a child asks why God "came down to see": God sees everything all the time: "The LORD looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men" (Psalm 33:13). The Bible says God came down to see the city and the tower (Genesis 11:5), and then He acted.
If a child asks about "let us go down" (11:7): keep it simple. The verses around it say plainly who did it: "the LORD came down" (11:5), "the LORD scattered them" (11:8), and "the LORD did there confound the language" (11:9). There is one God: "The LORD our God is one LORD" (Deuteronomy 6:4).

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