


the
Jesus 
Storybook
Bible
Curriculum

Going home

The Ascension, from Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 14

☉ Please see the curriculum Introduction .pdf for more guidance on praying with your group and on Scripture memory.

☉ The total allotted time per lesson is 45 minutes. This is the minimum amount of time it would take to complete the whole lesson. The time can easily be extended to increase the lesson to as much as 1.5 hours. If you have more than the allocated 45 minutes, please use the extra time to extend the time for activities, to learn the memory verse, and to pray.

☉ The “Notes for Teachers on the Text” section is intended as explanation of the Bible text and advance preparation for you only; it is not expressed in terms or language the children could understand.

The Jesus Storybook Bible Curriculum
By Sally Lloyd-Jones and Sam Shammas

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Recap of the Previous Story

3 min. 

- ☉ Welcome the children and ask them to sit in a circle.
- ☉ Briefly recap the main point of the previous story: “Last time we read that three days after dying on the cross Jesus rose from the dead. Jesus is alive, just like he said. We also memorized a verse about why Jesus died and was raised to life.”

- ☉ Ask them to recite together the verse they learned at home about the story. “1 Peter 3:18 — ‘Christ died for sins once for all, to bring you to God.’”
- ☉ To lead into the theme of today’s story, say: “Jesus the King is alive. Since Jesus is King and he is alive, how should we treat Jesus?” Get appropriate responses, e.g., obey, trust, love, put Jesus first, etc.

Activity Introducing the Story

10 min. 

Aim: To expend energy and learn that we should obey the “king.”

Materials: A crown (this can be a paper crown you have made yourself).

1. Put the crown on your head and then explain the game (you have played this game before, but it is always good to repeat the rules).
2. Say: “We’re going to play ‘The King Says.’ When this crown is on my head, I am a king and you must do what I say. But when I remove the crown, then you do not have to obey my commands. If I say, ‘The king says stop!’ and I have the crown on my head, you should all stop. But if I do not have the crown on my head, then you should keep walking. Only obey my commands when I am a king. Watch closely for the crown. Ready? Everyone stand up and walk around the room.”

3. Call out commands (e.g., skip; freeze; wave your hands in the air; jump up and down five times; dance; touch your nose; etc.), prefacing each one with the words, “The king says ...” Periodically call out a command without the crown on your head. Comment on how the children respond (e.g., “Oh dear, about half of you obeyed that command, but I did not have the crown on my head, so I was not a king. Let’s keep trying. Everyone ready?”).

4. At the end of the allocated time, ask the children to sit back down in the circle. Say: “This is not a real crown and I am not a real king. But Jesus is a real King so when he tells us to do something, we must do it. In today’s story Jesus tells his disciples (and that includes us) to do something important. See if you can spot what it is. Ready?”

Join the children in the circle and announce the title of the story. Read aloud pages 318–325 from *The Jesus Storybook Bible* or listen to CD3 track 12.

Notes for Teachers on the Text

Note three intriguing characteristics of the risen Christ:

First, contrary to what the Greeks and the Romans would have expected, Jesus is physical. The Greeks and the Romans believed to reach a higher plane, one needed to shed the body and move into the spiritual realm, because the body was bad and the spirit was good. The idea of a physical resurrection from the dead was ridiculous—maybe there would be a spiritual resurrection but not a physical one. But Jesus is absolutely physical. This is very clear from the Gospel accounts—Jesus says he has flesh and bones; he eats a fish; he shows the disciples his hands and his feet and his scars; he lets Thomas touch him; and so on.

Second, Jesus is “ordinary.” When the disciples on the road to Emmaus meet Jesus, they think he is just a regular person. In fact, in John 21—and it is almost comical—there is a resurrection appearance where Peter and the other disciples are out in a boat fishing, and they see Jesus on the beach. When they meet Jesus, he is cooking fish on a fire—the risen Lord of heaven and earth just cooking some fish. He is physical, he is ordinary. Jesus is not hovering; he is not six feet off the ground; he is not a dazzling light—he is touching; he is walking; he is loving; he is recognizable.

Third, although Jesus’ body is a physical body, it goes through locked doors and through walls. It can appear and disappear at will. Jesus’ body and our future bodies are not going to be less physical than this current body but more physical. Our future bodies are going to do more of what bodies are supposed to do. They are going to be more indissoluble, more perfect. They are going to be able to be and do and bear the burden of what bodies are supposed to do in a way in which our present bodies cannot.

The risen Christ appeared to his disciples and others over a period of 40 days before he ascended into heaven. The disciples are with him and watch him ascend. At that point some angels appear and gently rebuke the disciples—they are not supposed to “stand here looking into the sky” (Acts 1:11). The angels say to them: “This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.” Why do they assure the disciples that Jesus is still the “same” and is coming back?

It would have been very natural for the disciples to be immediately in great distress—assuming that they had lost Jesus, that he was now absent from them, and thus they were bereft. But the angels assure them that Jesus, though in one sense gone, is in another sense still with them. On the one hand, he is “taken from you,” yet they stress that he is “the same”—he is still personal, he is still their leader, he is still their Savior. Therefore, the angels tell the disciples to stop “standing,” stop being inactive.

The ascension means “get busy!” It means we have more confidence and excitement than ever—for now our Lord is at large in the universe, working through us until he returns. Jesus tells us what we are supposed to be doing in the meanwhile—we are to be “witnesses for the kingdom,” his ambassadors, representatives of the King.

Understanding the Story

15 min. 

Aim: To understand, and help the children to obey, Jesus' command to tell others about him.

Materials: A microphone (this can be made out of paper, though if you can get a real microphone children enjoy using it); crayons; copies of the handout (the last page of this document).

1. At the end of the story, say: "The disciples have been through a lot since Jesus' death. We are going to retell this story from the disciples' point of view. So everyone pretend to be the disciples and pass the microphone around the circle. When you have the microphone, tell just one short part of what happened to the disciples and then pass the microphone to the next person. I'll start."

2. Hold the microphone and say: "It has been three days since Jesus, our leader, our teacher, our King, was killed and died on the cross. Our hearts are all broken. We're also afraid. So, we've been hiding in ..." Do not finish the sentence but hand the microphone to a child in the circle and ask them to continue.

3. Prompt as needed to make sure the entire story is told; e.g., "Yes, that did happen but something happened before that ...," etc. If a child is struggling, whisper a hint or ask one of the questions below to help. (If the children are really struggling, you may simply want to use the questions below, asking them to pass the microphone to the next child when they have answered their question as the disciples.)

4. As the microphone passes around, ask suitable questions to help the children think about and remember the story, e.g.:

- ☉ Even though the door was bolted shut, what happened?
- ☉ What did you think had appeared in the room?
- ☉ Who had actually appeared in the room?
- ☉ What did Jesus ask for and what did he do?
- ☉ How did you feel seeing Jesus again?
- ☉ What did Jesus' body look like? Was it different?
- ☉ Where did Jesus tell you he was going?
- ☉ How did you feel when Jesus told you he was going home to his Father?
- ☉ What did Jesus mean when he told you he is the way, the truth, and the life?
- ☉ What command did Jesus give you?
- ☉ What did Jesus tell you to tell everyone, everywhere?
- ☉ How did you feel when Jesus told you that you can live forever with God and him because he has rescued you?
- ☉ What happened to Jesus?
- ☉ While you were looking up into the sky, who appeared and what did they say?
- ☉ Where is Jesus now?
- ☉ What did Jesus promise you?

5. To end the story, take the microphone and say: "Jesus told us, his disciples, to tell everyone, everywhere about him. The End, for now!"

6. Give each child a copy of the handout and a crayon. Say: "You can see on your paper a picture of the disciples. In the red thought bubble, write down what they might have been thinking when they first saw Jesus."

7. Ask a few children to share their answers and share one of your own. (You may want to ask the children who are struggling to draw rather than write what the disciples are thinking.)

8. Say: "The disciples may have been surprised when they first saw Jesus, but soon they realized that Jesus is alive again. Their King is alive again. Jesus tells them something more about himself. He is not only the King but also three other things. Look at the green box on your paper. Let me read the sentence to you. I will say 'blank' when I get to the three things."

9. Read the sentence aloud; then say: "You can see some letters on the table near the disciples; remove the letters Q, X, and Z and write in the other letters in order to get the three things Jesus told his disciples about him."

10. Give them 30 seconds to do this and ask them what the three missing words are. Then ask one of them to read the entire sentence aloud.

11. Say: "Look at the blue box on your paper. Jesus is King, so when Jesus asks us to do something we must do it. What did Jesus ask the disciples, and us, to do? On your paper, you can see some possible answers; let me read them to you. Circle the correct answer."

12. Read the possible answers aloud; then ask them what they circled. Say: "Jesus commands us to tell everyone, everywhere about him. What can you tell people about Jesus? Pass the microphone around the circle again, but this time imagine someone who has never read the Bible and never been to church — what can you tell that person about Jesus? Pass the microphone and each say one thing. Let's see if we can get around the circle a few times. I'll start."

13. Take the microphone and say: "Jesus is God," then pass the microphone to the first child. Prompt as necessary, making sure that they say things like: "Jesus died for our sins," "Jesus' death means our sins can be forgiven," "Jesus is the Rescuer," "Jesus is alive today," etc.

14. Once you have been around the circle a few times, say: "Jesus says 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.' If people believe in Jesus, they will be with God and Jesus forever because their sins are forgiven. Jesus was punished for their sins. But if people do not believe in Jesus, they will not be with God and Jesus forever, their sins are not forgiven, and they will be punished for their sins themselves. Jesus commands us to tell everyone, everywhere about him."

For larger groups: You may want to divide the group into smaller circles, each with a teacher and a microphone. Each teacher can then help their circle retell the story and also help them to complete the handout.

Drawing the Story to a Close

1 min. 

Say: "Think of someone you know who does not know Jesus. Why not plan this week to pray for them and ask God to help you to tell them about Jesus."

Say: "Jesus is alive. Jesus is the risen King. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. It is only by believing in him and trusting in his death on the cross that anyone can be saved."

Jesus in the Story

2 min. 

Ask: "What did we discover about Jesus from today's story?"

Get a few children to share their answers aloud, commenting appropriately; then ask everyone to write an answer in the space on their handout.

Praying about the Story

5 min. 

Pray aloud, thanking God that Jesus is alive. Pray for someone you know who does not know Jesus.

Ask the children to pray for someone who does not know Jesus.

A Verse from the Story to Learn at Home

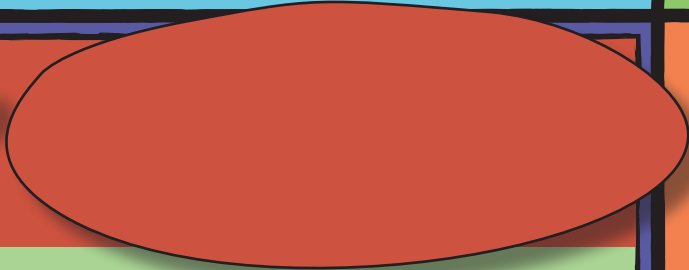
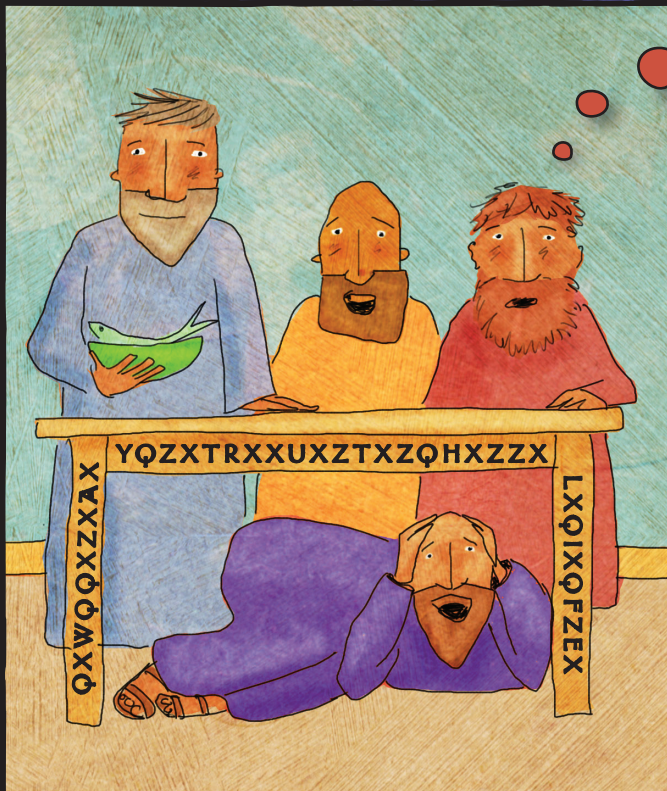
2 min. 

☉ Introduce the verse: "The verse we recited at the start tells us why Jesus died and was raised to life again."

☉ Announce the verse: "Your verse to practice at home is 1 Peter 3:18 — 'Christ died for sins once for all, to bring you to God.'"

☉ Read the verse out loud together as a group.

☉ Remind the children to give the handout to their parents and to memorize the verse for next time.

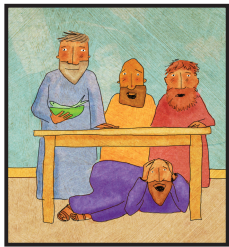


Jesus said: "I am the _____ and the _____ and the _____. No one comes to the Father except through me."

What did Jesus command the disciples, and us, to do?

- a) To tell no one about him.
- b) To tell only good people about him.
- c) To tell everyone, everywhere about him.

Jesus in the Story



What did you discover about Jesus from this story?



Jesus

A Verse from the Story to Learn at Home

Christ died for sins once for all, to bring you to God.
(1 Peter 3:18)



Notes for parents: From the story we learned that Jesus is the risen King, the way, the truth, and the life. We also learned that we need to tell others about Jesus. Please help your child to memorize the verse and the Scripture reference for next time. Please review with them the place of the book of 1 Peter, using the diagram above. www.jesusstorybookbible.com